Off The Couch
An Ezine of Psychoanalysis and Culture

High

Low

Vol I Number 3
“Psychoanalysis, unfortunately, has scarcely anything to say about beauty either. All that seems certain is its derivation from the field of sexual feeling. The love of beauty seems a perfect example of an impulse inhibited in its aim. ‘Beauty’ and ‘attraction’ are originally attributes of the sexual object.”

Sigmund Freud, Civilization and its Discontents.

“all creation is really a re-creation of a once loved and once whole, but now lost and ruined object, a ruined internal world and self. It is when the world within us is destroyed, when it is dead and loveless, when our loved ones are in fragments, and we ourselves in helpless despair—it is then that we must re-create our world anew, re-assemble the pieces, infuse life into dead fragments, re-create life.”

Hanna Segal  A Psycho-Analytical Approach to Aesthetics.

For beauty is nothing but the beginning of terror, which we are still just able to endure,
and we are so awed because it serenely disdains to annihilate us.
First Duino Elegies
Rainer Maria Rilke

How can ugliness and disharmony, which are the content of tragic myth, inspire an esthetic delight?
Friedrich Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy
Circulation 163
Submissions

We welcome submissions, suggestions for articles, original poetry, photography or art, reviews of books, plays, movies, music.

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From the Editor

We have in this issue what we consider to be a unique pairing of three generations of Freuds. This issue was inspired by Jane McAdams Freud when she gave a talk at the American Psychoanalytic Association meeting in New York in January, 2011. She is the daughter of Lucian Freud, the noted English painter and the great-granddaughter of Sigmund Freud, the noted psychoanalyst. She is a sculptor in England. She agreed to work with me in tracing an artistic lineage starting with Sigmund’s collecting of antiquities. His youngest son was Ernst Freud, a noted architect in both Berlin and London. Lucian Freud is the second son of Ernst Freud and is one of the most pre-eminent painters in England of this century. He works primarily in oils and is known for his portraits. He died in July, 2011.

Jane has contributed two articles, one on her affinity with Sigmund’s antiquities and a posthumous tribute to her father. We have an extended interview with Jane about her own work and background. I have written background information on both Sigmund and Lucian Freud and a reflection on two paintings of Lucian Freud. Janice Lieberman has written a reflection on another painting of Lucian Freud. I hope that we have demonstrated an artistic lineage in the three generations of Freuds. This is quite explicit in the unconscious similarity of Jane’s work with medals and the style of antiquities that Sigmund preferred. Lucian Freud, while not publically having any interest in the theories of Sigmund Freud, had a significant personal relationship with him and certainly reveals in his paintings deep unconscious forces, both libidinal and aggressive. Both Lucian and Jane must struggle with the shadow of their very famous and intellectually brilliant progenitor. It cannot be easy to find one’s way to an independent career in such a family.

In another note, I would like to see this ezine grow into a collaboration among its readers and subscribers. To this end, I would love to hear from any of you who would like to contribute. We could use a copy editor, suggestions for theme issues, an editor for a theme issue, suggestions about individual articles, writing individual articles, suggesting potential authors of articles. If any of you are interested in working with us, please email me.

The color scheme for this issue’s graphic design is inspired by the Lucian Freud painting, Girl in a Dark Jacket.
Sigmund Freud and his Antiquities

Robert S. White
One of Freud's earliest introductions to antiquities must have been the Phillipson's bible that his family had possessed (see sidebar). We can hypothesize that this Bible was a major source for the childhood Freud of images and stories (Philoctetes, 2008). It was this Bible that Freud's father presented to him on his thirty-fifth birthday (Gay, 1988).

In the Interpretation of Dreams, Freud (1900) recounts a dream from his seventh or eighth year (the only dream from childhood in the Interpretation of Dreams):

I saw my beloved mother, with a peculiarly peaceful, sleeping expression on her features, being carried into the room by two (or three) people with birds' beaks and laid upon the bed. I awoke in tears and screaming, and interrupted my parents' sleep. (p. 583)

Freud notes that the people with birds' beaks were derived from illustrations in the Phillipson's Bible, gods with falcon's heads from an Egyptian funerary relief. Freud later interpretated the dream "to an obscure and evidently sexual craving" (p. 584) toward his mother. The figure in the dream was clearly Horus, the falcon god (see sidebar). There are images of Horus in the Phillipson Bible that served as the day residue of the dream. This is the only direct evidence of the influence of the Phillipson Bible in Freud's life.

Modern archaeology developed during Freud's life. Heinrich Schliemann's first excavations at Troy were in 1873, the labyrinth of Minos was discovered in 1900, and Tutankhamun's tomb discovered in 1922. Freud had purchased Ilios, Schliemann's book on Troy in 1899 and subsequently amassed a large library of archaeology texts. It was Schliemann who coined the concept of Trümmerschichten ("layered ruins") (O'Donoghue, 2004),
which Freud was to use as the archaeology metaphor. The great European collections of antiquities were formed during this period. In the Aetiology of Hysteria (1896), Freud imagines a explorer in a strange land:

“he may start upon the ruins, clear away the rubbish, and, beginning from the visible remains, uncover what is buried. If his work is crowned with success, the discoveries are self-explanatory: the ruined walls are part of the ramparts of a palace or treasure-house; the fragments of columns can be filled out into a temple; the numerous inscriptions, which, by good luck, may be bilin-gual, reveal an alphabet and a language, and, when they have been deciphered and translated, yield undreamed-of information about the events of the remote past, to commemorate which the monuments were built. Saxa loquuntur! [“The stones talk!”] (p. 192)

The archaeology metaphor suggests something hidden beneath a concealed landscape that can be accessed by temporal stratification of buried layers. In the Dora case (Freud, 1905):

In face of the incompleteness of my analytic results, I had no choice but to follow the example of those discoverers whose good fortune it is to bring to the light of day after their long burial the priceless though mutilated relics of antiquity. I have restored what is missing, taking the best mod-els known to me from other analyses; but, like a conscientious archaeologist, I have not omitted to mention in each case where the authentic parts end and my constructions begin (p. 12).

He told the Wolf Man:

“The psychoanalyst, like the archaeologist in his excavations, must uncover layer after layer of the patient’s psyche, before coming to the deepest, most valuable treasures.” (quoted in Gay, 1988, p. 16)

In visiting Paris in 1885-6, Freud was exposed to the antiquities found in the Louvre, with its Greek and Ro-man statues, Assyrians kings, Egyptian bas-reliefs, and the famous Venus de Milo, a “dreamlike world” (Gay, 1988). At the home of Jean Martin Charcot, Freud found a collection of Indian and Chinese antiquities (Gamwell, 1989). His first acquisitions were plaster casts and Old Masters reproductions.. Freud acquired his first antiquities in December of 1896 just after his father’s death (Gamwell, 1989). He wrote to Fliess: “I have decorated my study with plaster copies of Florentine statues. They were a source of exceptional renew-al and comfort for me.” (Freud, 1896). Michelangelo’s Dying Slave was among these Florentine statues (Bergstein, 2003). This statue was originally made for the tomb of Pope Julius II as a symbol of the arts.

When Freud was collecting, these antiquities were not in fashion and could be brought cheaply. Freud was a careful collector and set aside money regularly for his collecting. There were five dealers in Vienna dealing exclusively in ancient antiquities, the most important for Freud was Robert Lustig, who sold Freud
The Phillipson Bible was a highly unusual publication in the Jewish culture. It was in a series of German-Jewish translations of the bible, perhaps 20, beginning with the Moses Mendelssohn translation in 1780. This translation was the first in High German and contained commentaries. There were more translations in German than in any other Jewish community. One of the agendas was to replace the Yiddish translations and preserve the correct Hebrew text. The Phillipson Bible was edited and published by two remarkable Jewish scholars, Ludwig Philippson (1811-1889), and his brother Phoebus, a practicing physician. Their father, Moses, was a dedicated participant in Haskala, the Jewish intellectual movement dedicated to overcoming ignorance and religious formalism of the Jews. The brothers, particularly Ludwig, embraced their father’s ideals and implemented them by publishing their unusual Hebrew Bible and a newspaper, the Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums (1837-1889), “the mouthpiece of German Jewry”, for years. He also published many German-Jewish books. Ludwig was in the first generation of university educated German Jews. Freud’s father had subscribed to the original publication by the Philippson brothers.

The Phillipson Bible is unusual in several respects: Each page has the original Hebrew text in one column and the German translation in the other column. At the foot of the page there are explanatory notes with comments not only about the biblical text but also a ‘cultural commentary’ that was informational about the objects described in the text and in the illustrations. Moreover, the most unusual feature consists in the illustrations described in the Bible’s title page as “many English wood engravings”. The engravings are shocking in a Hebrew Bible that forbids images. The illustrations encompass trees to animals, Egyptian gods to Roman ruins, landscapes to camel caravans, and so forth—hardly what any good Jew could have expected in a Bible. The commentaries and illustrations were intended to open the mind of its Jewish readers to other lands, experiences, realities, and phenomena to help them join the world in which they lived and expand their horizons (Rizzuto, 2007, Philoctetes, 2008).
several hundred objects between the mid-1920’s to 1938 (Gamwell, 1989). Corcoran (1991) notes that many of the smaller objects in Freud’s collection were mass produced in ancient civilizations as votive offerings. The objects themselves came from the ancient Middle East, Greece, Rome, and China, and we know now Mexico. Freud had a life-long friendship with Emanuel Löwy, who became a professor of archaeology and helped him with his collection (O’Donoghue, 2004). Freud tried to avoid forgeries by having his antiquities authenticated by experts. He would get rid of known forgeries. He also collected reproductions. He eventually had over two thousand pieces. They are now housed in the Freud Museum in London.

In his new study in 1907, Freud hung over the analytic couch a large print of The Rock-cut Temple at Abu Simbel, based on a gouache by Ernst Koemer. Ramesses II, a heroic military leader and patron of the art would have been a suitable father figure (Gamwell, 1989). He had a reproduction of Ingres painting of Oedipus interrogating the Sphinx and a plaster cast of Gradiva. The collection was always located in his study and consultation room. Some were always on his desk. In the center was Athena, the goddess of war, the arts and wisdom (above). Behind Athena was a Chinese table scroll. Also on his desk were Imhotep, the Egyptian architect and healer and the baboon of Thoth, the Egyptian god of the moon, wisdom and learning (to the right). The objects were placed carefully to reflect meaning among the relationships. He was known to treat these figures as companions, greeting them and stroking them. He would bring a new acquisition to the dining room as a “guest of honor” but would always return it afterwards (JA Freud, 2010). He would even pack up the antiquities and take them with him on summer vacations.

The Wolf Man describes the experience of being in Freud’s consultation room:

“Here were all kinds of statuettes and other unusual objects, which even the layman recognized as archaeological finds from ancient Egypt. Here and there on the walls were stone plaques representing various scenes of long-vanished epochs. A few potted plants added life to the rooms, and the warm carpet and curtains gave them a
Horus

Human culture began in Egypt around 5000 BC. The upper and lower kingdoms were united in 3100 BC under a succession of pharaohs. The name Horus is Greek. In Ancient Egypt he was known as “Heru”. He was considered to be a celestial falcon, and so his name could be a specific reference to the flight of the falcon, but could also be seen as a more general solar reference. It is thought that the worship of Horus was brought into Egypt during the predynastic period. He seems to have begun as a god of war and a sky god who was married to Hathor, but soon became considered as the opponent of Set, the son of Ra, and later the son of Osiris. Each “Horus” had his own cult center and mythology, but over time they merged and were absorbed by the most popular Horus, Horus Behedet (Horus of Edfu).

As a child, Horus was known as Harpokrates, “the infant Horus”, and was portrayed as a baby being suckled by Isis. He was said to be stunted from the waist down. This may be because his father was dead when he was conceived or perhaps because he was born prematurely. In later times he was affiliated with the newborn sun.

Since Horus was said to be the sky, he was considered to also contain the sun and moon. It became said that the sun was his right eye and the moon his left, and that they traversed the sky when he, a falcon, flew across it. Thus he became known as Harmerty - Horus of two eyes. Later, the reason that the moon was not as bright as the sun was explained by a tale, known as the contestings of Horus and Seth, originating as a metaphor for the conquest of Upper Egypt by Lower Egypt in about 3000 BC. In this tale, it was said that Set, the patron of Upper Egypt, and Horus, the patron of Lower Egypt, had battled for Egypt brutally, with neither side victorious, until eventually the gods sided with Horus. As Horus was the ultimate victor he became known as Horus the Elder. In the struggle Set had lost a testicle, explaining why the desert, which Set represented, is infertile. Horus’ left eye had also been gouged out, which explained why the moon, which it represented, was so weak compared to the sun.

Haroeris, “Horus the Elder”, was one of the earliest forms of Horus and the patron deity of Upper (southern) Egypt. In this myth, he is the son of Osiris and Isis. The original form of the myth states that Osiris was killed by a wooden sarcophagus secretly being made to his measurements by Set, the brother of Osiris, who was jealous of Osiris's position as king, and so plotted to kill him and take his place. A party had been held where the coffin was offered to whoever could fit inside. A few people tried to fit in, but to no avail. Osiris was encouraged to try, but as soon as he lay back, the lid slammed on him and was locked. It was then sealed with lead and thrown into the Nile. Upon hearing that Osiris was gone, Isis set out to look for him. She was afraid without proper ceremonies and
burial Osiris would not be able to go to the place of the dead. She found the coffin in Byblos (now in modern day Lebanon). When traveling back, along the Nile River, she left the coffin in an area of marshland. Set, while hunting, finds Osiris’ coffin and dismembered him into 14 parts, scattering them across the land of Egypt. Each part represented one of the 14 full moons (each year has 12 to 14 full moons). Once again Isis set out to look for the pieces and she was able to find 13 of the 14 parts, with the help of Nephthys, Set’s sister-wife, but was unable to find the 14th, as it had been eaten by a fish. Instead, she fashioned a phallus out of gold and sang a song around Osiris until he came back to life. Osiris was resurrected. He could have proper ceremonies and burial. Due to this experience, Osiris became Lord of the Dead, and the Afterlife. Horus was conceived after Osiris came back to life.

Horus was also said to be a god of war and hunting. The Horus falcon is shown upon a standard on the predynastic Hunters Palette in the “lion hunt”. Thus he became a symbol of majesty and power as well as the model of the pharaohs. The Pharaohs were said to be Horus in human form. As Horus was associated with Upper Egypt (as Heru-ur in Nekhen) and Lower Egypt (as Horus Behedet or Horus of Edfu) he was the perfect choice for a unified country and it seems that he was considered to be the royal god even before unification took place. The Pharaoh was often considered to be the embodiment of Horus while alive (and Osiris once he was deceased).

One might easily see why Freud was attracted to the god Horus. He had a number of artifacts of Horus in his collection. He published a childhood dream that featured Horus. Here is combined the fratricide of Cain and Able, Oedipal conflicts and the primal horde that rises up against the father. (Whitehead, 1986). Or might we see more of the Kleinian splitting of the preoedipal mother, the frightening bird beaks hidden behind the soothing image of her love (Rosenfeld, 1956).
homelike note. Everything here contributed to one’s feelings of leaving the haste of modern life behind, of being sheltered from one’s daily cares.” (Gardiner, 1971, p. 139)

What do these objects mean to Freud? Gay (1988) suggests a lost world of the Jews. He told Ferenczi of “strange secret yearnings…perhaps from my ancestral heritage – for the East and the Mediterranean and for a life of quite another kind: wishes from late childhood never to be fulfilled and not adapted to reality.” (quoted in Gay, 1988, p. 172). Gamwell suggests the ambivalence of loss and triumph in the death of his father. Rizzuto (2007) suggests the antiquities continued the affectionate and playful presence of his father. Bergstein (2003) suggests that the antiquities functions as magic charms for Freud, a kind of muse for the mysteries of the human mind. Could we think of the antiquities as Freud’s transitional objects with the tie to the preoedipal mother. I like Bennett Simon’s (Philoctetes, 2008) interpretation. He thinks that the antiquities illustrate what filled Freud’s mind as he listened to his patients, a constant stock of images that he used as associations. The antiquities were a kind of filter through which Freud understood the world.


Gardiner, M. (1971). The Wolf-man by the


Freud’s medals
Jane McAdam Freud

Freud’s antiquities inspired him in the development of psychoanalysis. I form links between Freud’s collection of ancient sculpture, his development of psychoanalysis and the impact of psychoanalysis on contemporary art.

In 1938, over 80 years old, Freud left Vienna for London escaping the Nazis. The house he lived in for his final year, until his death in 1939, became the Freud Museum in London. The Museum is maintained as he left it, a shrine to Freud’s life and work and not least his collection of antiquities, which number over 2000.

In January 2005 I began an artist’s residency at the Freud Museum in London. Unaware of the depth of Freud’s collection, I found it extraordinary that I had made works so similar in form to those he had collected (Fig 2). Freud collected medals (Fig 3). He also collected many two sided objects like the Egyptian Sistrum depicting the cow eared god Hathor, which like Janus has two faces, one appearing on either side (Fig 4).

Sigmund Freud is my great grandfather and through working with his antiquities collection during my residency at the Freud Museum I have become very interested in the links between psychoanalysis and art.

Studying Freud’s relationship with the ancestors through his ancient objects I look at our mutual interest in sculpture, examining the connections in order to illustrate the overlaps between psychoanalysis and art – between his field and mine. I make sculpture, Freud collected sculpture – a fact that I had not been consciously aware of in my art school years and early career.

Fig 2. Object no 2203 from Sigmund Freud’s Collection: Egyptian Breast Plate (Sekmet) Bronze
For so many years I had been involved with making double sided hand-held – what I called P.U.P.s (Pick up Pieces) (Fig 5-7). Generally called medals, in terms of contemporary art they were neither fashionable nor understood. I was driven to continue with the medium but was unable to explain why to others. People would often ask why I made medals. I had no idea.

During the Freud Museum Residency I examined Freud’s objects by sketching them (Fig 8). For the concluding exhibition Relative Relations, I placed my works alongside objects from Freud’s collection: one of my works made during the preceding 25 years paired with a selected object from Freud’s collection - my sculpture with Freud’s sculpture echoing each other’s motifs, materials, scale, form or patina or a series of the latter (Fig 9).

In 1899 Freud aged 43 published The Interpretation of Dreams. Einstein was looking at Relativity and Picasso was delving into Cubism while Helmholz was looking at human beings as energy systems. This was an age of questioning – who we are – in time and space and how we process that emotionally. The latter was Freud’s domain. He looked at what was happening in our minds as we experience the world, our societies, our families and ourselves.

Freud read a great deal about archeology and was fascinated by the subject. All the main concepts of human psychology have come from the ancient world however Freud systematized this wisdom and developed psychoanalysis with the help of his art collection.
Uninterested in aesthetics in general Freud never the less disagreed with Dali that the art of the Surrealists made use of the unconscious. He said that Surrealism was designed and constructed consciously and so had nothing to do with unconscious processes. Surrealism apart, I would say certain movements in contemporary art such as conceptual art with its installation and language components would not have been conceivable without Freud’s theories.

In reaction to his father’s death in 1896, Freud started writing the Interpretation of Dreams as part of his self-analysis. He also started his art collection.

While reflecting on his collection of antiquities and their meanings Freud developed the theories fundamental to psychoanalysis. Using one of Freud’s dreams from childhood I wish to connect his unconscious wishes to his art collection. I refer to Freud’s significant childhood dream which I believe impacts on his later desire to collect ancient objects. When Freud was eight years old, he had a dream: a nightmare. He dreamt that two or three people with birds’ beaks were carrying his mother, apparently asleep, to a bed. He realised in the dream that this meant that she was dead. He ran screaming to his parents’ room where he was able to check that his mother was still alive.

He later identified the beaked creatures as falcon headed gods derived from Egyptian funerary reliefs, which as a child he had seen illustrated in his German Jewish Phillipson Bible (Fig 10). This dream expresses the coded creativity, the displacement and wish fulfilment he believed was disguised in dreams. The young Freud dreamt of a two-dimensional image becoming a three dimensional reality. The image he had seen was his first vision of the sculpture he later collected. Was there inside the dream an aspirational wish containing Freud’s desire to make real those images he had seen in his childhood bible, that is...
Fig 8. Including drawings of Freud’s Collected Antiquities, 2005  J.McA.Freud Pencil on Paper

Fig 10. Left- Horus Hawk 2 dimensional depiction:  
Right- Horus Hawk 3 Dimensional sculpture  
from Freud’s Collection
real in a physical, three dimensional sense, to bring them to life? Was this his first dream reference to his beloved objects of ancient sculpture and if so what were they doing carrying his mother off? In the dream she died and in reality the falcon headed gods from the bible were brought to life. They formed part of his collection as -what he later termed ‘guardians watching over him’.

On many levels he made the connection between death and antiquities not least as his collecting activities seems to have been prompted by the death of his father in Vienna in 1896. The antiquities ‘dug up’, archaeological finds, objects of the dead represented a metaphor for digging into the depths of the unconscious for buried memories. Freud remembered the dream featuring the beaked creatures his whole life and analyzed it in his thirties. I noticed that several beaked creatures appear in his collection (Fig 12).

I re-examined the medals I had made featuring hybrid relationships (Fig 13). Heads and Tails combining can with snake, animate with inanimate and Merman combining Fish and Man reversing the traditional configuration of fish and woman for the mermaid (Fig 14).

During my residency at the Museum, working with Freud’s collection, I noted that he was not interested in the best examples for investment value (indeed one or two pieces were in fact forgeries but the value of what the objects offered in terms of meaning. He was intrigued by the stories they told. He saw his collection as representing wisdom through the ages, seeing them as representations of his ancestors. He used this ancient wisdom to illustrate his theories.

As well as being inspired by them Freud did however have a tactile relationship with his objects. He picked up and held his pieces, stroking and
turning them in the hand. Freud’s theories centre on libidinal urges as driving forces and this I think people find very difficult to accept, especially in reference to childhood. Freud handled his works, he had an intimate relationship with them, a physical relationship. There is physical evidence in some of the works of his meditative handling. I noticed that some of the bronzes were shiny in parts. This is exactly the effect you get from gently rubbing over the surface. Eventually the patina is worn away and parts become polished.

Image 15 shows one of my recent works titled Ancestor. The obverse shows a libidinal symbol and the reverse depicts an Egyptian Shabti inspired by a piece in Freud’s collection. Freud’s idea of sublimation is a channeling of the libido into achievements like making art, writing poetry, science etc – a socially acceptable way where displacement serves a higher cultural purpose.

I noted from studying Freud’s objects in situ, that he seemed to collect in groups often twos and threes, (a strange echo of those beaked creatures he dreamed of and described as numbering two or three). He also enjoyed the Egyptians penchant for reversing their themes for example he acquired both the bird headed human and human headed bird again an approach he developed for his psychoanalysis, which delights in looking at information from dualistic directions (Fig 16).

He had a group of his favourite figurines standing on his desk like the audience. The placing of these figures was meaningful to Freud and highly symbolic with figures of wise men, scribes and scholars with Athena his favourite at the very centre (Fig 17). Freud played with the arrangement. In some photos of Freud at his desk you see the Bear placed in the West corner of the desk and the Monkey in the East. The sculptures took up most of the space leaving just enough room for Freud to write.

Freud also liked to bring a new acquisition to the dining table as a "guest of honour" during the meal but always repositioned it afterwards. The placing of his objects was highly important to Freud and
each object had specific meaning in relation to the objects around it. Much like an artist might make an installation Freud thought through his theories while arranging these juxtapositions.

In his study he was surrounded by his treasured antiquities. He said that he had two addictions one being nicotine the other his collection. Unable to control his own impulsive drives the nicotine was his downfall in the end (Fig 18). Of course both the process of psychoanalysis and of art make use of the unconscious. Unconscious or instinctive impulses both help create art and allow art to be accessed by the viewer. Through the experience of art, the viewer receives information and feels emotions that he/she may otherwise not acknowledge.

By unconscious Freud means unknown, ignored, hidden, that is repressed knowledge. I think artists use this knowledge and the viewer taps into it in his/her engagement with art. Images speak was something Freud exclaimed in reference to his collection.

Freud’s recognition of the unconscious was very important for the comprehension, growth and development of contemporary art in general. I feel that Freud, with his theory of the unconscious, opened the doors to conceptual art practice.

Through experiencing Freud’s objects I re-frame my objects. I do this in the tradition of Duchampian appropriation. As in Duchamp’s Mona Lisa, where he appropriates the coveted Mona Lisa (Fig 19-20) for his own I displace and in doing so appropriate Freud’s coveted antiquities for my own.
Lucian Freud was born in 1922, the middle son of Ernst and Lucie (née Brasch) Freud. Ernst was the fourth of Sigmund and Martha’s six children and the third of their three sons. He grew up in Berlin. Lucian had contact with his grandfather, who would come to Berlin to undergo cancer treatments. Sigmund reportedly gave Lucian a copy of The Arabian Nights and prints of Bruegel. They both liked the comic strip brats, Max and Moritz. Ernst Freud was an architect who worked in an Art Deco style and later was influenced by Mies van der Rohe. In England, he designed housing blocks and did Melanie Klein’s consulting room. He remodeled the house in Hampstead that Sigmund, Martha and Anna moved into.

Lucian has two brothers, Clement, a noted media personality, and MP, and Stephen, who runs a shop for door knobs and knockers. When Lucian was 11, the family left Germany for London where they settled in St. John’s Wood. He became a British citizen in 1939, having attended Dartington Hall school in Totnes, Devon, and later Bryanston School. He considers himself very English. Freud briefly studied at the Central School of Art in London and with greater success, at Cedric Morris’ East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing in Dedham. He also attended Goldsmiths College - University of London from 1942-3. He served as a merchant seaman in an Atlantic convoy in 1941 before being invalided out of service in 1942.

He has been married twice and has numerous children. After an affair with Lorna Garman, he went on to marry her niece Kitty (daughter of sculptor Jacob Epstein and socialite Kathleen Garman) in 1948. He reportedly continued to drink, gamble and womanize. After four years and the birth of two daughters, Annie and Annabel, their marriage ended when he began an affair with Lady Caroline Blackwood, a society girl and writer. She had huge eyes, and was, on the evidence of Freud’s art, blonde, vulnerable and fiercely sexy. Blackwood was introduced to Freud by her friend Ann Fleming, wife of Ian. Freud spent a summer in Jamaica with the Flemings while Casino Royale was being written. Blackwood later married the American poet Robert Lowell, who described her as “a mermaid who dines upon the bones of her winded lovers”. They married in 1953. The marriage was dissolved in Mexico in 1958.

His painting genius was recognized early. His first important commission was illustrations for a book of poems by Nickolas Moore, published in 1944. His first solo exhibit in 1944 was at the Alex Reid & Lefevre Gallery. He has been grouped in “The School of London”, a group of painters who knew each other and worked in a figurative style. These included Ronald Kitaj, Francis Bacon, Frank Auerbach, Michael Andrews, Rob-
ert Colquhoun, Robert MacBryde, Reginald Gray, and Patrick Swift. Freud’s early paintings are often associated with surrealism, influenced by Miró and De Chirico. From the 1950’s, he has almost exclusively painted portraits, both heads and full bodies, often nude.

Around 1956 Freud changed from his finely pointed sable brushes to a stiffer hogshair and began to loosen his style, gradually amplifying his touch. At the same time he began to work standing up. This injected his work with a more athletic, energetic feel. In the mid-1970s, he began using the heavy, granular pigment called cremnitz white, which he has since then reserved for the painting of flesh. He works extremely slowly and deliberately, wiping his brush on a cloth after every stroke. The colors in these paintings are typically muted and feature a thick impasto. Francis Bacon encouraged him to immerse himself in pictorial material with complete freedom from the requirements of the drawing. His brushstrokes became coarse and angular but without betraying his taste for details. He often takes several months to finish a painting and makes great demands on the model. He usually has two or three paintings on the go at once, and will work on them in shifts of two or three sessions a day. His working day often starts early in the morning in his top-lit Holland Park studio, and ends in his night studio where he works under artificial light.

Freud’s work is intimate, piercing, distressing. His models’ flaccid bodies disturb the spectator with their autobiographical intensity that is almost always far from any sexual intention. The models are almost always friends, lovers, fellow painters, children and he paints them with deliberate parsimony, always in natural settings, in order to capture their instincts while they pose. He is fond of dogs and horses and has painted both. Freud has said about this that he wants his paintings to have “the same effect as flesh.” Influences include Hals, Rembrandt, and Ingres. Freud is one of the best known British artists working in a representational style, and was shortlisted for the Turner Prize in 1989. His painting After Cézanne, which is notable because of its unusual shape, was bought by the National
Gallery of Australia for $7.4 million. In May 2008, his 1995 portrait Benefits Supervisor Sleeping was sold by auction by Christie’s in New York City for $33.6 million, setting a world record for sale value of a painting by a living artist at that time. He has had major exhibits at Abbot Hall Art Gallery, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Tate Britain, The Metropolitan Museum in New York, MOMA in New York and MOCA in Los Angeles.

Robert S. White

Large Interior (after Watteau)
1981-3 Oil 186x198 cm
Private Collection  Suzy Boyt’s son Kai (in yellow) who

Jean Antoine Watteau
Pierrot Content, ca.1712
Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid
“Art is by its nature wrought, however convincing it is. It has to do with artifice, which means an artist’s ability to convey feelings that aren’t necessarily ones the artist has himself; otherwise the most remarkable artists would also be the most virtuous and extraordinary people. I mean to say, the character of the artist doesn’t enter into the nature of the art. Eliot said that art is the escape from personality, which I think is right. We know that Velázquez embezzled money from the Spanish court and wanted power and so on, but you can’t see this in his art.” (p. 103)

He has an intense wide-eyed stare that can be startling. That stare, and the long scarf that in winter he ties around his neck, are among his familiar features. So is his whippet, Pluto, who joins him even as he goes to lunch at the River Café. (p. 98)

[the paintings] invariably have to do with the plasticity of pigment simulating flesh. They are about an evasive Psychological inwardness, a sense of the otherness of objects and people, scrutinized like specimens under a hard, enveloping light. Freud liked to talk about the truth of what he depicts, by which he means the Truth of the human transaction between him and his models. His paintings of figures are tough, impacted, Unforgiving of their subjects, and in that respect they do not lie. (p.99-100)

I mean to say, the character of the artist doesn’t enter into the nature of the art. Eliot said that art is the escape from personality, which I think is right. (p. 103)

I think an erotic element is in nearly all great art. I see it in Constable, certainly. It’s to do with love, not sex. (p. 103)

Freud paints only people he knows…working “with” his models, not “from” them. (p. 106)

When Freud was young, he was once called “the Ingres of existentialism” for his meticulous drawings of anxious figures” (p. 108)
At the turn of the century I had just arrived in London, to stay for a few months. Lucian offered to sit for me, if I would sit for him. I agreed even though I knew he would not give me much time and would expect me to give him a lot.

I would arrive every morning at 8.30 and leave at noon. My best time of day. We usually had a cup of tea first. I walked up through Holland Park and watched the spring arrive, making me very aware how uneventful they were in southern California.

He works very slowly, I also knew he abandoned some portraits, and as I was going to sit a lot I did not want that to happen. So I co-operated. He liked a particular jacket and a blue shirt. I always wore them. I was fascinated to see his methods.

All people who met him were immediately fascinated... He was thin, he wore very well-tailored, well worn clothes.

The studio in Holland Park was at the top of the house and he almost ran up the stairs. The light came from directly above. A glass roof that is never seen in the paintings but gives very good lighting on the face. Shadows under the nose and chin, very little side lighting. He could control the amount of light through louvres. He took a while to set things up. I sat in a low chair with a reachable ashtray on the floor.

Because he works slowly we can talk. He would look very intensely for a while, the eyes very piercing, and I notice rarely lowered. Then, as he mixed the paint, he would talk. All subjects seem to come up, but a lot was gossip about people we both knew.

He could be very pithy and funny about them, very good putdowns that made me laugh. We got on very well, often talking about drawings. He too admired Rembrandt's drawings, that they were all portraits, there were no generic faces in the whole lot.

His palette is perhaps eight colours. He never put the tops back on the tubes so the paint
cakes up on them and he flicks this off on the wall with a swipe. He has been doing this on the studio wall for the last 40 years so it is thick with many years’ layers. Like a wall in the life rooms at the art schools of the Fifties that I knew, but this was all done by the same hand - a rare and beautiful thing in itself.

Freud’s assistant David Dawson took a photograph of me sitting in the chair, the portrait on the easel in front and Lucian coming in the door looking like a butcher in a splattered apron. The overhead natural lighting gives it a theatrical air like a Beckett play.

The palette he never cleaned, just smoothed out bits for mixing which he does for every change of tone. The paint tubes were all on a trolley that didn’t look as though it could move. There might have been a hundred. The first time he took a long time to find a tube. I thought he must be looking for a colour he doesn’t use much. I was right. It was cerulean blue for my shirt.

It was a very memorable and enjoyable experience and he eventually sat for me for about three hours and fell asleep. He said he would come on an afternoon, the time he usually sleeps. I got one or two things out of it, but I thought his portrait very good indeed - all the hours I sat were layered into it; he had always added, rarely taken anything away. It really shows: they are remarkable works by a great artist.
Naked Portrait 2002
Oil Lifesize
Pregnant supermodel Kate Moss recently sold for $9 million
I get my ideas for pictures from watching the people I want to work from moving about naked. I want to allow the nature of my model to affect the atmosphere, and to some degree the composition. I have watched behaviour change human forms. My horror of the idyllic, and a growing awareness of the limited value of recording visually observed facts, has led me to work from the people I really know. Whom else can I hope to portray with any degree of profundity?

My work is purely autobiographical. It is about myself and my surroundings. It is an attempt at a record. I work from the people that interest me, and that I care about and think about, in rooms that I live in and know. I use people to invent my pictures with, and I can work more freely when they are there.

Interview with Geordie Greig  London Evening Standard 2/26/10

Not after I left school. I used to see my father to get some money. And I did see something of my grandfather, Sigmund, who died in 1939 leaving the royalties of his work to his grandchildren. So I had a private income, which was wonderful. It went on for 33 years from when I was 17. So when I took a flat it was my money that paid for it.

How did your portrait of the Queen come about?

Robert Fellowes, the Queen’s Private Secretary, arranged it, but there was another reason why I felt I owed her family a debt and that was partly why I gave her the picture. It was very odd, like a very snobbish fairy tale. My grandfather had a great friend called Marie Bonaparte who married Prince George of Greece and Denmark, who was the Duke of Kent’s best friend. My family came to England before the war, but as the situation became more and more dangerous we applied for naturalisation. The applications were all blocked and then things got really dodgy. But the Duke of Kent got on the telephone and that same afternoon some people came round to see my parents and our papers were sorted. The Second World War broke out a week later. If we had not had our papers, we would have been interned on the Isle of Wight.
“Lucian Freud as he has inherited, due to his name and lineage, the spirit of psychoanalysis; he is bestowed with its symbols, stigma, its honors, its secrets, its “eye” and its spell. The art here is to undress with a sort of cruelty and carnal exhibitionism orchestrated by the authorized “interpreter”, due to his name, in turn acting as the sadistic father to his characters (or patients), knowing all about them and projecting onto them his own social discomfort or more specifically, his own self loathing. It is psychoanalysis itself that is being viewed here (by thousands of eyes sharpened with the fascination/repulsion generated universally) as though it were placed on a picture rail, its turn to become the subliminal character in a scenario (often on a couch) created by Lucian Freud with his models, their bodies and genitalia offered to the voyeur/spectator as a holocaust, “naked as death”. It is psychoanalysis which brought to the forefront Eros as the mechanism of the psyche which, in the subconscious (or perhaps not even) of each visitor, is dissected and undressed by the pictorial interpreter of the family, the family doctor so to speak.”

“As for Lucian Freud himself, who wants nothing of psychoanalysis and understandably so, one need not be a genius to note and often with glaring evidence that, even if not written metamorphically anywhere as such (except to be noted in the early stages of his career in The Painter’s Room where the head of a red zebra passes through a square hole in the wall overlooking an empty couch with a black hat on the ground), his artwork reflects it in its entirety and the artist even more so. From the beginning, and with each painting, it is a question of an impossible score that Lucian Freud must settle with his overbearing, invincible grandfather; an indefinitely aborted attempt to put to death the “Old Viennese” by the eternally young angry British artist though eighty eight years old today. For decades, the paintings repeat obsessively the same sadomasochistic litany of sad and savorless flesh deprived of love and desire. The artist always has the same projection, the same mimetic transfer showing the little appetite he has for himself which is reflected in the characters he endlessly paints while barely dressed or as nude as his characters and as though they were he and he were one of them. He is in fact both, as can been seen in his famous auto portrait of a nude painter, palette and instrument in hand, his feet in boots Van Gogh style without laces. His figures have empty expressions or closed eyes, with no soul, closed off, withdrawn into themselves. There is compulsive repetition, flat chronicity, an-historicity, and an impenetrable disorderly studio where only few are admitted. With persistent self auto-citation, his paintings and their subjects are never able to evolve and to transcend themselves enough to finally reach within the realms of symbolism. A venture which never tires of the repressive de-sublimation of the genitalia appearing again and again in spite of, or perhaps because of, Freud's forbidden representation of the genital organs. These are works that never achieve exhaustion; such is an analytical painting of itself, never-ending with no escape, incessantly returning to the point of departure. Lucian Freud said, “I want to continue until there is nothing left to see”. However, what is there to see that has not been already seen hundred of times ? Then, of course, there are those hundreds of posing sessions where the artist obliges himself along with his models, or should I say his patients, to submit to the interminable duration of his pernickety brush, his posing constraints, lying down, essentially naked, day after day, on a bed with white sheets or on a sofa or, for some, sitting or coiled up on an armchair all strangely reminding us of the other Viennese Freud in question. Doesn’t all this, along with the rest, the words, the setting (locked up in a room with a sofa), the sessions and the long hours,
remind us of analysis? Doesn’t Lucian Freud, as the majestic portrait artist, take on the position of analyst for his patients, an analyst who never speaks to them, who subjects them to his presence with eternal silence (Lucian Freud never signs his canvas just as the analyst never divulges himself), torturing their flesh and their bodies as almighty creator and never delivering them from their misery and disgrace with an artistic epiphany (or language). I see here the return, inversion style, of the gestures, the practices and the neutral Freudian benevolence; a sort of inverted minima Freud. In short, has painting as a form of auto-analysis indefinitely failed and has the artist himself, in the footsteps of the analyst and deprived of speech, become a stranger to others and solely preoccupied with painting/analyzing himself?"
I am familiar with Lucian Freud’s paintings from a number of group shows I have seen in New York and in Washington, D.C. I recall returning from each show feeling anxious, uncomfortable. It is a rare artist who “shakes me up” the way Freud does. I find it a challenge to focus on just one of his works. Lucian has been celebrated internationally, and has become a celebrity known to the British royals. He is Sigmund Freud’s grandson, the son of Freud’s youngest son Ernst, an architect. I have chosen to write about Lucian’s portrait of his mother Lucie, for whom he was named. I cannot help but wonder whether, in his Ernst’s choice of Lucie for his wife, he was re-finding something of Sigmund or Martha. Was Lucian, who supposedly fathered at least forty illegitimate children, working through his relationship with his father or with his mother, making mothers of so many?

This portrait conveys to me a palpable sense of anxiety. She seems to be looking at, or thinking about, something horrific. She is aging, ill-kempt, she does not look at her son who is painting her or at us. She calls to mind images from Goya’s “Horrors of War” and is someone who witnessed the beginnings of the Holocaust. (Lucian was eleven when the family immigrated to London in 1933). The grayness of her hair is reflected in the veins of her face. Then I wonder: is it her anxiety or is it his anxiety projected into her that I feel? This is not a compassionate portrait. I do not see it as akin to Whistler’s mother or to Rembrandt’s portraits, as art critics have said. Freud is looking at the “inside” of a person, inside the self, not the surface. His bodies are animal-like, carnal, also filled with angst and give little comfort to the viewer.

Freud told a journalist that he painted his mother after she became depressed following the death of his father. Freud said: “I started painting her because she’d lost interest in everything, including me. Before then, I always avoided her because she was so intuitive that I felt my privacy was rather threatened by her”. His unique gift as an artist is that he is able to invade and put onto the canvas the inner self of his subjects.

Janice Lieberman
I had a dream: A man is following me in a car. Two cars ahead of me collide and I am blocked behind. I get out of my car and start to walk. The man who is following me also gets out of his car and walks behind me. After a block, the police show up to investigate the accident and I turn around, thinking I had better get my car out of the way before it is towed. The man continues to follow me. I go up to him and demand an explanation. He does not say anything but gestures with a cup of hot coffee that he will pour it on me. I have a vision of his grabbing my head and pushing me face first into boiling water.

I wake up with the Girl with a White Dog on my mind, painted when Freud was 29. So how does the dream illuminate the image? The dream is paranoid, menacing and full of violence. The man follows me, the cars crash, the police show up and I have a horrible vision of mutilation.

Let us turn to the painting. On the surface, we have a placid scene of a woman with her sleeping dog. The tones are muted: the white dog, the whitish flesh of the woman’s feet and breast which becomes more bluish and reddish in the chest and face, the yellow tones in the couch and robe. There is great beauty in the woman herself, the comfort of the dog and the precise draftsmanship of the brush strokes.
What is discordant? The woman’s expression is somewhat flat. She is not exactly happy and she is not exactly sad. She seems somewhat removed. The gaze is wide eyed and direct. It is a watchful gaze, wary, expecting hurt? The dog, I think, echoes this. He (or she, I do not know which) is half asleep, yet also wary and watchful, out of half closed eyes.

One breast is fully exposed while she clutches her robe to hide the other breast. The exposed breast is jarring and intrusive. It is beautifully rendered yet one is drawn to the black mole which interrupts the beauty. It is hard to tell what the breast is. Nurturant? Erotic? Threat? Isolation? Menacing? There is a split between the breast that is exposed and the breast that is hidden.

The skin tones are rendered realistically. Compare a similar scene painted when Freud was 83 (Eli and David). Now the skin tones, especially in the upper chest and face of the man show a disintegration of tones, the blues and reds are streaked and separated in a garish portrayal. The dog is completely asleep and the man is clearly anxious and frightened.

Here are two possible internal object relationships conveyed by the scene. The dog represents the painter. He is half-asleep but is keeping an eye on the woman and on any rival who might be around. For him she is the breast. It is both the breast of unlimited fulfillment and the breast that withholds and poisons him, both equally dangerous.

Or the woman represents the painter who is struggling against an incipient breakdown. There is a mask; the fear is controlled in the flatness and the wariness. In Eli and David, the disintegration has occurred in the separation of the skin tones and the anguish that is no longer capable of being disguised. The dog is the wished for response and ability to sleep soundly.

Freud is able to creatively dip into deep paranoid levels of primitive anxieties. My dream is an open expression of the underlying violence and fear. This painting of his wife was drawn in the last year of their marriage. Do we not see the underlying disintegration in both of them masked by the defensive flatness and dissociation?

Robert S. White

David and Eli
2005-6 Oil 46x56cm, a painting of his assistant David Dawson with Freud’s whippet Eli on his lap.
Lucian Freud, Figurative Painter Who Redefined Portraiture, Is Dead at 88
By WILLIAM GRIMES
From the NY Times published: July 21, 2011

Britain’s Lucian Freud recast the art of portraiture and offered a new approach to figurative art with his stark and revealing paintings of friends and intimates, splayed nude in his studio. Mr. Freud died on July 20, 2011, at his home in London. He was 88.

In Britain, Mr. Freud’s name appeared on any connoisseur’s list of the country’s greatest 20th-century artists, along with Stanley Spencer and Henry Moore and Francis Bacon; abroad, he was only selectively admired. A critic for Le Monde, reviewing a Freud exhibition at the Pompidou Center in 2000, described him as painting flesh like badly carved ham.

Critics in America were more effusive. In the opinion of the art critic Robert Hughes, Mr. Freud was simply “the greatest living realist painter.” John Russell, the chief art critic for The New York Times, went even further: “As a witness to human nature in the second half of our century he has no equal, whether in Britain or elsewhere.”

The artist’s work is easy to admire, difficult to like. Mr. Freud used to admire openly the work of Francis Bacon, a once-close friend. Other equally uncompromising English painters, like Edward Burra, may have shaped the younger Mr. Freud’s vision with their disaffected embrace of lowlife. He is connected to the “School of London,” the group of painters that includes R. B. Kitaj, Michael Andrews, Francis Bacon, Leon Kossoff and Frank Auerbach, though none of these artists have much in common except their allegiance to figuration and a palette that tends to the murky.

Lucian Freud was named after his mother, Lucie Brasch, known as Lux, and a favorite daughter-in-law of Martha Bernays, the wife of Sigmund Freud. Lucie Brasch married Ernst Freud, the psychoanalyst’s second son, in 1920. Lucian was born two years later, in Berlin, where Ernst practiced as an architect. The family lived near the Tiergarten, a prosperous district of the city, and the household welcomed some of the many inspired minds working in Germany before the establishment of the Third Reich. It was at Ernst’s house that Sigmund Freud met Albert Einstein.

In 1933, when Nazism came to power, the Freuds moved to London. The young Lucian was sent to Dartington, an artistic and liberal boarding school in the Devon countryside, but later returned to London at 16. He was admitted to the Central School of Arts and Crafts and began drawing, figures and faces and occasionally rebarbative plants, in a flattened, linear style of suspended animation. His drawings were admired and reproduced, along with the work of Graham Sutherland and Henry Moore, in the literary journal Horizon.

In the words of James Kirkman, the artist’s dealer, Mr. Freud “isn’t remotely interested in money, in what are commonly called worldly goods.” He disliked holding on to anything except his painting; he was said to discard suddenly, peremptorily, mistresses, friends, people who have come to bore him or otherwise displease him.

He drove himself hard, sleeping rarely and giving appointments to models around the
clock. Commissions seem equally as punishing. The art collector Baron Thyssen calculated that he sat 150 hours for one portrait.

Mr. Freud portraits do not seek to create an illusion; the circumstances in which the sittings take place are never neglected. The portraits dramatize relationships through the poses he contrives and their unvarnished environment — bare boards, burst sofa, slipless pillows and stripped mattresses, unpainted walls, cracked pipes and industrial sinks that appear as subjects in their own right or as background to the figures, clothed and naked.

Jane McAdam Freud
02 Aug 2011  The Telegraph
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It is a week after the death of my father, Lucian Freud. My head is nowhere and everywhere. It is a very sensitive time for all the family. As such a prominent figure in the art world, “Lucian Freud” was public property. I felt I shared him, not only with the rest of our large family, but also with the art community. My hope is that I might focus my thoughts in tribute to him, for all that he has done for me — and for the many who have made it clear how close they felt to Lucian through his work. As a child whose parents were both artists, I thought that art was the centre of the world. Although my mother, Katherine McAdam, was artistically talented — she worked as an art teacher and fashion designer while I was growing up — it was my father who captured my early imagination. I admired his work, which I saw in the catalogues he gave us. Perhaps it’s not surprising that the Freud side of my family has always fascinated me.

I was born in 1958 in the Royal Free, the first of my parents’ four children. My father was there at the birth, which must have been a pretty rare occurrence in those days. We lived in Paddington. My father rented a studio nearby and we saw him constantly.

My maternal grandmother, Lucie, collected me from school every day, taking me to my grandparents’ house for tea and Danish pastries. She and my grandfather, Ernst, would speak to me intently about my day. I loved them dearly. At that time, Ernst was editing the diaries of Sigmund Freud, his father, for a book.

I often think of how hard it must have been for my father to flourish under the shadow of the “Universal Sigmund”, as I call him. It conflicts with the moral of the famous story about the sculptors Brancusi and Rodin. When the great Rodin asked Brancusi to come and share his studio, the junior artist replied: “Young shoots don’t flourish under the shadow of great trees.” Clearly, Lucian was the exception. He has been my inspiration, as well as an instruction by example.

My mother and father had been together for 15 years — ever since she was a 19-year-old student at St Martin’s School of Art. Her mother had sent her to expensive Catholic boarding schools from the age of five, and couldn’t understand her unconventional lifestyle. She was disapproving of my mother’s relationship with Lucian and put constant pressure on her to move. Eventually, my mother gave in and suddenly relocated us away from Paddington. I was eight years old and devastated. I was worried that I wouldn’t be able to see my father again. What a shock it must have been for him to go to our house and find us all gone. After we moved, we had no further contact with him for many years.
During my father’s absence in my teens, my love for art grew with a passion and my desire to be an artist became almost overwhelming. By the time I finally saw my father again, I was 31 and had just returned from Rome after completing a three-year scholarship there, studying sculpture at the Rome Academy of Fine Art. My father and I were reconnected through my half-sister, Bella, who had phoned me out of the blue while she was visiting Rome. Bella and I spent quite a bit of time together when I first got back to London and she arranged the reunion.

I went to supper with him. He asked me about my time in Rome and what it was like making sculpture. He asked me if I wanted a studio – and was delighted when I replied, “No, thank you, I like to get things for myself.” When I look back and reflect on his reaction – he was both amazed and thrilled – I wonder whether he recognised some of his own independence in me. Over several visits, I showed him the work I had done in Rome and he seemed genuinely impressed. He asked me if I would teach him sculpture. This time it was my turn to be amazed and thrilled. What extraordinary humility!

By then, I had started working as a sculptor for the Royal Mint in South Wales. I came back regularly to see my father and, over about six months, we made sculpture. While we sat for each other, modelling in wax, we chatted a lot and he taught me about light – to work from natural daylight or electric light, but not both at the same time. He taught me what it meant to really concentrate. He looked with every inch of his body, his muscles, and nerves, his whole being. We darted around each other looking at the forms, it was exhausting and demanding – but also enlivening and inspiring.

I left the Mint in 1991 to teach at the Royal College of Art and started a Masters Degree there two years later. I spoke to my father about becoming a student again and he said he wanted to support me financially, which he did. I felt very close to him during that period. I often wrote to tell him how I was doing. He was, however, always busy when I wanted to meet up, saying that he was getting older and was protective of his time. Despite my initial disappointment, I did grow to understand him. Although my father has always been an inspiration to me, I feel proud of what I achieved without him.

By the time I came back from Rome in 1989, my works had been acquired by many national public collections, including the British Museum, which bought its first of about a dozen works when I was a 21-year-old student at the Central School of Art. The piece it acquired was a relief portrait of Picasso in bronze, which had won an RSA (Royal Society of Arts) bursary award. Indeed, I used the name Jane McAdam until I was awarded Freedom of the City of London in 1991. Only then by chance did my peers discover my relationship to my father.

One of the reasons I developed a passion for sculpture is that it was, and is, something just for me. How could I compete with my father’s great paintings? When he used paint (oh, how difficult it is to use the past tense, and how sad and strange it feels), he almost modelled with it. He built up the surfaces until they reached bas relief proportions. I remember him once telling me that he wanted his works to “read in the round, like sculpture”. Both he and my mother have told me they wanted to be sculptors at one stage in their lives – so perhaps, in one way, I am doing it for them, too.

As with many families, it is inevitable that this sad, seismic event will have its repercussions. Already, many of my own recent works are informed by my father’s presence, and indeed, his absence. One of the installations to be shown in my forthcoming exhibition at the Austrian Consulate Gallery in Krakow is called E ART H. It’s made from rock and salt, and depicts art at the centre of the Earth, just as I used to believe it as a child. On some level, this is also a tribute to my father.

Although there was a testing time when I didn’t see my father for long periods, I prefer to think of the good times we had, and all the love, support and encouragement he gave me. Some time ago, I asked him if he would sit for me. He said people would think him vain. I assured him it would be
kept as a personal work. He replied: “Jane, good work can’t be kept private.” But he promised to do it when he was “on his last legs”. True to his word, he sat for me very recently.

The last time I saw my father was a couple of weeks ago, when I finished the sketches of him. I’m now using them to make a large portrait sculpture. It helps me to keep him alive.

**Triple Portrait**

1986 Oil 100x120 cm

The wippets Pluto and Joshua with Freud’s daughter Bella
Jane McAdam Freud
Jane McAdam Freud is the daughter of Lucian Freud and Katherine McAdam. She is the granddaughter of Ernst and Lucie Freud and the great-granddaughter of Sigmund and Martha Freud. She is an internationally acclaimed sculptor and multi disciplinary artist, with a career extending over twenty-five years. Her contemporary art practice is conceptually led. Her multi-disciplinary practice covers drawing, print, sculpture, medals and digital media. Her DVD 'Dead or Alive' was made during her artist's residency at the Freud Museum, London in September 2006 and has since been shown internationally.

Jane received her first degree from Central School of Art, London, was awarded the British Art Medal Scholarship in Rome and is a graduate of the Royal College of Art.

She is a Fellow of the Royal Society of British Sculptors and a Founding Fellow of the Munton Medalion for Ethics. She was granted Freedom of the City of London in 1991.


Jane has taught at several London art schools including the Royal College of Art and has lectured at Kingston School of Art, Wimbledon School of Art, the Royal Academy, Antwerp, Webster University, St Louis, USA and at R.M.I.T., Melbourne, Australia. She is an Associate Lecturer at Central St Martins, London and is a sculpture tutor at Morley College, London.

Jane's work is represented in numerous major national and international public collections. The British Museum made their first acquisition in 1980 while she was a student at the Central. Other national collections include the V&A, National Gallery archives, Ashmolean and Fitzwilliam Museums. International public collections include the National Gallery of Greece, Berlin State Museum, National Museum of Copenhagen and the Carnegie Museum of Art and Brooklyn Museum USA.


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Jane McAdams Freud was interviewed by Warren Proacci and responding to questions from the audience at the Winter meeting of the American Psychoanalytic Association in New York City on January 14, 2011. The interview was augmented by Off the Couch.

She also had a solo show at the Sundaram
Tagore Gallery on 547 West 27th St., New York, that coincided with the Winter Meeting.

**Question:** What has it been like to have the name of Freud? Such a powerful name. Your father such a renowned figure in the art world and your grandfather such a force in the intellectual and cultural world.

A big question! It has to come first. It is interesting, as I didn’t grow up with that name. I grew up as Jane McAdam. My mother didn’t encourage us to use the name Freud. I think it was very intelligent of her. She thought it would be too crushing a legacy and we wouldn’t develop our own talents. My father wasn’t the famous Lucian Freud then. He was a struggling painter. She was worried about the Sigmund legacy. My mother didn’t make the fact that we were part of Freud’s legacy an important aspect so we didn’t see it as something in the foreground. So being related to Sigmund Freud was more of an exciting secret ingredient. I always had a vivid imagination (in my mother’s words) and this secret ingredient sort of suited me and was also very healthy.

So it was very healthy for me. I didn’t mention Sigmund Freud and I sort of forgot about him. I went into denial. I was quite comfortable in my work and won several awards. Even my tutors didn’t know that I was related to my increasingly successful father. By the time I was in art school, he was becoming well known. I was keeping quiet about it and was successful on my own. After attending Central School of Art (unknowingly at the same art school and in the same department that my father attended initially), I was awarded a three-year scholarship in Rome. One of the financing bodies, the livery company The Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths wanted to award me the Freedom of the City of London, an honorary decree for merit. They said that I would need to bring a birth certificate. When they saw it, they fell down. Why didn’t you tell us? We discovered you. What a strange thing to say! They didn’t discover me before? Anyway I used both parents’ names after that. I had to swear allegiance to the Queen—in my full name. I felt that on some level this ancient traditional ceremony was speaking to me personally, which was interesting. I thought now I must use my name, will I become someone else? -It will be an interesting adventure.

**Question:** You had an exhibition entitled Relative Relations. What does this title mean to you especially? What meaning does it have in your professional and personal life? (If there are separate meanings in the two spheres.) In what context do you use the expression “relative”? Does it have to do with family and descending or relativism? Both meanings are interesting, especially if you connect them to the relational issues. (Question credit ref: Thalassa. 2006, Budapest, Hungary. Lenard Kata’s interview with Jane McAdam Freud)

I chose the title “Relative Relations” as it felt fitting. On the personal level it signifies a feeling of “everything is relative” in the Einsteinian sense. My relationship with my great-grandfather is a relative relationship, as I never knew him. Everyone knows as much if not
more about him as me for example. Any relationship with objects is “relative” and so in that sense the title applies. I like the double meaning though. Also I intend the sexual connotation of “Relations” as in the old fashioned “having relations”. This is because of the popular myth that Freud was predominantly interested in sex.

Question: Was it any way special for you to work in the Freud Museum, in the house of your great-grandfather? Has it any special inspiration for your art to work in his milieu? Or does it affect your personal life and your identity? [Question credit ref: Thalassa. 2006, Budapest, Hungary. Lenard Kata’s interview with Jane McAdam Freud)

It eventually felt very natural but at the beginning I felt it to be life-changing. It changed my feelings about the “Freud Legacy” from being out there to being more of an interior experience. I feel it to have been immensely therapeutic in that sense. The experience is like going on a journey of Holy Communion. Similarly, in an act of faith I am searching for a union not with God the Father but Freud the Father of Psychoanalysis. It is spiritual in a sense and evokes all sorts of things to do with the father not least my own father.

I loved working in the environment of Freud’s last house with all his objects around me that were indeed around him. To touch and look where he touched and looked and in the process connecting with a sort of truth of the past and of my ancestry. I definitely achieved a greater sense of security and connection from the experience. It felt both personal and professional. I feel at home there now, in both senses.

Question: At some point you must have begun to know that your great-grandfather had a major impact on the intellectual life of the word. In what ways have you found his ideas of value in understanding your work as an artist?

I realized from the beginning that Sigmund Freud was quite significant in many fields and had influenced our cultural landscape as his name was constantly used and made reference to in all areas of the media and everyday life. As you might imagine my ears were finely tuned to his name and my curiosity was mixed with fear and delight. The fears were I suppose bound up with my mothers fear for me of which I was well aware but had no understanding. The delight was my own imagination and spirit of adventure coming into play. As my legacy was such a repressed part of my everyday life but was in constant focus via Freud’s cultural influence, Freud’s theories indirectly drove my art. It was a matter of channeling and sublimation.
I found that when reading Freud’s works for essays at Art School, there was an explanation for everything. In that sense he was the sort of ‘God’ figure for me. What was also wonderful was that I got such high marks for the essays! I saw these marks as a gift from Freud in both senses of the word ‘gift’.

Question: Did your father, who obviously knew his grandfather, ever discuss his ideas about S. Freud’s contributions to understanding an artist’s life and work?

Out of respect for my father, I prefer not to talk on his behalf. Suffice to say, naturally I did ask him about his views on Sigmund, his grandfather. He wasn’t that interested in talking about it. On a positive note he did say that ‘What Freud said always seemed to make sense.’

Question: Have you found dreams to in any way be a stimulus for your own artistic creativity? If so how have S. Freud’s ideas about dreams shed light on the creative process? What about some of your own dreams such as the "bubble gum" dream -how have they influenced your creative process?

Dreams have indirectly been a stimulus for my creativity. I have read the Interpretation of Dreams many times and never fail to find more points of interest. I have also worked directly from Freud’s ideas of condensation and displacement for my film Dead or Alive where images of Freud’s antique sculptures merge with and separate from my created sculpture.

I had the bubble gum dream as a child where I was attached to the pram my mother was pushing by bubblegum which could not be severed. This was a repetitive dream in my childhood but now long gone in that I do not dream about it any more but perhaps it is related to my process in some way. After all my process involves the cutting up of works so that I am able to fire them successfully in the kiln. This practical solution is also an acceptable aesthetic solution for me so in that sense it may have other meanings. After all in the bubble gum dream an unbreakable cord attaches me to my mother who could be a symbol of the elders (i.e. parents, grandparents etc). The cutting up of my works and placing them back together as separate elements that come together in the finished work might be significant! I have never made this connection before but must thank Warren Procci for this question. Very insightful!

Question: what is the process in making the film? Especially the notion of condensation?

[She had shown a film at the talk that she had made of Freud’s antiquities and her
own sculptural objects: “This film 26 minutes long was made when she was artist in residence at the Freud museum.”

That the film references Freud’s concept of condensing with images of objects coming together and merging to create a third thing then separating is very interesting as an example of unconscious processes at work. I didn’t recognize until afterwards that the process is linked to condensation. I was simply trying to connect to Freud’s sculptures through my sculptures. As I had previously considered myself to have found something for me i.e., sculpture, I was surprised to realize that Freud himself took an interest in sculpture through the collecting of it. On some level, I think he may have been a frustrated artist but has had a great influence on the development of conceptual art inspiring artists like Joseph Kosuth.

I photographed objects in the museum that I thought looked similar to objects I had made. I went home and photographed objects I had made and put small images of the corresponding objects side-by-side in a sketchbook in planning for the exhibition. For the exhibition ‘Relative Relations’ which was the culmination of my residency at the Freud Museum, I put the corresponding sculptures together; that which I had made and that which Freud had collected. Prior to this I used a film-editing program to cross the images over in various ways relating them to each other.

This film “Dead or Alive” formed part of the resulting exhibition called ‘Relative Relations’. It was exhibited at three symbolic venues. First was the Freud Museum in Hampstead, London where Freud died in on 23 September 1939. The exhibition then travelled to the Muzeum Novijinska, Pribor, Czech Republic near the house where Freud was born on 6 May 1856 and spent the first four years of his life. Finally it was shown at the Harrow Museum – local to where I live and work. This film shows the merging of a selection from Freud’s eclectic collection of over 2000 antiquities with my sculpture - selected from works I had made over the past 25 years.

Referencing Freud’s concept of ‘Condensing’ the pairings morph into each other through the merging back and forth of Freud’s antiquities with my sculpture, -from past to present ‘virtually’ closing the gap of time. Great similarities can be found in the forms and motifs of the pairs. At a midway point the two objects merge together and form a third image of a ‘virtual’ object, different from both, that does not exist but is a combination of the two. For
me this is the unknown: - but what I really like is that the third object is in many cases an aesthetic improvement on both the individual objects.

The film is accompanied by the background music of Kathleen Ferrier. The classical music sung by Kathleen Ferrier is from three tracks. One of the tracks is “I Will Lay Me Down in Peace” by Maurice Green. I chose this music as Kathleen Ferrier was a contemporary of Freud and they are neighbours in death at the Golders Green Crematorium in London. (I like the idea of Freud analyzing Ferrier while she sings to him, therefore entertaining each other in the long expanse).

There are intended breaks in the music. The significant break is to symbolize the tragedy that the singer, seriously ill with eventual bone cancer, suffered. She got through the opening night of Orfeo successfully, but at the second performance a bone in her leg broke while she was on stage. This was her final performance. Another pause in the music is to symbolize the break in Sigmund Freud’s only BBC broadcast. A bomb alert went off and he was rushed off unable to finish.

The title “…Dead or Alive” alludes to one of the images in the film. This image shows a photo of the famous couch merged with my drawing of Freud smoking a cigar. One idea behind the image is that Freud is perhaps more alive in death (as an icon) than he was in life where being looked was not his favourite occupation; after all, during his psychoanalysis sessions he sat on a chair at the head of the couch preferring to avoid eye contact with his patients who faced forwards and so were unable to see him. Ironically, everyone would now recognise Freud’s image.

The title also evokes that genre of film – the Spaghetti Western with its familiar mantra ‘Wanted – Dead or Alive’ as I think Freud is indeed needed now as much he ever was!

**Question: What is the influence of the unconscious in your own work?**

On one level it comes through in what I call the ‘happy accident’. When I make a work and an unplanned event intervenes, I take it as information and very often modify the piece as the accident contains information, which is beneficial for the progress of the work. For example if a clay sculpture collapsed I rebuild it along new and improved lines, which happens when necessary for the benefit of the piece and my own insight into what is driving it (the work).

Early on my work became more driven by unconscious influences. I think this started when I was living and studying in Rome between 1986 and 1989. I started to recognize that a lot of my titles, for example, Circles and Cycles or Moments and Memories, were driven by my own unconscious. In Rome the training was very traditional...
and my work there, which involved so much life drawing and sculpting, felt like exercises. However in Rome I started to relax and grow into myself. The people were so warm. It affected my whole personality.

Question: I wondered if there was something special in the time you worked in the Freud museum, the house of your great-grandfather? Was it inspirational in your own creative processes?

It was amazing handling Freud’s objects. Being in what was my ancestral home after having been in complete denial about it. Before I did the residency, I hadn’t even known that Freud collected these antiquities. In fact, the director of the museum came up to me. He said, ‘oh Jane, what do you think of Sigmund’s sculptures?’ I said, ‘what sculptures?’ I absolutely hadn’t noticed that he collected all of these antiquities. The director pointed out all these objects that had been collected by Freud. It was extraordinary. I was suddenly awakened. I couldn’t see them without drawing them, I explained to him. I connect with things by drawing them, by touching them, handling them. So could I come in and handle one? There were two sided relief objects and I recognized they were among the sorts of things I had made. Can I draw one? The director said certainly. I came in week after week drawing them. So one day the director said we have had a board meeting and we made it official, you are now officially artist in residence. It was the beginning of my project. I have found my voice now. It changed everything on one level, working with Freud’s objects, and connecting with my legacy as more of an interior experience. Not something out there.

Question: What about your siblings, will they carry on the name?

There is an interesting parallel with Francis Bacon, who was named Francis Bacon after the great philosopher. His parents wanted him to aspire to the great and the good. This affected him on some level in the way expectations affect every individual. We were taking instruction from our father. My siblings and I, we had a set of instructions, I feel. My father succeeded and he had a big shadow so we are sort of instructed by default to succeed even though we have a big shadow.

Question: Could you say something about your personal relationship with Lucian. He is infamous for having a number of children and not paying them much attention?

We haven’t spent a great deal of time together on a regular basis. We try and get something organised more than we succeed. However we worked together for a period of time (making sculpture) and it was amazing! I really enjoyed watching and listening to him, showing him my work and sitting for each other.
Question: What do you think of Lucian’s artistic themes and do they have any influence on your own?

They don’t have any conscious influence now but I do remember a time when all my life drawings that I made in color (pastel) were very much in the style of! I think I must be influenced unconsciously though, even now as many of my works, which involve subjects or objects, are prostrate, ie floor mounted works. My father’s works seem to involve a lot of lying on couches so in that way there is a continuing theme.

Question: Could you say something about your mother, both personally and artistically?

My mother was very beautiful and a loner. She was always alone in my memory of her. We have a family joke about one of my mother’s friends who came to visit her regularly. We say that she was our mother’s only friend, which wasn’t strictly true but almost. My mother was an extremely talented artist who attended posh catholic boarding schools in Surrey from age 5. She wanted to be a nun but the nuns said she had a special talent and must develop it. They encouraged her to apply to St. Martins School of Art where she studied Painting and went on to specialize in Fashion. She met my father at the Saint Martins end of year Ball.

I remember her as fiercely protective at the same time as being too bohemian for my liking (as a conservative child trying to fit in). I felt very loved though and childhood for me was exciting, scary and suffocating all mixed together but overall I have great memories. I loved making my mother laugh, which we both enjoyed tremendously. The thing that stands out most in my memory is that she was always there physically. We were never left with sitters or anything. I think she made a point of that as she was at boarding school from such a young age (5) and felt the loss. My moth-
er is dead now and I think about her so much. I miss her.

**Question:** Do you know any of your paternal half-siblings?

Yes all of them or should I say most of them, as one never really knows.

**Question:** What was the influence of Ernst Freud?

I adored him. He was my grandfather proper. My grandparents lived next door to the school I attended between ages 5 and 8. They collected me everyday after school, gave me a cup of tea and a Viennese pastry. I sat there until they were ready to take me to the bus stop. They were editing Sigmund Freud’s diaries at the time; I think I picked up a lot of the language of psychoanalysis over those three years. They were going through his theories and I realized quite recently, having heard all the terms in childhood made it all very accessible when I read Freud later.

I suppose that the fact that Ernst was an architect and I have married Peter who is a partner in an architects practice is no coincidence. Ernst Freud’s architectural practice dealt less with the designing of new buildings and more with the reform and restoration of buildings much like my husband’s practice does.

**Question:** The years in Rome that were transformational. I wondered if you had gone to see the Michelangelo [of Moses] that was so important to Sigmund? I wonder if you had read his paper?

I saw the Moses by Michelangelo and have read his paper, which I found fascinating. It inspired a work called mm and mm, standing for Moses and Mary or/and Mary and Moses. mm & mm pairs Moses with Mary (my Catholic side with my Jewish Heritage). On a universal level it metaphorically brings together apposing forces harmoniously onto one piece. Like in dreams it contains ‘This and This’ as either/or or both at the same time. The piece is physically and symbolically ‘compressed’ in its relief form.

**Question:** Could we use that piece, Mm and Mm, to talk in more detail about the artistic process? Could you say more about the inspiration for the piece and how it came to be made?
I was interested that Sigmund was religious after all. Jewish of course but it is interesting that he had a Catholic nanny who took him to churches: the parallel being that I am baptized Catholic, have obviously my Jewish heritage but was given no religious instruction. The piece Moses and Mary are merged together in one stone. Mm and Mm means nothing is thrown away. Everything we are stays with us from the cradle to grave. Noises like Mm, a baby suckling from the body, we carry forward to Mm the sound of adult affirmation. I wonder if Sigmund was thinking of this continuum in the use of the sound Mm as many of his titles contain two M’s like the Moses of Michelangelo, Moses and Monotheism, Mourning and Melancholia.

**Question:** What is the personal experience in handling Freud’s objects? The tangibility of sculpture: You can hold it as three dimensional, hold it in your hands, touch it and turn it around. For Freud, the tangibility of the sculptural object was very important in the difficulty of apprehending the unconscious that he felt when he touched the various sculptures, the art of the ancient Greeks, and now we know the arts of Mexico, for Freud, this was living proof of the power and significance of the unconscious?

Freud was interested in two sided objects, reliefs, like the Janus head, that has two faces one on either side. His theories were dualistic so holding and turning his objects and imagining him doing the same thing made me think of one object (or subject) containing its opposite – or extremes meeting: For example the way transgenerational repetition works in Freudian theory; that is repetition of the familiar (whether good or bad) from one generation to another, even when arrived at by trying to do the extreme opposite to avoid the repetition. In the holding and turning of his two sided reliefs Freud may have been connecting with his own unconscious and intellectualizing the information he gleaned through this tactile, reflective experience.

The way Freud placed his objects in relation to each other was also very telling and may have been an act of playing out some unconscious information.

But many of Freud’s objects, their motifs, scale, patinations and form are so similar to those I have made during the past 25 or so years. I was astounded! It was as if my works had been informed by Freud’s collection. They were so similar. When holding one of Freud’s objects, I felt I could have been holding one of my own sculptures. I connected so much, not just with Freud, but my ancestral heritage of being a sculptor. I imagined these ancient artists and craftsmen from Egypt, Greece, Rome etc.
Jane in her studio - 3 + 1 Clay and Sand