

Commentary: Assignment 4, *Weight* – Tracy Collier

Look at the *Weight* in the women both in terms of their relationship to gravity and their muscular ability, giving them either strong motion factor. This will obviously have an impact on the woman with the dog's ability to resist the pull of the dog, and the wind. You might like to explore which way the wind might be blowing, if indeed you see wind in the picture. The umbrella might state otherwise. And the indulgence of the woman with the cat, is there any fighting effort in terms of weight with her? Referring to the mental factor of weight being Intention and Jung's link giving us Sensing which allows for a visceral and palpable sense of the world around us.

Really remember that physical and mental weight elements may be different, enjoy the dichotomy of diverse inner and outer rhythms. Again, embed this new research into that of Assignments 1 and 2. By this point it is fine if the characters from the pictures are beginning to be somewhat abstracted. You can choose how much you wish your work to refer directly back to the original pictures. The joy of this kind of play is how far we stray from the original source of our exploration.

Weight I find fascinating in terms of the Jungian aspect and how we have a *Sense* of weight. This can be looked at in so many ways. The *Sense* of occasion for example is interesting as we can enter a room and get a *Sense* of the temperature of the room. The expression 'that was a bit heavy' is something we have all experienced at some point in our lives. We talk about people not having a *Sense* of occasion, they are not taking the situation seriously enough. We weigh things up getting a *Sense* of how to proceed. Does this matter need a Light touch for example? Is *What* (Actorly Quest) we are doing important; does it have or require a Strong *Intention*? (Mental Factor). It is something that is innate in us all. On a more practical level, have you ever thought about how much effort you put into lifting something? You don't need to; your brain has already taken in all the evidence in front of you and calculated the exact amount of physical strength you need to pick something up. It is something we learn over our life time. Children are often regarded as 'heavy handed' with objects, that's just because they have not yet gathered all the information they need to get it right. It is also where comedy lies. We have all seen the 'heavy' suitcase gag. Where the adult actors try to lift the suitcase and through their skilful mime give the audience the impression that the suitcase is far too heavy for them to lift. This will happen a couple of times to really convince the audience and then a small child will walk on and easily pick it up and exit. I suspect most of us have also, at some point mis-read the weight of something. By thinking that a suitcase is full for example, when it is in-fact empty and nearly knocking ourselves out with the object that has unexpectedly flown through the air. I do an exercise with my students where I ask them to use an inappropriate effort to pick something up. They find it really difficult and have to think quite hard to achieve this task. This is also a good way of evidencing movement sensation clearly, as you slam down a book, instead of just placing it down giving away an inner emotional state. How amazing that our brains and bodies have this ability to just 'know' how much physical effort to employ?

As a mover I have a preference for Strong, and find Light movement quite strange to explore. It can make me feel much freer which I find surprising as it's not my natural movement preference, but of course the affinity between Light and Free is clear. I think I have quite a

intense approach to life , so everything is of importance to me. I probably need to chill a bit!!! I find the use of the mental factors really helpful when working with Weight as it gives purpose to the movement. It is often quite difficult for students to just 'be strong' in the space without stomping around like a weightlifter. Also, the use of other people or heavy objects help, the resistance that these present gives a reason to be Strong. Light does not seem to be as problematic to them. There is often a lot of joy in the space when Light is being explored.

### **My Commentary**

I will again start with the *Woman and the Cat*. For me the Weight element to this picture was more easily experienced in movement sensation. I found myself in the lower part of the dynamosphere quite central, so mid-way along the Time and Space lines (see image of cube in commentary one). This gave me a mixture of Sinking/Dropping/Relaxing and Collapsing. I liked this mixture as it allowed me to enjoy the expansive nature of Indirect Space, without actually moving. The Direct element held me where I was, whilst the Indirect element allowed the growing of the kinesphere in my contented state of mind with a Sense of wellbeing. I have found that there was a tendency to go into Spell Drive with an emphasis on the Dream state. I often view the States, or Incomplete Efforts as bridges from which you can either return or move into another Drive. By using the bridge of Remote I was also going into Vision as I paid attention to the Cat, and occasionally the contents of my bowl, in the Awake State. But these were gentle moments of Awake not really disturbing the air around me with moments of Attention. This is where the contradiction of Weight in motion factor and Weight in movement sensation came in. My physical movements were Light and effortless almost, where as my inner efforts were Heavy but contented. I wanted to move this woman on the floor and the bench she was sitting on. The movements were not strong they were light in execution and then heavy on arrival. Almost as if there was not enough energy in my muscles to complete the moves. So many of my movements were incomplete and it was at the moments of cessation that my mind would take me to another bridge and consequentially another State or Drive. It almost felt like moving in water.

If I relate this exploration to my previous commentaries, I notice that I have Heavy, Indirect and Sustained. This would give me Wring if the Weight was Strong but as I am drawn to Heavy that is Movement sensation Wring which is Relaxed. Which absolutely fits with my movements and mood. This is not the whole story of course and the little moments of attending to the peas and the cat gave me small explosions of Dab into Glide, and Flick into Float. I liked these explosions as they added colour to the stillnesses which tended to last quite a while if I really allowed myself to indulge in the sense of landing a movement.

The contrast I felt in the need for muscular exertion whilst working with the *Woman with the Dog* was very noticeable. My use of Weight was definitely Strong in my body but the movements were all short. Nothing had a sense of following through. I found I had a lot of tension in my muscles so Strong was tainted in a way. The distracted focus which has come from the Space exploration added to this tension in that I was not really grounded so the effort of moving was mostly in the upper body. My shoulders carrying my feet in their high heeled shoes on their journey. This led to arm centred actions. Thrusts mostly which felt like jabs. I mentioned in Assignment 2 commentary that I felt as if she was fighting the space. It

felt to me in my exploration of Weight that she is fighting everything. I also felt less comedic in my chaos and more manic. There was a sense of Pressing inwards towards my core to maintain balance, but my movement wasn't coming from there. I was trying to hold stillness in my core whilst motivating the movement from the upper body. I felt a little like a puppet. I didn't feel as if Weight was a dominate element in this woman movement only in the way she held her body. Which is interesting as my first observations of her focused a lot on the red pencil that for me outlined her muscles, I had imagined that Weight would be more dominant in movement, but instead the red pencil now indicates for me the amount of strength it takes her to maintain the status quo. Mentally there was a senes of determination and purpose, Strong Intention. The chaos that I mentioned in the last commentary turning this determination into frustration. Movements had a very interrupted feel to them so the introduction of Weight just added to the importance of Time and Space. I was very much in Action in response to discoveries made in the Vision Drive. I spent a lot of time on the bridge of Awake.

### **Observations of submissions**

Before I put together more responses to the Weight Assignment, I would like to encourage you to take a look at the Pinterest pages created by a fellow participant. Some really evocative images which will help the development of movement.

There were some really interesting submissions again this week. I am excited by the work coming in. There are so many approaches and also participants are reading around their area of questioning which has produced some interesting conversations and insights.

This assignment has produced a little more 'away from the image' responses. There has been a projection of the next moment in the *Woman with the Dog* image, investigating the thought that the dog has stopped and the next image would be that of the woman leading the dog. A new view of the marks in the margin in this picture, that rather than being related to the wind and rain could be related to the movement patterns of the woman and the dog.

The *Woman and the Cat* bearing the introduction of a really lovely mise en scène as a preview to a movement piece relating to this image. An image that the audience could enjoy as an insight into what was to follow. I liked also the idea that the woman is sharing an inner peace with the cat and that the passive weight she is experiencing being linked to meditation.

I have been interested by various participants struggle with Weight without relating to objects but then delighted by the outcome of those struggles. The viewing of the Motion Factors as 'colours' was particularly interesting. A comment that the expenditure of increased energy can result in a lighter Weight factor and the intervention of Time has an impact on that increased energy. Also, the effect of the counter-pull of objects on the body, for example the umbrella, the dog, the bowl the rain. I loved the description, that this exploration took the participant to 'an image encompass(ing) a snapshot sharing of different kinds of heaviness- '

Mass was the focus of one submission drawing 'two images as a web of tied masses'. Within this the description of climbing a rope ladder; 'I loved the feeling of hanging and surrendering

my feet to air'. A beautiful mobile was created with leaves and string. Relating Weight to nature in a deeply visceral way. The mobile was divulging 'Energy of Weight- Biomass Interactions' relating the body's relationship to the ground and nature around us to the life of nature itself. This was a portion of the conclusion of this exploration which I found a deep connection with:

*The outcome is a mobile combining all the webs of biomass shifts between humans, animals and nature to make up new loopholes that capture the atmospheric gaps in between the spaces filled with weight.*

There were a couple of sensory movement films. One with an amazing sense of indulgence and effortless movement. Really luxurious to watch and very sensual. The other of hand gestures in relation to the other elements in the pictures; the rain, the breeze, shelling peas, and the horizontal and vertical affects on Weight. The sound track of natural sounds adding to the experience but also linking both drawings.

A painting in acrylics was a Weight Narrative. Exploring weight and pressure. The picture included 'other living beings, all in complicated relationships of push-pull, attracting and repulsion'. This was a visibly deep painting in terms of its texture and relationship to weight. The battles truly visible in the work .

An interesting concept of exploring weight in things that aren't normally considered in respect of their weight, examples, rain and sun. This resulted in a deep throated composition which was amazingly impactful against the image of a floating feather.

One participant made a beautiful observation around the 'red dot above the fist'. For this observer it was 'like an emphasis (on the) unconscious extra effort' and in imaging the rain to be light Autumnal rain, a beautiful description of the refreshing quality of such a rain being mixed with dust so embodying weight in its composition. This participant also explored the experience of the umbrella itself .

As you can see, some imaginative explorations with this assignment and also there is a move toward abstracting the images with some of you. It is important that you keep faith with your own explorations and not be influenced by others ways of exploring unless you feel you are being led down that road organically as part of your own process. It is good to perhaps look at the possibility of taking a different approach in your explorations in order to enhance and develop but don't judge your work against others. We each have our own journey which can be influenced by the explorations of others but needs to be owned by ourselves.