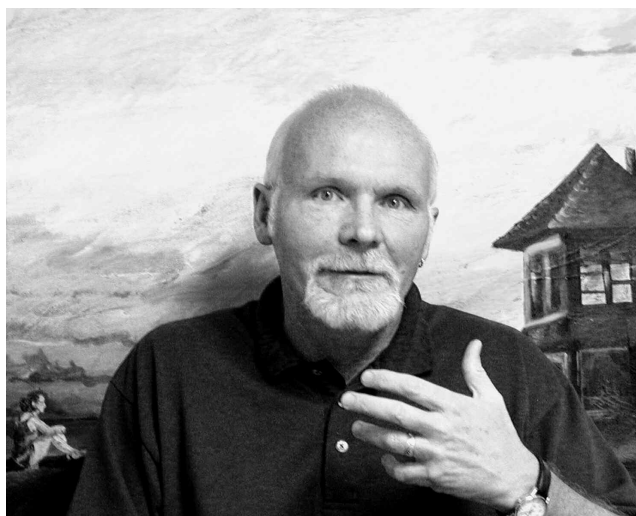


INTRODUCTION TO ART THERAPY



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bruce L. Moon, Ph.D., ATR-BC, is a professor and chair of the art therapy department at Mount Mary College in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He is the 2007 recipient of the Honorary Life Member (HLM) award of the American Art Therapy Association. Formerly the director of the graduate program at Marywood University in Scranton, Pennsylvania, and the Harding Graduate Clinical Art Therapy Program in Worthington, Ohio, he has extensive clinical, administrative, and teaching experience. He holds a doctorate in creative arts with specialization in art therapy from Union Institute in Cincinnati, Ohio. Doctor Moon's current clinical practice is focused on the treatment of emotionally disturbed adolescents. He has lectured and led workshops at many colleges, universities, conferences, and symposia in the United States and Canada.

Doctor Moon is the author of *Existential Art Therapy: The Canvas Mirror; Essentials of Art Therapy Training and Practice; Art and Soul: Reflections on an Artistic Psychology; The Dynamics of Art as Therapy with Adolescents; Ethical Issues in Art Therapy; and The Role of Metaphor in Art Therapy: Theory, Method, and Experience*. He is editor of *Working with Images: The Art of Art Therapists* and co-editor of *Word Pictures: The Poetry and Art of Art Therapists*. Moon's many years of experience in clinical and educational settings, coupled with his interdisciplinary training in art education, art therapy, theology, and creative arts, inspire his provocative theoretical and practical approach to the discipline of art therapy.

Author's Note

The clinical vignettes in this book are, in spirit, true. In all instances, details are fictional to ensure the confidentiality of persons with whom I have worked. The case illustrations and artworks presented are amalgamations of many specific situations. My intention is to provide realistic accounts of an art therapist's work while also protecting the privacy of individuals.

Second Edition

INTRODUCTION TO ART THERAPY

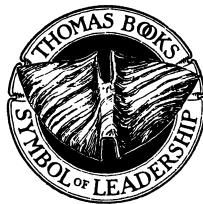
Faith in the Product

By

BRUCE L. MOON, PH.D., ATR-BC

With Forewords by

Shaun McNiff



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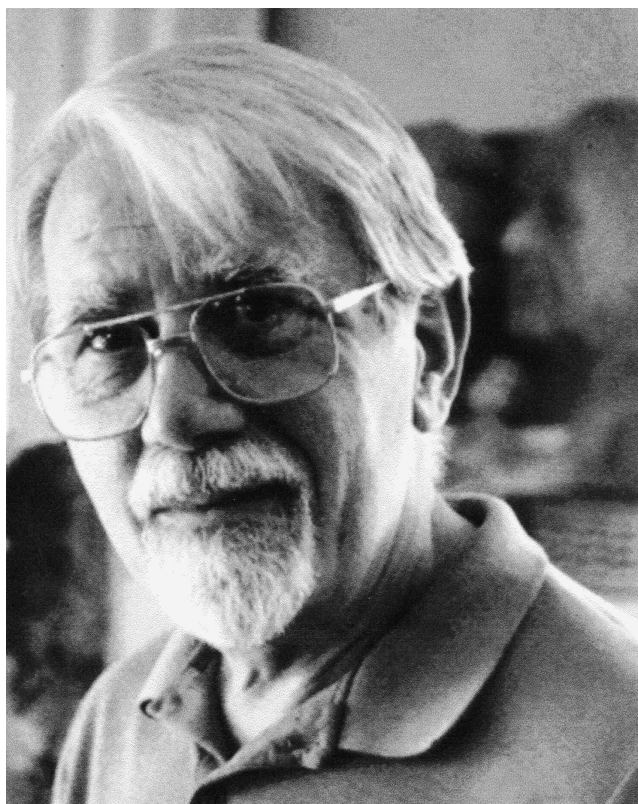
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*This book is dedicated to Don Jones, ATR, HLM:
my mentor, colleague, hero, and friend.*



Don Jones

FOREWORD

The 1994 edition of Bruce Moon's *Introduction to Art Therapy: Faith in the Product* has become a classic text in art therapy. I am leaving my original foreword intact because it is part of the historical record of the publication, and because it offers readers the passionate and enthusiastic response of another person's initial engagement of the book. In this foreword to the second edition, which updates and renews Moon's overview of art therapy, I will comment on the book's impact and Moon's larger influence in this field.

Since he began to focus on communicating his ideas and practice in books, starting with *Existential Art Therapy: The Canvas Mirror*, Moon has made major enduring contributions to art therapy. Because his writings are accessible, clear, convincing, and inspiring, he has pioneered and shaped the future direction of the discipline. I predict that time will recognize Moon as one of the most influential figures in the history of art therapy because of his many years of experience; the numbers of people whom he has directly influenced as an art therapist and educator; his consummate devotion to this work; and most importantly, the lasting power of his vision of art and healing.

The area within art therapy that has changed most significantly since the 1994 publication of this book is the realm that received the most critical attention in the first edition. At that time, Moon questioned the one-sided orientation to scientific justification that historically had permeated the art therapy field. As mentioned in my original foreword, art therapy's artistic identity took on a shadow dimension as the discipline aspired to cloak itself in science. The change we see today whereby art therapy celebrates and furthers its core artistic nature is largely due to the impact that Moon has had in calling for an art-based approach to practice and understanding in art therapy. I believe that the artistic soul of this work has become its most defining

and appealing characteristic rather than an area of perceived inferiority in relation to what Moon describes as the “scientist-clinician” model.

Creative expression and the making of art objects are the empirical elements that characterize every approach to art therapy. They are our primary defining qualities: the unique things that we bring to the larger domains of therapy, healing, and wellness. An appreciation and recognition of art therapy’s unique integration of art, psychology, and service to others have required neither the making of dichotomies between art and science nor doubts about the valuable roles that science and scientists can play in the art therapy field. An issue that Moon addresses in the first edition of this book is the one-sided scientism that has threatened the art-based powers of our discipline. Like Nietzsche and other expansive thinkers, Moon believes in the integration of complementary elements like art and science rather than the oppositional stances that attempt to reduce one to the other.

Thanks to Moon and others who have helped to establish a new mainstream in art therapy that affirms an essential basis in art, we are now in a clearer, more mature position to continue our discipline’s historic partnership with science. With our artistic identities established and affirmed, we can confidently enter a new period of creation and growth in which more attention can be given to studying and perfecting the essential phenomena of art therapy.

The revisions in this new edition of *Introduction to Art Therapy: Faith in the Product* amplify the already large impact of a seminal text. Enhancements include: an overview of the spectrum of theoretical orientations within art therapy; a brief history of practice in the United States; descriptions of applications that were not widely understood in 1994; and most importantly, Moon’s most current and seasoned descriptions of how he perceives the art therapy experience. A pragmatic and excellent teacher, Moon takes to heart and learns from his ongoing interactions with students at Mount Mary College and other settings, as evidenced by new issues and trends that he addresses in this book.

Art therapy continues to fascinate and inspire many of us over sustained periods of time and lengthy careers because of its one-of-a-kind integration of multiple forms of expression and human understanding. In my opinion, Moon remains one of the most intelligent and passionate contributors to this more complete vision and practice of art

therapy. I am proud to be closely connected to his work and grateful for once again being asked to comment on this important book.

SHAUN MCNIFF
Professor and Dean of Lesley University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

FOREWORD TO THE FIRST EDITION

*I*ntroduction to *Art Therapy: Faith in the Product* offers Bruce Moon's most passionate and convincing call for the renewal of art therapy. The book is full of the inspiration and wisdom conveyed when a pioneer honestly describes his deepest personal instincts and those of art. More than any other book in art therapy literature, this text fulfills Rudolf Arnheim's (1972) ideal of a psychology of art permeated by smells of the studio. All of my senses were aroused as I read Moon's descriptions of clients working with diverse materials: the sounds of a man chiseling concrete, cutting and bending tin, building stretchers and preparing canvas, and squeezing wet clay. The clear and numerous vignettes show how art therapy is about action, constructing things, and making soul. I am intrigued by the subtitle *Faith in the Product* because the book is so strongly focused on "trusting the process." But process and product are two sides of a coin, necessary partners in creation that depend upon one another.

The embrace of products is an expression of a love and respect for images that is the foundation for art therapy's rediscovery of its soul. Moon helps us see the enduring therapeutic function of art: the healing that comes from making objects, perfecting craft, and reflecting upon the images as talismans who change the lives of those who are able to enter into relationships with them. *Faith in the Product* assumes that the image has a therapeutic purpose and offers medicine to those capable of being open to its remedies. This shift of authority from therapist to image threatens the control of the labeling mind that has until recently dominated the modern history of art therapy. Moon reintroduces art therapy to itself and suggests that closer attention to the deep streams of creation that run through our lives will help us realize ways of practicing art therapy that lie beyond our current imaginings.

Many professional art therapists distance themselves from art and

strive to become scientists. One-sided identification with science and the repression of the artistic persona produce a malady that Pat Allen (1992) calls the “clinification syndrome.” She attributes the malady to a self-defeating inferiority, which can be distinguished from the soul-deepening sense of vulnerability and humility that characterize Moon’s work. The suppression of art paradoxically makes a shadow of the profession’s essence because it threatens the tightly constructed and controlled persona of the therapeutic technician. The primal and unpredictable forces of creation do not fit the guise of the “in-control” scientific clinician. This contrast accounts for the hostility that often characterizes the institutional art therapy response to the soulful expressions of therapists who identify with the artist archetype. Unfortunately, this aggression is also addressed by the images and results in the “imagicide” that Moon (1995) laments. Images and products are vital parts of the constellation forming the shadow complex of art therapy. If we art therapists do not make, love, and honor our own images, how can we do this for our clients? When will we see that our profession is an ancient and also new collaboration between art and therapy that presages a transformation of both?

My sense of the shadow aspect of art therapy is not a matter of good and bad qualities, and it affects everyone involved in the profession. Exploration of the shadow is a mature and deeply affirming gesture not to be confused with the oppositionalism and bickering that characterize efforts to exercise control and power over professional affairs. Moon is not concerned with regulating others or institutionalizing his experience. He simply strives to describe his experience and maintain the freedom to practice according to his personal vision of art and healing. Since Moon worked for many years as an artist within a medical environment with scientist colleagues, he demonstrates how respect for art does not require opposition to science. However, the power of his medicine comes from his primary identity as an artist who offers something pure and unique to the therapeutic milieu.

The shadow of art therapy can be imagined as the antithesis of the face our profession displays to the world, the qualities that we hide. Moon articulates how he became caught up in this repression of the artistic persona. As long as the dominant energy of a profession represses a vital part of itself, it is impossible for any of us to avoid collusion until we are ready to openly admit to discomfort.

Moon says that for over 20 years, he denied the ideas that he pres-

ents in this book. But the denial is not his alone. He carries, lives out, and liberates the collective experience of our profession. The angels and demons of creation are always a step ahead of the reflecting mind. Moon (1994) says, "I did not want to hear them, nor did I want to speak them aloud for fear of the repercussions" (p. ix). Just as the individual ego fights against its shadow, the collective ego of a profession guards against whatever it deems unacceptable to its persona. Whoever has the courage to expose and celebrate the repressed shadow can expect an uneven reception. It takes time for these internal inclinations to mature "from inaudible murmurs to clear voices" that Moon (1994, p. ix) offers our profession.

We know from depth psychology that repression of the essential desires of the soul will ultimately generate a primal release of energy. Throughout this book, I feel the continuous bursting of the creative essence of art therapy. There seems to be no end to the corrective medicine, and Moon models how the transformation of a profession can occur with the precision and discipline that is also associated with the artist's craft. The outburst of passion is paired with aesthetic sensitivity and the containment of media.

This book will inspire serious artists to become involved in art therapy, and it will help art therapy students become more demanding consumers who ask, "Where is the art in my training and practice?" The book will also encourage veteran art therapists to renew their vocations by living the process of art therapy, which will help us become more effective in reaching others.

Moon's writing is pervaded by compassion and reverence for the sacred medicine of art. He gives testimony, bears witness, and does not try to prove anything; by doing this, he makes the book especially convincing and useful. He offers a new paradigm for art therapy practice, a contagious faith based on personal experience as an artist and therapist. He is not compromised or sidetracked by trying to prove the unprovable. This book contains inspirations and meditations on the healing function of art in which the shaping of an artistic product is a metaphor for a corresponding crafting of soul. The therapeutic studio is presented as a sanctuary where "confessions, thanksgiving, and praises" are expressed through images, and where it is all witnessed by the therapist who acts as a caretaker of the environment in which art heals. People are vital contributors to this therapeutic ecology, but they step aside to let art do its work.

This homage for the sacred dimension of art therapy shows yet another shadow repressed by the scientist/clinician persona. Moon's affirmation of *faith* is perhaps more provocative than his assertion of art's healing function. He not only challenges secular boundaries of art and science, but also mixes the more explosive materials of sacred and profane. Where pre-Freudian society repressed sexuality, the post-Freudian therapeutic world has considered spiritual experience off-limits, thus increasing its shadow power. Moon, who earned a master of divinity degree at the same time that he was becoming an art therapist, has never compromised his vision of art as soul's medicine. I feel the pulse of the sacred *Imago* in this book like nothing else Moon has written. By describing the intimate details of how he interacts with his clients, Moon shares the ministerial function he was destined to serve and affirms his faith in the creative spirit.

The many examples of Moon's practice at Harding Hospital and other clinical settings are straightforward, and they show how the making of art will adapt to the person's needs and offer guidance, insight, and revitalization. Art is part of living, and Moon repeatedly shows how the creative process cultivates the soulfulness of existence. Love, as Moon suggests, has got everything "to do with it." This book portrays art therapy as an image of the beloved, which Moon carries within his soul. The reader who is able to open and become a client of art's medicine will be transformed, as will art therapy itself. This vision of art therapy is an expression of a love for the soul, a love for creation. It is an introduction to art therapy that the profession needs more than ever, a fresh perspective of what we are about that respectfully acknowledges what art has always been. This is what I love about Moon's work and this book.

SHAUN MCNIFF
Dean of Lesley University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

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PREFACE

I am never entirely sure where or when my ideas emerge; they just come to me. The ideas presented in this book have developed subtly, gently, and fiercely. They have grown over the past 35 years from inaudible murmurs to clear voices within. For a long time, I tried to ignore these voices, and I denied their existence and relationship to me. Neither did I want to hear them, nor did I want to speak them aloud for fear of the repercussions they might inspire. Alas, they would not leave me in peace. Gentle as they were, there was tenacity to them, reminiscent of a dog that will not let go of your pants leg until given attention. My author-cuffs are tattered but having at last written, and now revised, this book, I hope to move about more freely.

For over three decades, I have worked with people suffering emotional, behavioral, and mental maladies. Together we have written poetry, performed dramatic enactments, and made music, but it is in painting and drawing with them that I feel most at home. In this book, I refer often to the visual arts experiences of clients, colleagues, and students. I embrace and appreciate many forms of the creative arts, but I am most comfortable in the visual realm.

In 1994 when the first edition of this book was published, it was in many ways a continuation of my first two books, *Existential Art Therapy: The Canvas Mirror* and *Essentials of Art Therapy Training and Practice*. In those earlier works, I laid out a philosophical foundation upon which all of my clinical and teaching efforts were built, and explored critical elements of our profession. Now, in 2007 as I revisit, update, and add to this text, I am aware that this second edition is influenced by all the subsequent writing I have done as well as by those of many other authors in our profession; trends in health care in the United States; professional licensure and credentialing issues; and new movements in art.

In a deeper sense, however, this second edition of *Introduction to Art Therapy: Faith in the Product* precedes all of my other written works. The content of this effort is the metaphorical ground from which the others have grown. The title of this book expresses my desire to explore prominent themes and dilemmas in our profession. Significant questions of the field are addressed but not necessarily answered. Instead, I offer positions that have evolved over the years in the hopes that my discussions will encourage readers to embrace the processes of reflection and questioning.

When this book was initially published, the inclusion of the word *faith* in the subtitle was an expression of my belief that the efficacy of art therapy could not be validated through quantifiable research methods. The intervening years have shown that this is not necessarily the case, and remarkable research efforts have been made that confirm the healing benefits of art-making (Kapitan, 1998; Kaplan, 2000; Belkofer, 2003). I suspect that there will be an ever-increasing number of scientific studies supporting the medicinal value of art. McNiff's (1998) vision of art-based research has also eased my misgivings regarding art therapy research processes. Nevertheless, I continue to think that the heart and soul of the work of art therapists is beyond the scope of precise measurement, and I remain convinced that the greatest validation of art therapy comes in the form of anecdotal testimony from clients. Such evidence is conveyed best in creative narratives that are primarily artistic expressions. I also adhere to the belief that to practice art therapy, one must have faith in healing qualities of art processes and products.

The subtitle also accentuates the role of the *product* in my ideas regarding the work of art therapists. For far too long, the products—art objects—created in art therapy sessions were relegated to a subordinate position beneath process in our literature. In this text, I make an effort to attend to that injustice.

Introduction to Art Therapy: Faith in the Product begins and ends with reference to love. These bookends provide the parameters of the work, both in the context of the writing process and context of clinical art therapy endeavors. Love is the source that first called us into the profession: love of art and love for people. Love sustains us as the work proceeds. I can think of nothing I'd rather have said of me when I am dead than that I lived my life in a loving manner.

When I wrote the first version of this text, I was a full-time art ther-

apist working in a psychiatric hospital and a part-time art therapy educator. Now, I am a full-time educator and part-time clinician. Everything has changed, but ironically nothing's that different. When I was practicing in the hospital, I was intensely focused on clients' experiences and the things I learned from them. In those days, I was not concerned with academic issues related to literary form. One shift that will be evident to those who read the original and this second edition is that I have adopted the American Psychological Association format and cited other's works more appropriately this time to improve the scholarly quality of the book.

Another less evident shift is in the overall tone of the writing. As I look back at the original text, I sometimes wince at the stridency of the presentation. It seems I had an axe to grind then that I have since lost somewhere along the way. Either I've mellowed or grown wiser. Whichever the case, I am less convinced that my way is the right way. Rather, it is just my way, and to paraphrase the poet and theologian Rumi, there are countless ways to kiss the ground and many ways to practice art therapy.

In addition to the revisions of form that I have made to this book, I have included two new chapters. One offers brief summaries of a range of theoretical approaches to art therapy, and another introduces historical figures in the art therapy profession. These chapters evolved in response to feedback I've received from colleagues in art therapy education indicating their desire for a succinct, yet engaging, overview of these topics.

I hope that this book strikes you as a bit of a jigsaw puzzle. The work that art therapists do is mysterious, and it should neither be too easily described nor too readily understood. Should the reading become frustrating, I ask of you what I ask of clients: Trust me, have faith, and make some art. I hope the picture will be clearer when you have finished the book. Until then, I hope you will enjoy the reading and struggle with it.

BRUCE L. MOON
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am in debt to many colleagues, teachers, and mentors who shaped my ideas about art therapy. Don Jones, ATR, HLM, laid the groundwork for my understanding of the healing power of art, and at varying stages of my career, he has served as my hero, supervisor, boss, collaborator, and friend. My approach to art therapy has been deeply influenced, both overtly and subtly, by many art therapy theorists. Among the most prominent of these are Pat Allen, Shaun McNiff, and Catherine Moon. Without these people, this book would not have been written.

I am grateful to many former students at the Harding Graduate Clinical Art Therapy Program, Marywood University, and Mount Mary College whose feedback helped shape this second edition. Their critical responses and constructive suggestions over a number of years were both insightful and encouraging.

I am also in debt to many clients with whom I have worked. Their emotional, behavioral, and artistic struggles have inspired and motivated me to write, and I hope this effort honors them.

I also want to express gratitude to Ling Olaes, an aspiring art therapist who edited the final work.

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INTRODUCTION TO ART THERAPY

Chapter 1

WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT?

I often ask myself, why do I make art? As new students enter the graduate art therapy program at Mount Mary College, I ask them the same question, “Why do you make art?” Now I ask you, the reader, “Why do you make art?” Don’t answer too quickly. I am not interested in the first answer that comes to mind. For art therapists, there is no more meaningful question to be asked; this question is a matter of philosophical bedrock. Our stability, our place in the therapy world, and our authenticity is anchored to our responses to this question.

How should I begin this book? Where should I start? Was this book’s moment of conception some time on the morning of St. Patrick’s Day 1967? Have the ensuing years been nothing less than an extended gestation period? Or did this book really begin to be written on an April afternoon in 1991 as I drove through a line of severe weather on my way to Macomb, Illinois, thinking only that I was going there to present a paper at an art therapy symposium? I had no inkling that my numb professional death walk was about to be exposed. Maybe this book began to be written when my mother died? I don’t know. I don’t know where to begin.

*You know I've heard about people like me,
But I never made the connection,
We walk both sides of every street,
And find we've gone the wrong direction.*

*But there's no sense in looking back,
All roads lead to where we stand,
And I believe we'll walk them all,*

No matter what we may have planned.

Don McLean, 1971

In 1967, I was a sophomore in high school in Sidney, Ohio. In those days, my life revolved around athletics and rock 'n' roll. I liked football and baseball, but lived and breathed basketball. On that particular morning of St. Patrick's Day, I was in gym class. We were being taught the basics of gymnastic apparatus, and I was attempting my first full flip off of the springboard. I didn't rotate completely and landed to the left of the safety mat, driving my left heel into the hardwood floor. The pain was instantaneous and blinding. I crushed my heel bone, ruptured my Achilles tendon, and essentially ended my participation in organized sports. For a few weeks after the injury, I was bedridden, and for the next 10 months, I was on crutches. I never again played on the basketball team, and my world view shattered. How could life revolve around that which was no longer possible? For the rest of my high school career, I was bothered by a slight limp, and since then, I have had to endure pain that comes and goes, and limitations that still remain (Figure 1).

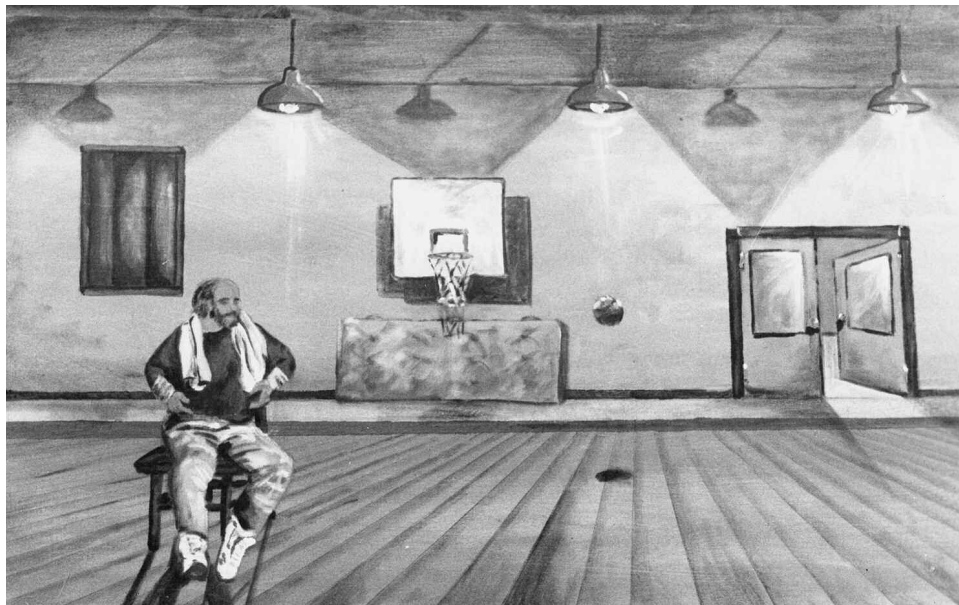


Figure 1. *Gym Ghosts*—Acrylic on canvas.

I entered a deep adolescent malaise. Then my friend, Cliff (my first sort of art therapist), came to my rescue. Intuitively sensing the struggle I could not put into words, Cliff began to visit me at home after school. He had the reputation as the best artist at Sidney High School, and I was regarded as a solid guitarist. Cliff offered me a deal. "Bruce," he said, "I'll teach you to draw if you teach me to play guitar." I was desperate for company and consolation, and so our covenant was made. Every day after school, Cliff would come to my house, and for an hour or so, he would instruct me in the proper use of #2 lead pencils. For the second hour, I would teach him bar chords and lead riffs. In those dark hours of my young life, the arts brought me light, comfort, and meaning—and I survived (Figure 2).

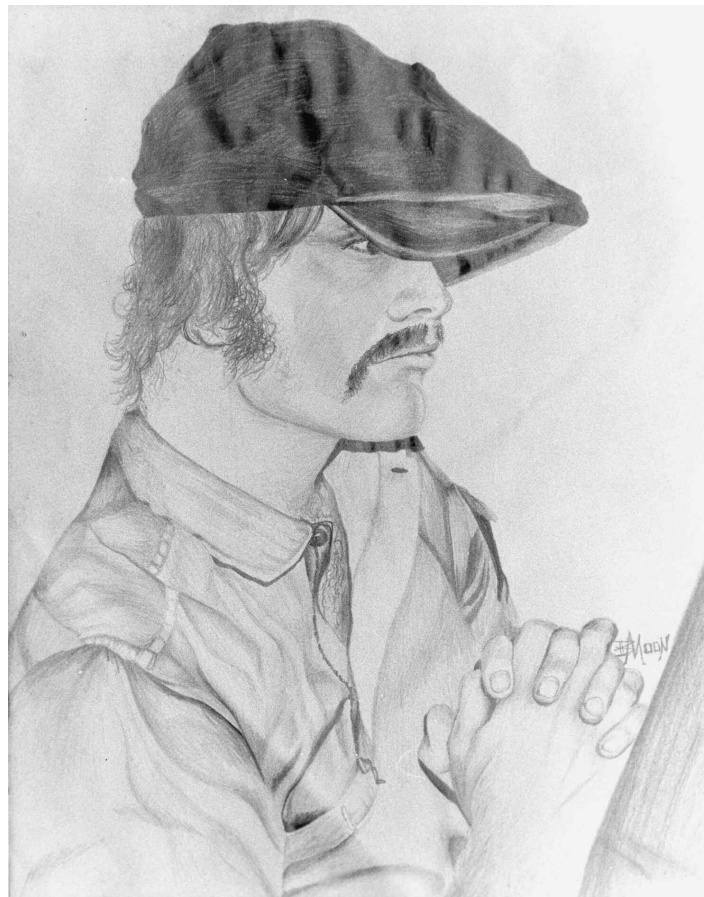


Figure 2. *I Survived*—#2 pencil.