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DREAMTIME

M A G A Z I N E

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Amazing Dreamers: Interview with Fariba Bogzaran



Clare Johnson, PhD

This series of interviews puts the spotlight on inspirational dreamers who have dedicated their life's work to dreaming. Researcher, visionary artist and professor Fariba Bogzaran, PhD, is co-author of *Integral Dreaming: A Holistic Approach to Dreams*. Fariba founded the first graduate certificate dream studies program and was the first to conduct major quantitative research into spiritual experiences in lucid dreams. Here she unlocks for us a dream that prepared her for both death and healing, and which ultimately gave her and her artwork a new lease of life.

'Every time I see you, I think of eggs,' I remember saying to Fariba at the 2005 IASD conference in Berkeley. She'd done a fabulous art installation, 'Eggs Dreaming,' and there were eggs everywhere. Eggs, whether dream or waking life ones, are the perfect metaphor for creativity, and this is something Fariba has in abundance. I discovered her work on Lucid Art at a time when as part of my PhD research I was developing my own Lucid Writing technique to bring the creativity of lucid dreaming into the waking state. Fariba's artwork was like a mirror reflecting my experiences of the lucid void, where all dream imagery falls away.

In *The Sun and the Shadow*, Kenneth Kelzer remarks: 'Any major life event or experience can jolt our

human consciousness and push it outward to the next orbit.' He adds that mystical experiences and profound lucid dreams can activate this jolt. Visionary artwork can too: Fariba's abstract scenes of her inner lucid dream spaces, or 'Hyperspace Lucidity,' touched in me a deep dream level of recognition—here was someone who in exploring her 'dreams beyond time and space' had glimpsed my own. Through being painted, the elusive dream spaces we so rarely talk about in our culture are raised to consciousness: dream art is another kind of lucidity.

CJ: *Fariba, why are dreams important in your life?*

FB: My life was saved by my mother's telepathic dream when I was an infant; in the middle of the

night, she dreamed that someone was suffocating me. At that moment, I was indeed being suffocated as the cot blanket was over my head. The horror of the dream woke her up and there she found me motionless under the blanket, blue and purple from lack of oxygen. Dream awareness and creative action from dreams have not only contributed to who I am today, but they have created the person I became. My entire life has been enacting my dreams. Extraordinary dreams such as telepathic, precognitive, lucid, visitation and hypnagogic are among those I pay great attention to. As much as dreams have played an important role in my life, perhaps I have been important for my dreams to come to existence! Could it be that we are a constantly unfolding Big Dream?



Photo by Irene Young

CJ: Could you share a 'big' dream with us?

FB: It is challenging to choose one, as my dream life and waking/creative life are so intertwined. I could share an epic dream, but a very simple, yet impactful dream from 2012 comes to mind. When I embodied it, it became significant to me. I believe our dreams are just a detail, or a fragment, of a much larger and extraordinary mosaic. My way of being with these dreams is to unfold them further through creative process. This way it is not an isolated experience. It is then that the enormity of the dream reveals itself.

'On the Fringe of Death'

I am walking through a mansion that is falling apart. All the plaster is peeling off, the windows are shattered, the floor is uneven. There are many levels in this house. Through one level and staircase I see an opening into another world. It is beautiful and spacious. I am alone until I walk into a room. Four women are sitting in chairs in a circle facing each other. They are 'fringing' a raw canvas. The atmosphere is very quiet and contemplative. It feels like they are cloistered nuns. A voice says that this is a vehicle of meditation. In the center is a table with all the strings from the raw canvas. In the slowness of time, I become lucid. I want to remember the scene. I stand there witnessing the calmness of their presence in light of the destruction of the mansion.

CJ: What did this dream teach you?

FB: I had this dream when I was battling a potentially fatal health situation. I had lost twenty pounds with no end in sight, and was facing many unpleasant symptoms. I was preparing myself for the inevitable. While seeking medical and alternative help, I was also doing my Phowa (death and dying) practice as instructed by my Tibetan Buddhist teacher, Lama Tharchin Rinpoche. One by one I was closing chapters in my life and was preparing to leave. I was also trying to slow time so I could be with life as long as possible. I was at my home in Hawaii and I would spend hours being with nature, floating in the sea, breathing in as much of life as possible. I had bought several raw canvases to do painting. I was preparing them by fringing the top and bottom, based on another dream in 2002 where I created a series of 'carpet-like' paintings.

Because I had so little energy, all I could do was fringe both sides of the canvases and leave them blank. After the dream above, I began fringing the canvas as a mode

of meditation. I passed the three-inch 'normal' fringe where I would usually stop, but I continued one thread at a time. I would pay great attention to each thread and think of how my life was 'hanging on a thread!' At one point, the action began taking me inside a particular zone. I felt calm, relaxed, and experienced timelessness. All thoughts slowed down. I realized this action was very effective. It was *embodied meditation*. It was hard for the mind to wander. I felt the action was total mindfulness, an integral mindfulness!

Soon, I would spend hours just 'fringing.' I realized there is a particular tension needed to carry out the act of fringing; I could not pull too fast or too hard. It had to follow a particular rhythm. The dream obviously was the reflection of my dying body and I was viewing the raw woven canvas as a metaphor of constructed self. I was deconstructing myself and with each thread releasing, unweaving like a 'life review.' The counsel of the elder women in my dream, who had appeared in other dreams, was teaching me a method of dying or healing.

I felt like the image of the wounded body being carried by Hypnos and Thanatos with Hermes' blessings. Was I going to die or heal? I prepared for both. When my health made a turn around, I began making things with the fringes. What I released with the threads became an occasion for new creation; the beginning of a world I could never have imagined. Among many factors in my healing process, I attribute the wise elders' method as one of the vehicles for my healing. Now the dream has taken me into a new horizon. My home, studio and study are filled with hanging fringes, fringed white canvases. It is leading me to the creation of a new art form!

To unfold and embody the dream further into social and creative action; in the retrospective of my artworks in March 2013 at the Meridian Gallery in San Francisco, I created a room, a 'Consciousness Laboratory,' that like the dream contained four chairs and raw canvases. I encouraged the public to participate in the 'fringing,' with a particular intention. I started to see similar patterns of experience. In the recent IASD conference in Berkeley, I brought a portion of this installation and members participated. In the twenty-six writings from participants, similar themes emerged, such as calmness, focusing, releasing (letting go), memory triggering, meditateness and a sense of joy. I now plan to launch art-based research to study this method.

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imagery, recounting a series of deepening episodes. The story began with a cluster of visionary dreams in which she was called to follow awesome figures of Light. It is not a work of fiction, as she did not create it consciously; nor does it seem to fit any other literary genre. But it did begin with Dreams! I think it speaks to the spirit in us all."

Congratulations to the dreamers of New Zealand! You are helping IASD to grow, both in scope and in membership. And congratulations to the thoughtful and sensitive dreamers who make IASD what it is. I hope you will take the time to enjoy this Fall 2014 issue of *DreamTime*, and think about the amazing impact our dreams have on the world around us.



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courses are waiting to be launched. Other highlights related to education include our successful regional meeting program. In addition to the annual conference, and the traditional PsiberDreaming Conference, we will have three Regional conferences this year, Southern Californian Regional in September, and the European Regional and the 4th Montréal Regional in November. It is going to a busy and interesting year!

Finally, I wish to extend appreciation to all the people I have had a chance to work with: Officers and Board directors, Committee chairs and Committee members, all other volunteers as well as our paid staff. Thank you for your enthusiasm and dedication to IASD. Also, I wish to thank all IASD members: you make IASD unique.

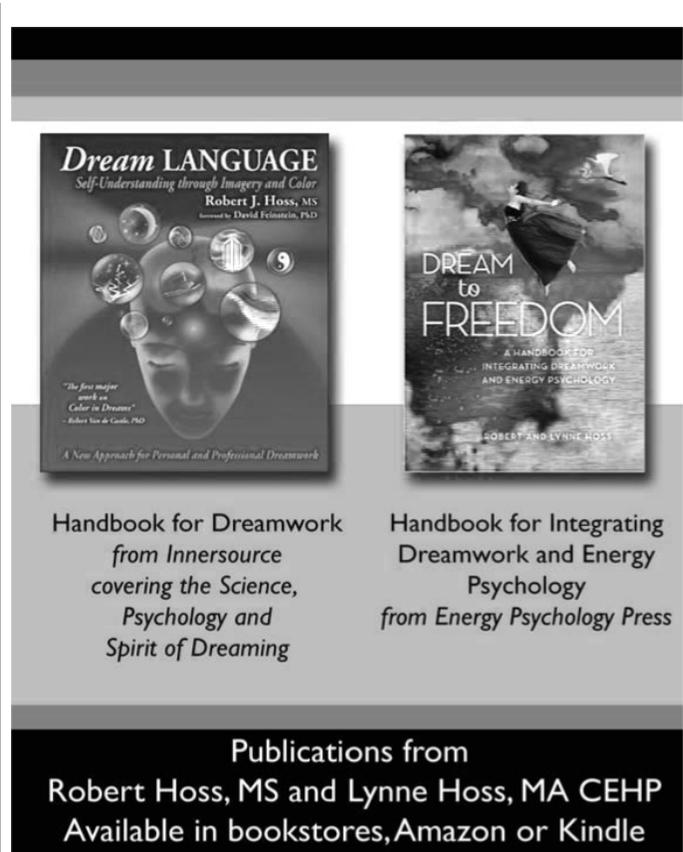
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CJ: Thank you for sharing such an inspiring healing dream, Fariba. I love the way it has become your new art! Could you sum up in one sentence a recurring message your dreams have given you?

FB: Be present and pay attention, be open to the unknown, and see waking life also as a dream.

Find out more about Fariba Bogzaran at www.bogzaran.com

Clare Johnson, PhD (Clare Jay) has written two lucid dream-based novels, *Breathing in Colour* and *Dreamrunner* www.clarejay.com. The first doctoral researcher to explore lucid dreaming and creativity, she's currently writing a nonfiction book on this. Clare's workshops combine dreams, art, yoga and her Lucid Writing technique. For mentoring write to clare.jay@hotmail.com For lucid dream tweets check out @LucidClare.



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