



INSTITUTE FOR  
Sensorimotor  
Art Therapy

& School for Initiatic Art Therapy

Certificate  
in  
Clay Field Therapy®  
Part I: Working with Adults

Apollo Bay VIC 2024

Cornelia Elbrecht

Art Therapist AThR, SEP; ANZACATA, IEATA



For information contact

Cornelia Elbrecht – Phone: 0418 388 539 email: [cornelia@sensorimotorarttherapy.com](mailto:cornelia@sensorimotorarttherapy.com)

<http://www.sensorimotorarttherapy.com>



INSTITUTE FOR

# Sensorimotor Art Therapy

& School for Initiatic Art Therapy

The Clay Field is a flat rectangular wooden box that holds 10 – 15 kg of clay. A bowl of water is supplied. This simple setting offers a symbolic “world” for the hands to explore. There will be no artwork to be taken home. The hands enter the Clay Field and move in it; in their ability or inability to “handle” the material they tell the client's life story. The hands then can be encouraged to find ways to deal with situations and events, to complete actions that previously could not be coped with.

This unique art therapy approach is recognized in Europe as a discipline in its own right. It is practiced by over 500 Clay Field Therapists in numerous institutions. It is part of the curriculum in schools for disabled and disadvantaged children; it is widely used in women's shelters and to facilitate trauma healing.

The four workshops will look at the application of Clay Field Therapy

- Experientially
- Via videoed case histories
- Through understanding core aspects of its theoretical basis

*“Due to the texture, weight and resistance of the clay, the material demands physical effort. Very quickly the head – and with it our cognitive conditioning – is pushed aside to make way for the more “ancient” urges of our libido.*

*There will be no finished product, no artwork to show to friends, no sculpture to be fired in a kiln. At the end of a Clay Field session, only intense body memories will be taken home. The kinaesthetic motor action combined with sensory perception will have lasting therapeutic benefits, especially in cases of developmental delays and trauma healing.*

*Touch is the most fundamental of human experiences. The first year of our life is dominated by the sense of touch. Tactile contact is the first mode of communication we learn. Our earliest stages in life are dominated by oral and skin contact between infant and caregiver. Our earliest body memories and our core attachments were formed when we relied on sensorimotor feedback to feel safe and loved. Love as well as violence is primarily communicated through touch. Our boundaries are invaded through inappropriate touching. Sexual experiences are overwhelmingly ruled by the sense of touch – and so are medical procedures, as well as all other events that happened to our bodies.*

*Work at the Clay Field involves an intense tactile experience – it can link us to a primordial mode of communication, to a preverbal stage in our life. This is the truly beneficial quality of clay in a therapeutic context. Its regressive qualities will allow a therapist to address early attachment issues, developmental setbacks, and traumatic events in a primarily non-verbal way, contained in the safety of the setting.*

*Toddlers may pile simple building blocks on top of each other and then enjoy knocking them down again, thus learning creative destruction to achieve object constancy (Winnicott 1971). Such play prepares children to cope with the real world as a continuum of constant change, of encounter and separation, of comings and goings of loved ones and*





# INSTITUTE FOR Sensorimotor Art Therapy

& School for Initiatic Art Therapy

*events, of endings and beginnings. Trust is gained from the ability to survive such changes intact. Work at the Clay Field involves a continuous process of destruction and creation because the material is both limited in its amount and unlimited in its possibilities. We can create at the Clay Field only if we dare to destroy the smooth surface and continue to have the courage to take something apart that we have put together before. We can learn to survive change; to grasp and handle it. In this manner the work can assist in dealing with the emotional injuries we suffered from overwhelming change and destruction in the past.*

*Pre-school children learn primarily through touching and handling objects. During the evolution of mankind, the cognitive brain was shaped through skilled hand movements; with our hands we learned to understand the world (Wilson 1999). These innate language skills become reactivated through handling things and through observing the hand-gestures of our caregivers, as a recent study at the University of Chicago showed (Rowe 2008; 2005).*

*School children will create three-dimensional representations in the clay – ‘real objects’, figures, scenes, and landscapes that have meaning and emotional values attached to them. At the Clay Field adults and children alike weave these developmental layers into a complex web of biography, formative kinaesthetic body memories, frustrated or traumatized internalized patterns of behaviour and the search for more authentic impulses and holistic structures.” From C. Elbrecht, Trauma Healing at the Clay Field 2012*

## **Sensorimotor Art Therapy**

In recent years “sensorimotor” has emerged as a term to describe body focused psychotherapies that use a bottom-up approach. Instead of a cognitive top-down strategy, sensorimotor art therapy encourages the awareness of innate motor impulses in the muscles and viscera, also as heart rate and breath. The expression of these motor impulses followed by their perception through the senses, allows the development of new neurological pathways that can bypass traumatic memories; such an approach is capable of restoring wholeness and wellbeing.

Work at the Clay Field is a sensorimotor, body-focused, trauma-informed art therapy approach. It is not necessarily concerned with an image-making process but supports the awareness of body memories. While these memories are always biographical, the therapy itself is not symptom oriented. Not the specific problem or crisis becomes the focal point, but the option to new answers and solutions as they are embedded in the body's felt sense. Such sensorimotor achievements are remembered like learning how to swim or ride a bike. They are lasting achievements that can transform even early infant developmental setbacks; they assist in finding an active response to traumatic experiences. They allow us to rewrite our biography towards a more authentic, alive sense of self.



# INSTITUTE FOR Sensorimotor Art Therapy

& School for Initiatic Art Therapy



**Cornelia Elbrecht** BA. MA. (Art Ed), AThR, SEP, has more than 40 years of experience as an art therapist. She is also a Somatic Experiencing trauma therapist (SEP). She has studied at the School for Initiatic Art Therapy in Germany, also Jungian and Gestalt therapy, Bioenergetics and bodywork. She is founder and director of the Institute for Sensorimotor Art Therapy, School for Initiatic Art Therapy. She worked as founder, co-worker and trainer in 'Neuenzell', a centre for self-awareness and meditation in the Black Forest. She is also the founder and director of 'Claerwen Retreat' in Apollo Bay, Victoria. She has lectured in Art Therapy at RMIT, Melbourne. Cornelia is a registered professional member of ANZACATA, the Australian, New Zealand and Asia Art Therapy Association and IEATA, the International Expressive Arts Therapies Association. She is an accredited art therapy supervisor. Cornelia gives courses and individual sessions

internationally, throughout Australia and in private practice in Apollo Bay.

## Publications:

- 2023 Elbrecht, Cornelia; *Healing Traumatized Children with Clay Field Therapy; sensorimotor embodiment of developmental milestones*. Online training <https://training.sensorimotorarttherapy.com>
- 2022 Elbrecht, Cornelia; *Bilateral Body Mapping with Guided Drawing*. In: Malchiodi, Cathy Ed., *Handbook of Expressive Arts Therapy*. Guilford Press, Pennsylvania.
- 2021 Elbrecht, Cornelia; *Healing Traumatized Children with Clay Field Therapy; sensorimotor embodiment of developmental milestones*. North Atlantic Books, Berkley, California
- 2020 Elbrecht, Cornelia; *Healing Artist' Block*. Online training: <https://training.sensorimotorarttherapy.com>
- 2019 Elbrecht, Cornelia; Prof Heinz Deuser; *Work at the Clay Field*. Three Masterclasses 2009, 2010, 2019. Online training: <https://training.sensorimotorarttherapy.com>
- 2019 Elbrecht, Cornelia; *Healing Trauma with Guided Drawing*. Online training: <https://training.sensorimotorarttherapy.com>
- 2018 Elbrecht, Cornelia; *Healing Trauma with Guided Drawing; a sensorimotor approach to bilateral body mapping*. North Atlantic Books, Berkley, California.
- 2015 Elbrecht, Cornelia, Antcliff Liz; *Being in touch: Healing developmental and attachment trauma at the Clay Field*. Australian Childhood Foundation Journal. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- 2015 Elbrecht, Cornelia. *The Clay Field and Developmental Trauma*. In: Malchiodi, Cathy Ed., *Creative Interventions with Traumatized Children*. Guilford Press, Pennsylvania.
- 2014 Elbrecht, Cornelia, Antcliff Liz; *Being Touched through touch: Trauma treatment through haptic perception at the Clay Field: A sensorimotor art therapy*. INSCAPE, International Journal of Art Therapy, 2014 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1745482.2014.880932> Routledge.





# INSTITUTE FOR Sensorimotor Art Therapy

& School for Initiatic Art Therapy

- 2013 ANZJAT, the Australian New Zealand Journal of Arts Therapy Vol 8, No. 1, 2013, p.67 review of: *Trauma Healing at the Clay Field* by Maggie Wilson.
- 2012 Elbrecht, Cornelia. *Trauma Healing at the Clay Field, a sensorimotor approach to art therapy*; Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London/Philadelphia.
- 2011 Elbrecht, Cornelia; Deuser, Heinz: Work at the Clay Field. Set of 7 DVDs.
- 2011 Elbrecht, Cornelia. *Die Wandlungsreise*. Der Prozess des Geführten Zeichnens, eine initiatische Kunsttherapie. Rütte: Johanna Nordländer Verlag.
- 2006 Elbrecht, Cornelia. *The Transformation Journey. The Process of Guided Drawing – An Initiatic Art Therapy*. Rütte: Johanna Nordländer Verlag.
- 1999 *Guided Drawing. Drawing as Meditation*, in Golden Age Issue 41, March – May 1999
- 1995 *Guided Drawing*, in Australian National Art Therapy Association Newsletter Vol VII Winter 1995
- 1990 Das Geführte Zeichnen auf dem Hintergrund der Initiatischen Therapie, in: Die neuen Kreativitätstherapien, *Handbuch für Kunsttherapie*, Hrsg: Hilarion Petzold, Ilse Orth Guided Drawing on the background of Initiatic Therapie, in 'The new Creative Therapies, *Handbook for Art Therapy*, editor: Hilarion Petzold, Ilse Orth
- 1988 *Das Geführte Zeichnen* in: Integrative Therapie, Zeitschrift für Verfahren Humanistischer Psychologie und Pädagogik Guided Drawing, in: Integrative Therapie, Journal for Humanistic Psychology and Education

## **Diploma in Sensorimotor Art Therapy:**

The Certificate in Initiatic Art Therapy is part of a Diploma in Sensorimotor Art Therapy, which takes four years to complete. Each certificate is valid as professional development. It is not necessary and advisable for every student to complete the 4 years.

Year 1 and 2: Certificate in Initiatic Art Therapy. Completion of all 6 weekends enables participants to apply with AON Insurance for Professional Indemnity Cover as an Initiatic Art Therapist.

Year 3: Certificate in Clay Field Therapy Working with Adults. Four training weekends.

Year 3: Certificate in Clay Field Therapy Working with Children - online.

Year 4: Diploma in Sensorimotor Art Therapy. Four training weekends of Clay Field Therapy as group assistants, working under supervision; plus facilitating 60 individual clay field sessions, videoed and presented for supervision.

ANZACATA - This certificate program is recognized professional development with the Australian New Zealand and Asian Creative Arts Therapies Association and ACA – the Australian Counselling Association recognizes the courses as professional development.



# INSTITUTE FOR Sensorimotor Art Therapy

& School for Initiatic Art Therapy

## Course Outline

The Clay Field Therapy Training Program comprises a series of 4 weekends as an Advanced Training for a limited number of interested professionals and students. A course requirement is

- the completion of the two-year Certificate in Initiatic Art Therapy or
- other mental health and art therapy qualifications.

The aim of the courses is to enable its participants to integrate Clay Field Therapy into the existing framework of their current practice, be it as counselor, social worker, teacher, nurse, artist or psychologist.....

The focus will be on the experience of Clay Field Therapy in an environment suitable for personal development. At the same time the approaches and techniques will be made transparent to make it possible to acquire profound techniques of working with the Clay Field in a therapeutic way. The 72 group hours will include individual sessions, seminars, co-counseling and supervision.

The four weekends should equip participants with fundamental skills to work with the Clay Field in a therapeutic way.

### Dates:

Participants are asked to commit themselves to all four sessions. All sessions will run from Friday 8.00pm to Sunday 5.00pm.

The dates are as follows:

- |                    |                              |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| • <b>Module 1:</b> | <b>19 – 21 April 2024</b>    |
| • <b>Module 2:</b> | <b>26 – 28 June 2024</b>     |
| • <b>Module 3:</b> | <b>27- 29 September 2024</b> |
| • <b>Module 4:</b> | <b>22 – 24 November 2024</b> |

### Cost:

Total cost for the four training weekends will be \$2400 plus GST payable one weekend in advance. A deposit of \$660 is due on application. Should an applicant be not accepted the otherwise non-refundable deposit will be returned in full. The deposit will roll over and account as payment for the last module. Should someone be unable to attend one particular weekend, an effort will be made to find compensation on an individual basis to enable the student to catch up with the rest of the course material. To receive the training certificate at the end, the required hours must have been attended. The cost covers tuition fees including all course and art materials.





INSTITUTE FOR

# Sensorimotor Art Therapy

& School for Initiatic Art Therapy

## Venue:

Claerwen Retreat is situated in peaceful solitude, on top of the hill, overlooking the coastline along the Great Ocean Road and the Otway National Park. It encompasses the beauty of 240 acres of park, farm, bush and fern gullies, plus a salt-water pool, spa and tennis court. The beach is 10 minutes away.

Apollo Bay is a 2 1/2 to 3-hour drive from Melbourne. Turn off the Great Ocean Road after the first 50 km sign approaching Apollo Bay. Claerwen Retreat is the last and only place on top of Tuxion Road.

Cost for accommodation for each weekend is additional. The suites and cottages where participants can stay have a 4 star rating and are self-catering. So, it is BYO food and cook together. There will be no extra charge for meals. Up to 5 participants can share a three-bedroom cottage.

Five types of accommodation are available. Cost per night:

- In the loft in the workshop area \$40
- Shared room in one of the cottages \$80
- Single room in one of the cottages \$125
- Single in a self-contained studio \$160
- Suite in the guesthouse, single \$190
- Suite in the guesthouse, double/twin, pp \$110

All linen and towels are supplied.

Please let us know together with your application, which accommodation type you would prefer. Cancellations for accommodation within less than 7 days prior to the commencement of a weekend workshop will attract the full fee.



# INSTITUTE FOR Sensorimotor Art Therapy

& School for Initiatic Art Therapy

## Course Structure

Each unit represents one weekend of 18 group hours. The units will not strictly focus on the course content lined out below, as the group's needs and special interests will also be considered.

### **Module 1. Haptic Perception and the Gestalt Formation Process at the CLAY FIELD ®**

Clay Field Therapy is a powerful haptic medium that can evoke, structure, and transform the inner world and an individual's biography. It is important that every participant aiming to work with this modality experiences its power and impact first. It is a unique approach that is predominantly non-verbal and kinesthetic.

Workshop:

- Individual art therapy sessions at the clay field

Seminar:

- Understanding the structure and dynamics of the field
- Understanding the haptic language of the hands

We will learn to identify the dynamics of the Gestalt Formation Process through:

- How fundamental experiencing progresses from diffuse motor impulses to sensory awareness and from there to fulfillment and cognitive integration.
- The structure of the Primary Gestalt and the Optimal Gestalt
- Afference and re-afference
- The Bottom-up Approach

### **Module 2. Trauma Informed Practice at the CLAY FIELD ®**

The second clay weekend will focus more on the understanding of the psychodynamic processes as they occur in the Clay Field and how these processes can be supported in therapeutic sessions.

- Co-counseling sessions with the Clay Field
- Trauma Healing at the Clay Field
- Pendulation
- Body-focus
- Sensory Interventions
- Motor Interventions
- Haptic perception
- Pathological indicators and their expression in the Clay Field





# INSTITUTE FOR Sensorimotor Art Therapy

& School for Initiatic Art Therapy

## Module 3: The Sensorimotor Foundation

In order to “read” the hands of a client the therapist needs to understand certain movements and how they relate to particular developmental stages; stages that express a client’s age-specific developmental needs and a process-specific pattern of action. The sensorimotor base is essential for children’s early development and is formative in all adults processes.

- The topography of the hands
- Proprioception
- Kinaesthetic messages of the hands
- The Skin Sense
- Sense of Balance
- Depth Sensibility
- Haptic Perception
- Haptic object relations
- The therapeutic dialogue with the hands
- Haptic diagnosis

## Module 4. The Nine Situations in CLAY FIELD Therapy ®

Prof. Heinz Deuser has mapped out 9 stages, “situations” as he has called them that characterize the Work at the Clay Field. These are partially based on D. W. Winnicot's theories on a child's developmental stages, but also relate to the human need to create mythical correspondences.

A particular focus will be given to these Nine Situations and how these situations are being acquired in the Clay Field:

1. Reliability, being reliable to me: Perceiving myself in my body
2. Reliability, relying on something other than me: Shifting focus onto an opposite
3. Finding orientation: Finding reliability in what is present
4. Acquisition of Object Constancy: Acquiring emotional constancy through creative destruction
5. Acquisition of Subject Constancy: Establish my own position in a foreign place
6. Centering, Grounding: Acquisition of one’s own ground
7. Shadow integration: Acquisition of one's individuality; self-correspondence, object accordance
8. Destruction as self-realization: Taking on the consequences of one’s own realization
9. Accepting one’s humanity: Integration with one's own Other.



# INSTITUTE FOR Sensorimotor Art Therapy

& School for Initiatic Art Therapy

## Part II: Healing Trauma in Children at the CLAY FIELD ® Online

This online course will consist of 60 hours of online tutorials, illustrated with over 300 videoed case histories with children between the age of 2 – 18 as they work at the Clay Field.

Clay Field Therapy with children and adolescents differs in various ways to the way a therapist works with adults. We will look at:

- Trauma and the Autonomic Nervous System in Children
- Trauma Informed Interventions to Strengthen the Sensory Division in the NS
- Trauma Informed Interventions to Strengthen the Motor Division in the NS
- Sequential Development and the Expressive Therapies Continuum
- The Developmental Building Blocks:
  1. The Sensory Cortex – age 0 to 1 years
  2. The Motor Cortex – age 1 – 4
  3. Vital Relationship and Perception – age 4 – 6
  4. Symbolic Play – age 6 – 9
  5. Departure from the Relational Field of the Parents – age 9 – 11
  6. Centring as Discovery of the Inner World – age 11 - 13
  7. Centring as Search for Identity – age 13 – 16
  8. Centring as Search for the Own Base – age 16 – 18
- Age-specific self-perception and orientation in the Clay Field
- Age-specific body-perception

Focus on the diagnostic markers concerning missing developmental milestones:

- Embodiment or dissociation
  - Age-specific haptic organization of the arms
  - Age-specific haptic organization of the hands
  - The Five Situations for Children
  - Age-specific Cognitive Integration
  - The appropriate use of tools
  - Child specific trauma interventions
  - Child specific body perception
  - Dialoging with children at the Clay Field
- 
- This online course is not part of the adult training, but we highly recommend it as a completion of your Clay Field Therapy training. Most adults will go through some form of childhood trauma when they are in therapy. In this case knowledge of the developmental stages and their haptic characteristics becomes helpful. The online training can be completed in your own time over the course of 12 months. It commences twice per year. For details go to:  
<https://training.sensorimotorarttherapy.com>





INSTITUTE FOR  
**Sensorimotor  
Art Therapy**

& School for Initiatic Art Therapy

**CERTIFICATE IN  
CLAY FIELD THERAPY**  
Apollo Bay Questionnaire 2024

Name:

Date of Birth:

Street:

Town:

Postcode:

Email:

Telephone:

Did you complete the Certificate in Initiatic Art Therapy or a Diploma/ MA in Art Therapy?

What is your professional background and present occupation? This does not need to be a complete CV, but please include whatever you think is relevant.

What is your motivation for this course?



# INSTITUTE FOR Sensorimotor Art Therapy

& School for Initiatic Art Therapy

Payment of your deposit is possible by:

- Online via the ISAT website
- Credit Card:

Card Number:

Expiry Date:

Amount:

Signature:

- Electronic Funds Transfer: BSB733 600 ACC 516463  
ACC name: Cornelia Elbrecht  
Please add your name!

Accommodation preference. Cost per night:

Six types of accommodation are available. Cost per night:

<input type="checkbox"/> In the loft in the workshop area	\$40
<input type="checkbox"/> Shared room in one of the cottages	\$85
<input type="checkbox"/> Single room in one of the cottages	\$125
<input type="checkbox"/> Single in a self-contained studio	\$160
<input type="checkbox"/> Suite in the guesthouse, single	\$190
<input type="checkbox"/> Suite in the guesthouse, double/twin, pp	\$110

All linen and towels are supplied. All accommodation is self-catering.

Please fill in the questionnaire and return it, together with a \$660 deposit for a place in the upcoming training group.

Also let me know your accommodation preference.

I reserve the right not to accept an application for the training program, in which case the deposit will be refunded in full. Otherwise, the deposit will account as payment for the last weekend.

Cornelia Elbrecht.

PO Box 174 Apollo Bay 3233

Phone: 0418 388 539

[cornelia@sensorimotorarttherapy.com](mailto:cornelia@sensorimotorarttherapy.com)

<http://www.sensorimotorarttherapy.com>