Notice of the Final Oral Examination for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy of

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MA (Pacifica Graduate Institute, 1997)
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“Sacred Mandala as Inquiry: The Lived Experience of Painting a Mandala as Research”

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Tuesday, August 27, 2019
11:00 A.M.
Clearihue Building
Room B007

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Wanda Hurren, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Jennifer Thom, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, UVic (Member)
Dr. Anne Bruce, School of Nursing, UVic (Outside Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Susan Walsh, Faculty of Education, Mount Saint Vincent University

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Tao Lu, Department of Electric Engineering, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Abstract

This phenomenological research explores the author's lived experience of painting a Sacred Mandala over the course of 15 months while focusing on child-loss by adoption. In this dissertation, the structure, process, and mindful practice of Sacred Mandala Inquiry are presented—incorporating methodological considerations, related theories, and illuminated through personal examples.

Although the focus in the paper is on an individual Sacred Mandala practice, it is understood the individual is embedded within a community and world in a web of relationships.

Impetus for research often arises from personal lifeworld experience. The Sacred Mandala provides structure and containment for inquiry, for those who are attracted to the form, assisting in bracketing that which has previously been accepted while simultaneously becoming a sacred boundary for the unknown to emerge, protected and witnessed. The practice and process may be taken up by inquirers in the social sciences, humanities, arts and within the community of adult learners.

The mindful and embodied painting and journaling practices necessitate the inclusion of processes occurring outside of awareness—hosted in emerging images, dialogues, stories, synchronistic events, myths, metaphors, and poetry; inviting the unconscious forward. Opening both eyes—the rational and imaginal—provides a depth perspective. Both are needed, each is as real as the other, one illuminating the inner world, one illuminating the outer world, in wholeness. Importantly, the meanings embedded within the work continue to resonate, unfold, and inform over time.