

Art Therapy – Coming home to self

Presenter: Noela Rhodes

What is Art Therapy?



Art Materials

It involves the use of art materials such as paint, pastels, pencils to explore thoughts and feelings.

It is person centred and focuses on issues that the client wants to explore.

It is connected to self understanding, a search for meaning, personal growth, self- empowerment and healing.



Communication

In Art Therapy the therapist works with a client or group of people who may be finding difficulty in putting their thoughts into words.

It is a way of communicating without using words.



Cave Art

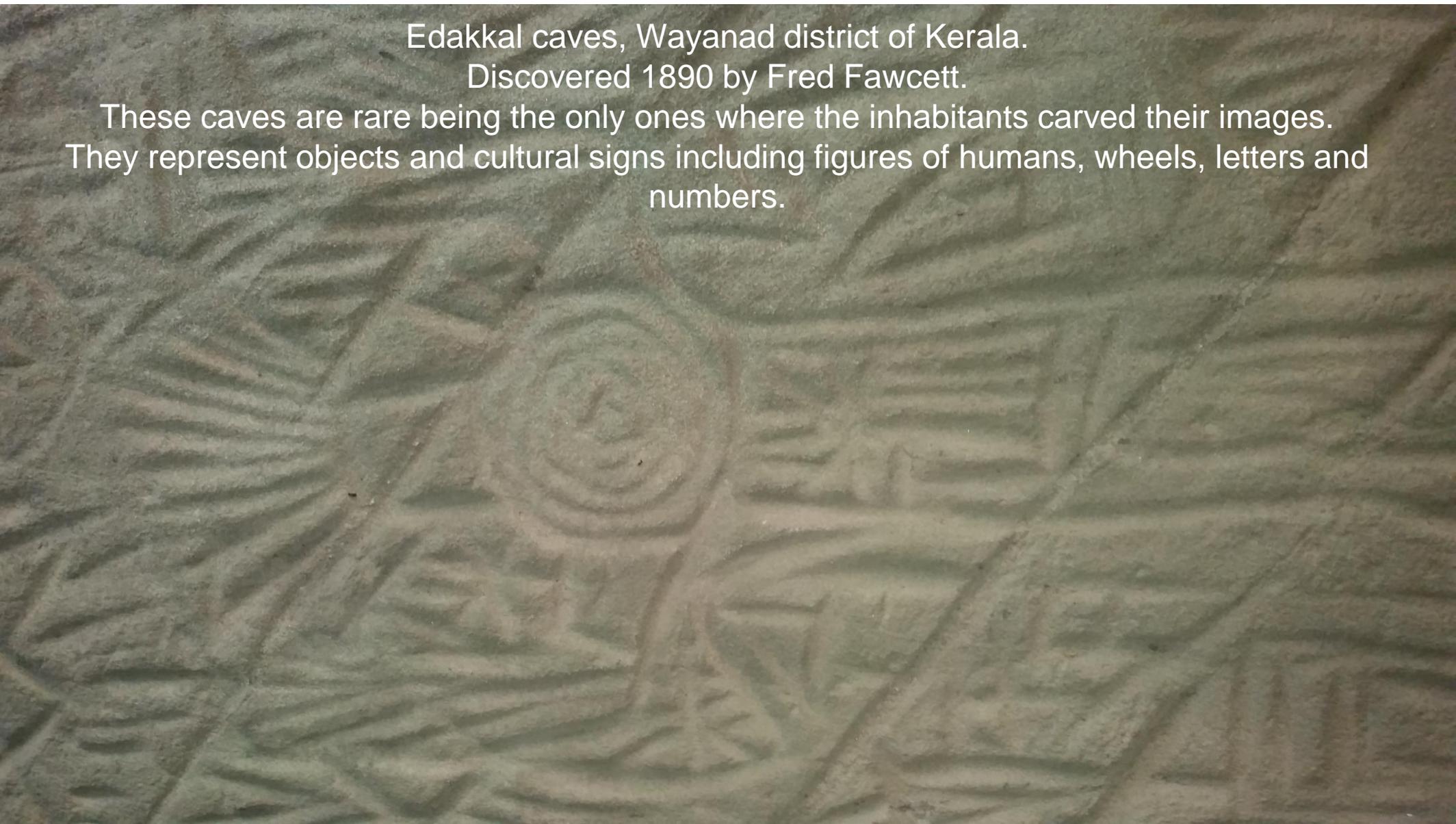
Early man used drawings to communicate with others in the group, clan, or community by drawing or carving on cave walls or rocks even before they developed a language.



Edakkal caves, Wayanad district of Kerala.

Discovered 1890 by Fred Fawcett.

These caves are rare being the only ones where the inhabitants carved their images. They represent objects and cultural signs including figures of humans, wheels, letters and numbers.



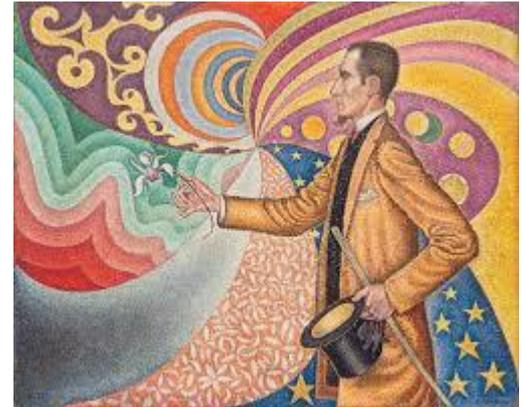
Outer & Inner Worlds

Art has recorded history.

It has also incorporated ideas, feelings, dreams and aspirations.

It conveys a wide range of emotions from joy to deep sorrow, triumph to trauma.

It has served to make sense and clarify inner experiences without words.





Images & understanding

Art therapy has evolved from the idea that art images can help us understand who we are, to express ideas and feelings that words cannot and to enhance our lives.



- Birth of Day
- by Joan Miro

What catches your attention with these works?



Emotional States

It can be helpful to use art therapy when a client has strong emotional responses to situations they may have experienced recently, or in the past.



Drawing Out Your Feelings

Children, teenagers or adults may use art materials to not only explore colour, line, shape, light and dark but also to reach into his or her subconscious to express themselves.

There is no right or wrong in any responses that are created.





Let It Rip

Sometimes collage is used.

Coloured papers, cloth or cardboard can be cut out and/or torn to form images.

Collage can be helpful if you are feeling scattered or directionless.



Snail

by Henri Matisse

Mandala – merging Art, Science & Wisdom

Sometimes a therapist may decide to introduce the idea of mandalas to the client.

This is where the person works within a circle using colours, lines and shapes in their own way.





Sometimes art materials are used on canvases.

What is your favourite colour?



The Sorrows of the King, Henri Matisse.

Sometimes paper and art materials are used.

Drawing From Within

Art therapy used to be referred to as drawing from within. In most sessions the focus is on your inner experience – feelings, perceptions and imagination, not so much on what you see (as in an art class)



Mandala – Sacred Circle



Everything is related to everything else.

Leonardo Da Vinci

C. G. Jung used mandalas for himself as well as with his patients to help relieve suffering & to promote the process of self renewal, self realisation & inner peace.

Surprising Sculpture

Sometimes sculpture, dance or writing may be used.

Writing can be in the forms of creative writing such as stories, poems or plays and diaries or journals.





The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new lands but in seeing with new eyes.

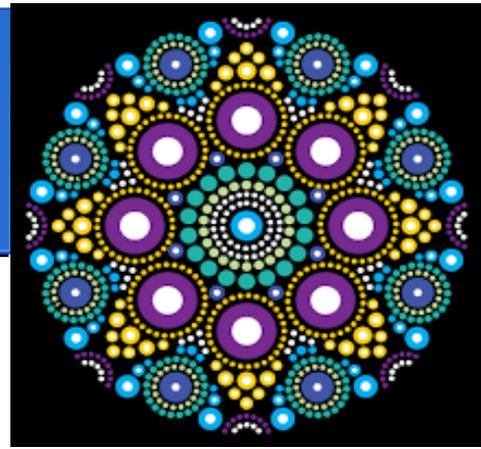
Marcel Proust.

Nurturing Yourself – find your feelings

Art Therapy is not for everyone and is not a cure all. It is another way of problem solving, communicating and helping yourself.

It can help people to feel less alone, supported and to move on from situations.

It won't change what has happened but can help to identify strengths and to manage oneself to effect change.



Emotions Get Stored in the Body

To express emotions we have to feel them first.

Colours can be used to express stored emotions eg. choose colours that represent sensations you feel in your body. If you feel hot you may want to use a warm colour such as red or orange. If you feel cold or numb you may want to use cool colours – blues, greens.

Colour therapy is sometimes incorporated or used with art therapy.



Colour

Colour meanings can guide thinking but many people use colour instinctively.

I have the blues.
Red in the face.
Green with envy.



Some meanings given to colours are:

Red – strong emotions such as love or anger, passion, drama, attention,

Orange – excitement, warmth, enthusiasm, happiness, joy, motivating,

Yellow – optimism, sunshine, uplifting, success,

Blue – trust, loyalty, intuition, wisdom, confidence, calmness, sky, sea.



Examples of Art Therapy activities

- Focus on an emotion you would like to explore. It can be one you are struggling with, or it may be one you would like to cultivate, such as playfulness or joy.
- With your non dominant hand draw a picture of a character who personifies this emotion. Or you can create this character through collage by using magazines, coloured paper, cardboard etc.
- Some questions around this work may be – what is your name? Can you tell me about yourself? How do you feel? Is there anything you want from me?





Drama, movement & dance are also used as Arts Therapies.



