

From the Desk of Rick Doblin, PhD



Rick Doblin, PhD

THIS SPECIAL EDITION OF THE *MAPS Bulletin* is focused on the contributions that psychedelic research and the mind-manifesting process of Holotropic Breathwork have made and continue to make to the fields of psychology and psychiatry: past, present, and future. As Dr. Stanislav Grof has written, “Psychedelics, used responsibly and with proper caution, would be for psychiatry what the microscope is for biology and medicine or the telescope is for astronomy.” The articles contained in this volume tell a large part—but still just a part—of the story of how pioneering psychedelic studies first revealed the benefits that psychedelics could have for science, psychotherapy, and Western society. These articles also hint at the profound expansion of knowledge and healing techniques that is just now beginning, after so many have worked for so long to overcome four decades of repression and cultural stigma.

This Special Edition Bulletin contains original articles on the contribution of early LSD research to our understanding of the serotonin (5-HT) neurotransmitter system, on the surprising effectiveness of LSD and psilocybin to treat cluster headaches, on MAPS’ latest research into LSD-assisted psychotherapy for people with anxiety due to life-threatening illnesses, on how ketamine research is providing new insights into the study and treatment of depression, on the successful integration of Holotropic Breathwork into the treatment of over 11,000 psychiatric inpatients, on how ayahuasca is being used in the treatment of addiction, and on the psychotherapeutic approaches underlying our promising research into MDMA-assisted psychotherapy

in the treatment of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Additional articles explore the development of a graduate school course on psychedelic research, propose a cultural strategy for integrating psychedelics into mainstream psychiatry, review an important new book on the future potential of psychedelic research, and offer a tribute to the pioneering psychedelic researcher Myron Stolaroff, who died in January 2013.

As the renaissance in psychedelic research and therapy continues to develop, we recognize with respect and gratitude the contributions of the early psychedelic pioneers as well as the growing community of younger researchers who are taking psychedelic research to the next stage.

In these challenging and turbulent times, after 40 years of hard work to restore the legitimacy of psychedelic research, we have a precious and unprecedented opportunity to integrate psychedelic experiences more deeply into our culture.

One of the key lessons we have learned over the past four decades is that psychedelic researchers in the 21st century need to fully acknowledge and address the potential risks of psychedelics as well as their potential benefits. For the Food and Drug Administration, and for society as a whole, we need to make careful and comprehensive assessments of the benefits and the risks of psychedelics. We need to embrace and present a balanced perspective that earns the trust of a culture that is still skeptical and fearful (this is changing, but cultural traumas are at least as hard to heal as personal ones).

We also need to communicate that the benefits and the

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risks of psychedelics do not flow from the drugs themselves, but from the contexts (or settings) within which they are used. MDMA, psilocybin, and LSD are not inherently therapeutic tools. In our clinical drug development research, we're evaluating how psychedelics are used to assist the psychotherapy process, with the main emphasis on the psychotherapeutic process within which the drugs are used. One of the principle fallacies of our current system of Prohibition is to ascribe properties to drugs in and of themselves, with some drugs being "good" and others being "bad." This approach misses the point that the key factor determining the relative risks and benefits of a drug is our relationship with it.

This Special Edition of the *MAPS Bulletin* is being released at the same time as our international conference on psychedelic research, Psychedelic Science 2013, co-sponsored by MAPS and our colleagues at the Beckley Foundation, the Council on Spiritual Practices, and Heffter Research Institute. I have great hope for the future, knowing that the past contributions and current promise of psychedelics explored in this *Bulletin* and at Psychedelic Science 2013 will further encourage the growth of psychedelic science and therapy and the mainstreaming of psychedelic experiences into our culture at a time of challenge and transformation when psychedelics, used wisely, can contribute so much.



Rick Doblin, PhD

MAPS Founder and Executive Director



Carmelo Blandino

COVER ARTISTS

Front cover:

***A Love Song* by Carmelo Blandino
48" x 48"**

oil and spray paint on canvas

Carmelo Blandino was born to Sicilian parents in Tübingen, Germany, and raised in the culturally charged city of Montreal, Quebec. Blandino studied art and design at the city's local colleges and began a successful career as a freelance illustrator, working with architects, designers, and advertising agencies. In 2002, Blandino shifted his focus to the world of fine art. Today, his paintings are widely known for their immediacy and their sensual, even lascivious expressions of colour, movement, and shape. His work is exhibited in New York, Palm Beach, Naples, Stockholm, Calgary, Vancouver, Toronto, and his beloved Montreal. He has conducted summer workshops at Von Liebig Art Center of Naples, Florida, and taught drawing for many years at Dawson College in Montreal before transplanting himself to Naples, Florida where he lives today. Blandino's greatest inspiration comes from the simplicity of being within nature.

Blandino offers his flowers not as mere ornamentation of little consequence but as a focus for the meditative experience, for that is at the root of his work and thus the greatest gift he can bestow upon those who view his canvases. "The exercise of meditating," he says, "is comparable to that of being a painter in its demands—dedication, consistency, faith, truth, and persistence. Both disciplines offer me a means of relaxation, as well as frustration at never quite reaching a finish line that is in truth illusory. Both are about the journey and each ends only with further paths opening up ahead."

View more of Blandino's work at blandino.ca. Contact Blandino at carmeloblandino@gmail.com for purchasing information.



Larry Carlson

Back cover:

***Orange Star Tree* by Larry Carlson
digital photography, 2011**

Larry Carlson is a groundbreaking visionary artist. G4Tech TV called him "The Salvador Dali of the Next Century," and *High Times* magazine labeled him an "artistic mastermind." His work spans a variety of forms including photography, video-art, web-art, collage painting, digital art, film-making, animation, and sound art. Larry Carlson has exhibited his artwork in the U.S., Sweden, Mexico, Brazil, France, Canada, India, and Germany. He is a modern day renaissance man who has changed the way art is perceived in our world today with revolutionary mind-expanding artwork that pushes the possibilities for consciousness exploration within contemporary art.

"Through my artwork I aim to offer the viewer a new way of seeing the world, to describe life as magical, and rich with wonder, mystery and possibility."—Larry Carlson

Check out more of Larry Carlson's amazing artwork at larrycarlson.com. Prints and canvases can be purchased directly from Larry Carlson at larrycarlson.bigcartel.com.