
MATOX — SYMPHOGRAPHY
A Facilitator's Guide to Artistic Mediation, Gesture, and Composition.
Based on the work of Nuno de Matos
Gemini Notebook

The Three Pillars of Transmission

1. The Artwork as Source

Identifying plastic decisions—tensions, repetitions, and contrasts. Not a psychological test.



2. The Exercise as Translation

Exploring an observed principle to produce a personal creation. Not an imitation or copy.

3. Respecting Singularity

Facilitating without clinical interpretation. Preserving the autonomy and emotional boundaries of the participant.

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The Ethical Compass: Mediating vs. Diagnosing

The facilitator is an artistic guide, not a clinician.

Describing (DO SAY)

Focuses on observable, plastic facts.

- "Lines concentrate in the upper section."
- "Several lines intersect in this zone."
- "A repetition is interrupted by a different sign."
- "How did you choose to organize this space?"

Interpreting teeing (DO NOT SAY)

Avoids projective or clinical language.

- "This drawing shows that you are anxious."
- "The color black reveals depression."
- "This shape necessarily represents a trauma."
- "Your unconscious is expressing itself here."

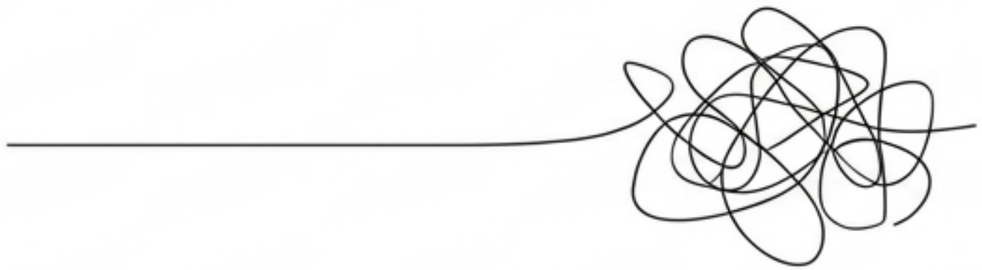
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Visual Lexicon 01: Line & Rhythm

The Observation:

Is the stroke continuous or fragmented? Where are the accelerations, interruptions, or varied pressures?



The Translation (Activity 1 & 2):

Step 1: Trace a continuous line for 60 seconds.
Step 2: Repeat, but introduce chosen pauses.
Step 3: Introduce a calculated rupture to alter the composition.

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Visual Lexicon 02: Density & Respiration

The Observation:

Where do signs accumulate? How do the empty spaces and margins act as active components of the composition?

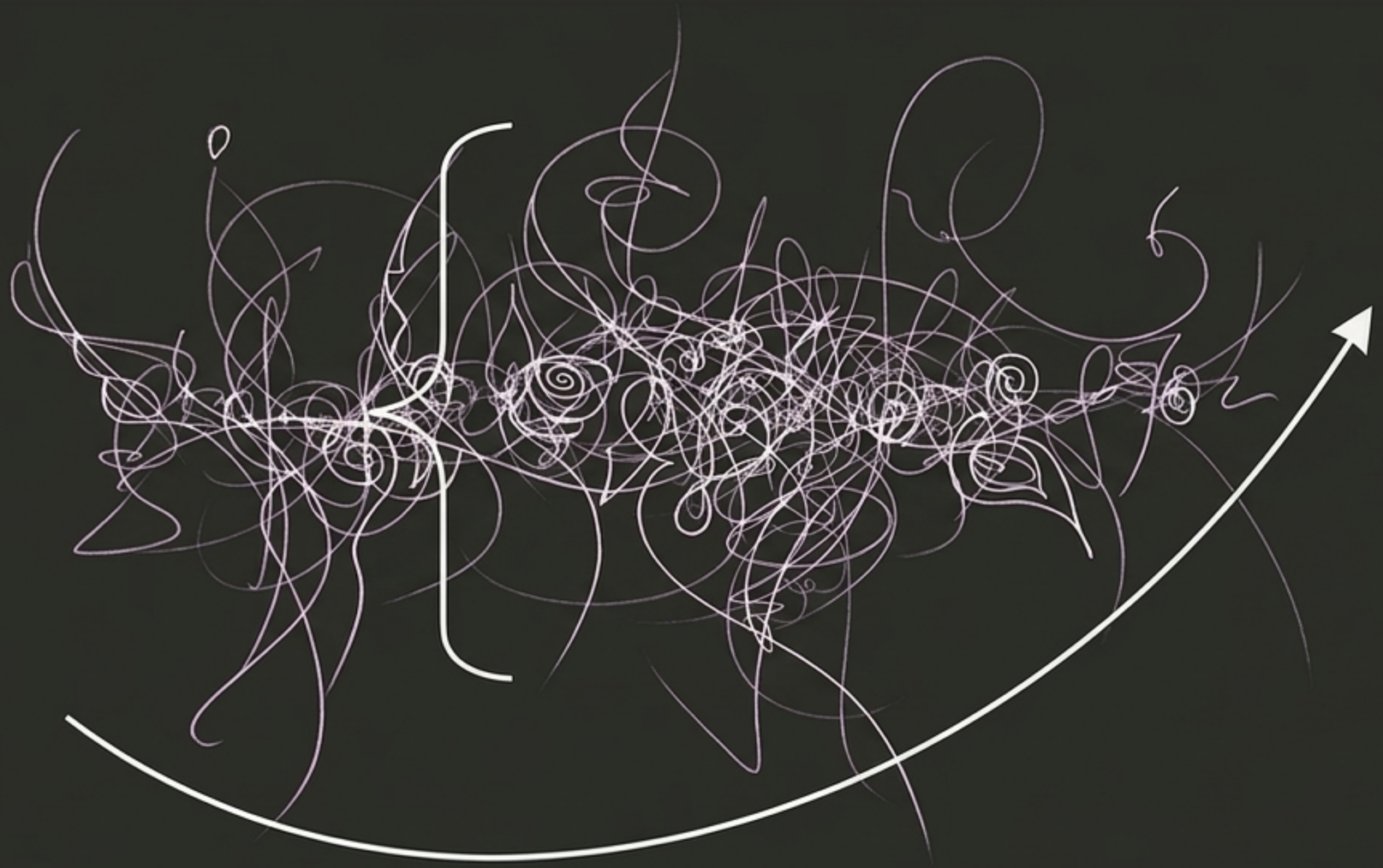
The Translation (Activity 3 & 7):

Step 1: Create a highly dense zone of clustered signs.

Step 2: Create a secondary, sparsely marked zone.

Step 3: Connect or separate them, observing the effect of the untraced space.

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Visual Lexicon 03: **Scale & The Micro-Gesture**

The Observation:
Do signs share a comparable size? How do intricate micro-gestures interact with broad, sweeping movements?

The Translation (Activity 4):

Step 1: Build a composition entirely of small, wrist-driven gestures.

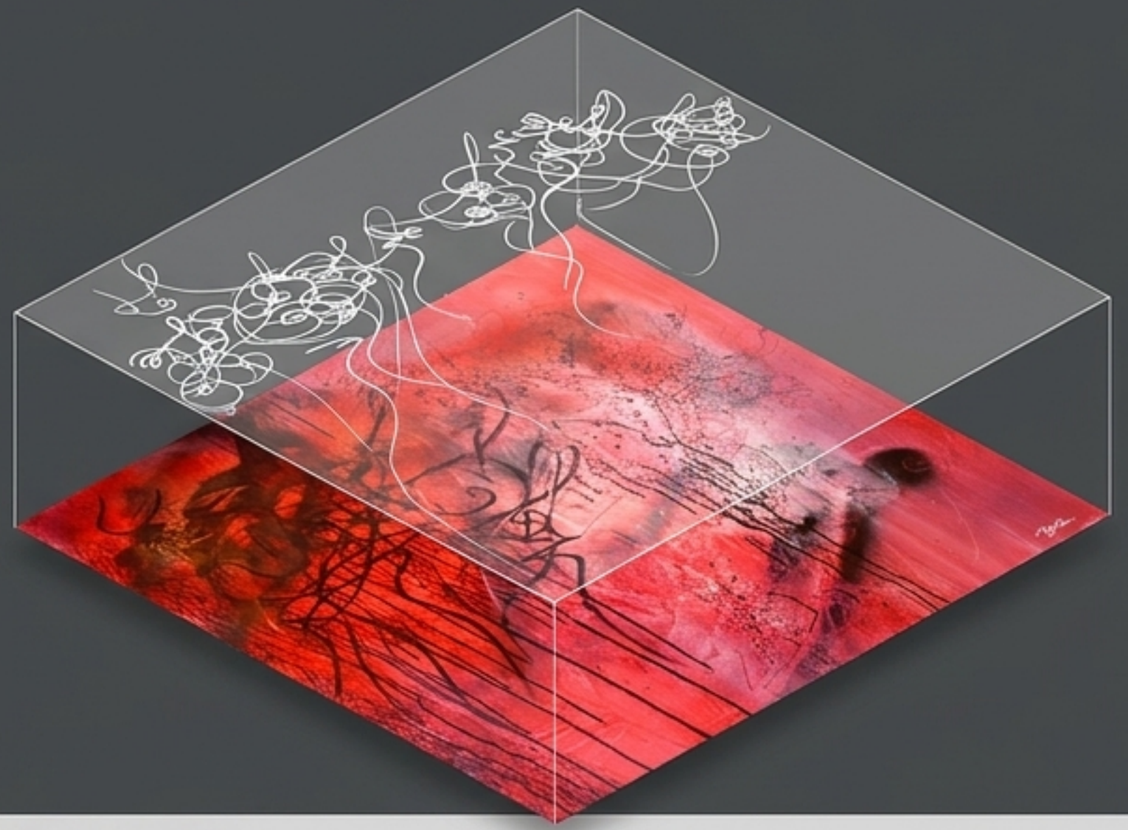
Step 2: Transition to a much larger format, requiring full-arm, sweeping amplitude.

Note: Adapt tools and formats to the physical motor capabilities of participants.

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Visual Lexicon 04: Superposition & Depth





The Observation:
Do signs cover one another? How does a new layer modify, disrupt, or reinforce an earlier organization?

The Translation (Activity 6):
Step 1: Execute an initial composition.
Step 2: Perform a “second pass” with a distinct color or tool that forces a relationship (reinforcing or obscuring) with the first layer.

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Visual Lexicon 05: Asemic Writing & Orientation

The Observation:

Signs that evoke writing without yielding a readable message. Do the dominant directions converge or scatter?

The Translation (Activity 5):

Step 1: Invent 5 unique, non-alphabetic signs.

Step 2: Repeat, transform, and associate them into a pseudo-system.

Reminder: Never present these signs as a necessary expression of the participant's unconscious.

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The Anatomy of a Session (60 Minutes)



0-5m: Welcome. Establish safety, goals, and the right to withdraw.

5-10m: Observe. Describe an original MATOX artwork purely through visible facts.

10-15m: Demonstrate. Show a plastic operation (e.g., varying pressure) without offering a "correct" final result.

15-35m: Creation. Open instructions. Participants explore the principle freely.

35-45m: Variation. Introduce a prompt to modify a parameter (e.g., scale or density).

45-60m: Closure. Optional descriptive feedback. Right to silence. No aesthetic judgment.



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Facilitating Without Directing

1. The Right to Silence

No oral sharing is obligatory.

2. Absolute Autonomy

Freedom to participate, observe, pause, or stop entirely.

3. No Autobiographical Pressure

The session must never demand the retelling of personal or traumatic experiences.

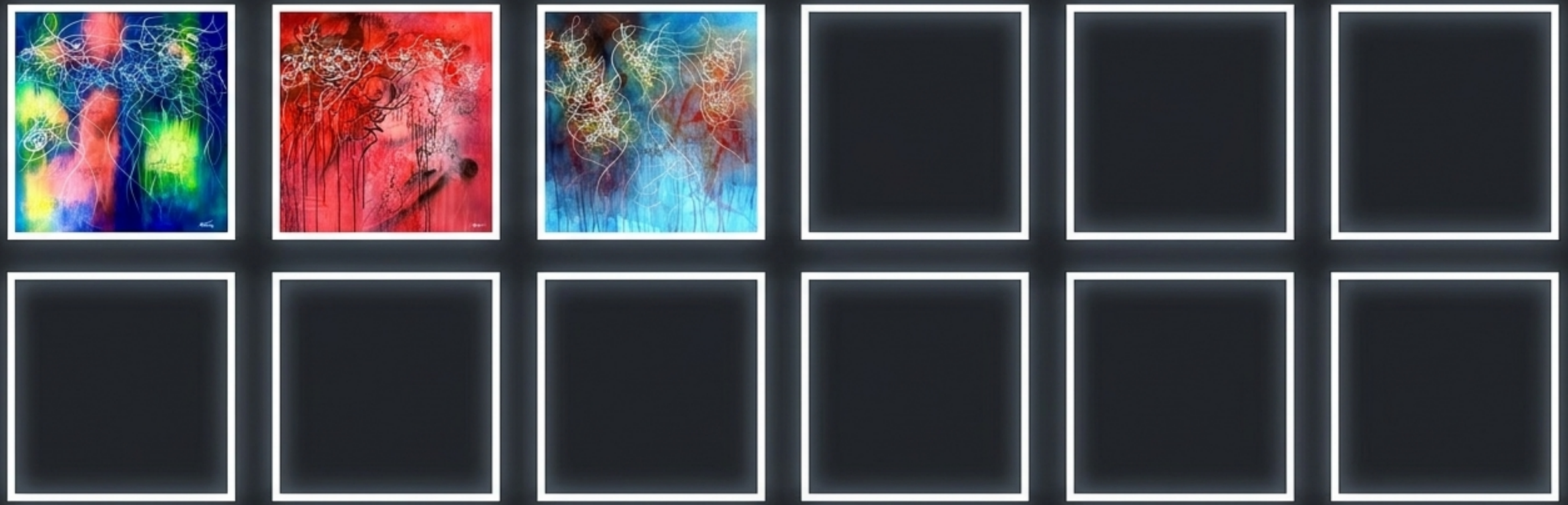
4. Aesthetic Neutrality

Creations are never compared, graded, or ranked against an artistic norm.

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The Pedagogical Corpus: 12 Functions

The artworks are not templates to copy, but lenses through which to study specific operations (M01-M12).



M01 Continuous Gesture / M02 Rhythm / M03 Density / M04 Microstructure / M05 Global Composition / M06 Superposition / M07 Orientation / M08 Unstable Legibility / M09 Contrast / M10 Margins / M11 Transformation / M12 Synthesis

Key Rule: Isolate one principle. Hide the reproduction. Translate the principle into a new form.

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The Facilitator's Mandate

Symphography is a transmissible method that preserves the singularity of both the artwork and the participant.

Observe. Translate. Transmit.

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