As a continuation of my 2014 Arts Award, this past year I continued to explore Carl Jung’s psychological theory of the collective unconscious and universal human archetypes. His idea is that all of humanity has certain “memories” that are universal and uniting within our species, most notably his archetypes (characters), who represent these global concepts. Out of the seven archetypes that Jung described, I was most fascinated by the mother figure and what that represents to me and to a general viewer. My fascination with the mother set me on a path to attempt to create sculptural forms for all seven of the key archetypal figures. With my generous award from the Miller Arts Scholars, I was able to create four archetypes and a response piece.

With the help of my two-year sculpture professor, Bill Bennett, and studio and gallery technician, Eric Schmidt, I undertook a year-long sculptural endeavor. In the fall, I continued to work on my mother archetype (now officially called Archetype I (Mother)), and eventually enlisted the help of an engineering student, Quang Pham. Quang worked with me to develop the internal mechanism that would make Archetype I hug the viewer upon an embrace (above right). After 3-D printing our designs, my sculpture was finally able to move. During this process I continued to explore the properties of silicone, and finally successfully created a skin tone and texture I found sturdy and effective. By November, I had finalized the sculpture and was able to exhibit it at McGuffey Art Center in Downtown Charlottesville (above left).

While exhibiting in a large forum, I wanted to take advantage of the diverse array of viewers who might visit my sculpture. Alongside my sculpture interests, I work as a research assistant in the psychology perception laboratory at UVA. With the help of my overseeing professor (Dennis Proffitt) and graduate student (Blair Gross), I created a double-sided short survey (right) to evaluate the experience a viewer felt while hugging my sculpture. I based my survey on my previous research into the relationship between maternal support and an individual’s extroversion and sociability.
At McGuffey alone, I received over 60 responses from my survey, and with the help of my lab, I analyzed the correlations. I found a significant positive correlation between how supportive in childhood someone rated their mother and their overall enjoyment of the experience (top, left). I also found a significant positive correlation between how supportive in childhood someone rated their mother and their overall rating of how much they liked the torso texture (bottom, left). In summary, if you believe your mother was very supportive of you as a child, you are more likely to have a positive experience with the sculptures and like the silicone torso. When thinking about these results, it makes sense that someone who had a positive attachment with their mother would be able to abstract those feelings and project them onto a mother-figure. These findings support the therapeutic effects of physically interacting with a potentially nurturing sculpture.

After a successful show at McGuffey, I was finally ready to begin working on another archetype. I had spent a long “gestation” of 9 months with Archetype I, and decided to begin analyzing the animal archetype. In a sculpture class project, we attempted a “2-hour” sculpture, where I tried to create the animal archetype. While my first attempt was not entirely successful, and my eventual second attempt was not quite right, on my third attempt (which I created for my thesis art show), I found success.

Archetype II (right) explores the “animal” archetype of Carl Jung’s collective unconscious theory. I interpreted this as humanity’s concept of animal, and the refusal to address that we are a species of animal and have animalistic roots. I am representing this through a humanoid head that has traces of human qualities, and traces of animal qualities. By blending the two, the viewer can see recognizable parts of their own face in a primitive representation. The sculpture dauntingly leans down towards the viewer, instigating a confrontation. A white skull is covered in clay, dirt, and grass, making it more creature-like. The sculpture is human and environment combined in a primeval depiction.

My next endeavor was to explore the third archetype, the shadow. This Archetype representation, Archetype III, is based off of Carl Jung’s “Shadow” principle. The Shadow is the subconscious aspects of one’s personality that the conscious doesn’t identify with, largely due to the fact that the Shadow is generally negative since we tend to remain ignorant or reject our least desirable qualities. According to Jung, the Shadow is irrational and instinctive, and very prone to psychological projection, where personal
inferiority is perceived in someone else. Jung also believed that since the Shadow is the “reservoir for human darkness…the shadow is the seat of creativity.”

I attempted to transform this abstract archetype into an experiential sculpture (left). Inspired by Bruce Nauman’s many hallway constructions, I created a ten foot long covered hallway. With four steps up, the viewer is led to a door. Once the viewer goes inside the black hallway, they walk down a ramp and move towards the back of the hallway, where there is just enough outside light to guide them. At the end of the hallway, there are mirrors surrounding the viewer, with the back wall short enough so as to allow just enough light to see silhouettes and shapes. The viewer is then charged to confront their almost completely dark reflection in the mirror. For many, this is a terrifying task. Due to the visual impairment of darkness, the viewer may negatively project onto his or her vague reflection, and “hallucinate” something unnerving. In order to come to terms with their Shadow, and subsequently their unrecognized subconscious weaknesses, the viewer must acknowledge the projection and remain in the hallway in order to regain control.

My next archetype attempt was the Anima, the subconscious, psychological feminine qualities that men harbor. Jung theorized that as men grew to better accept their anima, they projected this understanding to women in their every day lives. As a man comes to terms with his feminine qualities, he respects women more and sees them as individual humans, rather than distanced females. I attempted to investigate “womanhood” and pinpoint the exact feeling or moment of becoming a woman. I asked many of my female peers to hand-write the first time they felt like a woman (not a girl). Many of these stories were empowering, where leadership, education, or social support defined womanhood. But many instances were also the women’s relationships with men, and had some kind of negative interaction that defined their moment of transition. I collected all of these handwritten “transition” stories and transferred them to a fabric paper, maintaining the authors handwriting. From there, I cut each of the stories line by line, and sewed them all back together, forming a very long string of a collective story of womanhood (top right).

At this point, I felt I captured the female side of womanhood, and needed to bring it back to the conscious participation of men. I then had many men read the jumbled stories as I recorded their voices. While the storyline no longer made coherent sense, the reader could still make out themes and emotions of the authors, and by talking in first person while reading these, the men took on the female identity. I then overlapped many of the men’s voices, creating a web-like chorus, and played the audio alongside the
collective story-string. I hung the string in a web fashion (to mirror the audio), and had it appear to be floating while blocking a passageway. The viewer is forced to attend to the web, and while getting close enough to examine whether they could pass through, they could see the handwriting and read the stories, participating in the narrative. Finally, I had a small notebook to the side of the piece, asking viewers to participate in the project by chronicling the first time they felt like a woman (bottom right), thus completing Archetype IV (Anima).

My final work that appeared in my studio art thesis show was a response work to Archetype I (Mother). As I began to describe in my outcome report from last spring, I did my first ever silicone pouring for my Mother casting. Not unexpectedly, my first casting was not entirely successful and was unusable for the purposes I had intended. I kept the misshapen silicone, as a study and prop for a potential work later down the road. Almost exactly one year later, I used the discarded “skin” in a performance piece. In the video performance, Becoming the Mother (adornment/removal) (left), I chose to undertake a birth of sorts and identity appropriation by repeatedly putting on and taking off the skin while nude. I wanted to experience the skin-on-skin contact of adorning a skin that is not one's own, and I actively chose to become a postpartum mother whose body is in no way perfect. By being a young woman choosing to become an older experienced woman, I am glorifying the beauty of the mother figure. The endurance body art performance lasted approximately 20 minutes (but looped infinitely on the final video), until the silicone was so ripped that I could not become the mother any longer. I attempted to take on this identity as many times as possible until it could no longer exist, making this desire unachievable.

Becoming the Mother (adornment/removal) was an incredibly unique experience that solidified by already strong love of performance art. Choosing to do a performance that was quite odd and exhausting was such a rewarding experience. I feel closer to my sculptures, and closer to my overall interests in these theories. Since I consider myself a very material-focused artist, actually experiencing the skin of my mother sculpture was necessary to fully understand its power.

Overall, this entire process was incredibly rewarding. I have found a deep interest in the therapeutic and tactile powers art has the capability of possessing, and I believe that art institutions will be moving more towards interactive art. All of my works have a certain level of audience participation, and I encourage touching the art, hugging it, listening to it, and experiencing it with as many senses as possible. Visual art is only one means of communication, which can be limiting to a significant population. Viewers inherently have more of a connection with a work if they can interact with it one-on-one in a personal and physical way.

I am so grateful to all that the Miller Arts Scholars have enabled me to accomplish. None of this would have been possible without the program’s faith in my artistic capabilities, the help of my advisors and mentors, and the intellectual stimulation at UVA.
Appendix A – Thesis Exhibition Statement

Collective Unconscious
Julia Pedrick

Artist Statement

Collective Unconscious: Carl Jung’s theory that within a species, all members have an innate, unconscious knowledge of universal figures, called archetypes.

Four of Jung’s seven archetypes are manifested here.

**Mother.** Swaddled embrace. Skin on skin contact. Soft. Supple. Unconditional and eternal.


Related to the Mother, I attempted to unite with the figure by choosing to bear its postpartum skin. This relationship was temporary, as the skin and identity was not viable in the long term.

As an individual, utilize these figures as a means to understand yourself and others. They are in your space; interact with them.
Appendix B – List of Thesis Exhibition Works

Collective Unconscious
Julia Pedrick

Archetype I (Mother) 2014
Silicone, foam, wood, plastic, steel, microfiber.
_Hug her._

Archetype II (Animal) 2014-2015
Mud, steel, chicken wire, plaster, clay, dirt, grass.
_Confront the stare._

Archetype III (Shadow) 2014-2015
Wood, plywood, mirrors.
_Enter, sit for 1 minute, examine mirrors._

Archetype IV (Anima) 2015
Thread, transfer fabric, audio.
_Read the collective stories and listen._

Becoming the Mother (adornment/removal) 2015
Silicone, video, audio.
_Listen and observe._
Appendix C – Exhibition Show Postcard/Flyer

Julia Pedrick

Thesis Exhibition:
Collective Unconscious

Ruffin Hall
April 6th - 10th
M-F 9-5

Closing Reception:
Friday, April 10th 5:30 - 7:30pm

Mcintire Department of Art
University of Virginia
Ruffin Hall
179 Culbreth Road
Charlottesville, VA 22903

[Image of abstract art piece]