

29th IAA SYMPOSIUM ON SPACE AND SOCIETY (E5)
Interactive Presentations - 29th IAA SYMPOSIUM ON SPACE AND SOCIETY (IP)

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ARTRONAUTS, ASTRONAUTS, ALCHEMNAUTS AND PLAY: HIGHLIGHTING THE
IMPORTANCE OF ART AND HUMAN INTERACTIONS IN SPACE MISSIONS

Abstract

We highlight the importance of “art-play” in human interactions for Space missions and how “Artronauts” and “Alchemnauts” are integral members of astronaut crews. Imagine a future where Humanity become a multi-planetary species on Mars but the prime directive over the decades on Earth were focused only on technologies and life sciences. Now we find “life on Mars” devoid of art, music and spirituality, ie, “Martians without Souls!” This scenario could become our reality if we forget our uniqueness, Self, our cultures and art. Space sciences and engineering find its roots in alchemy. The science of alchemy had the transformation of matter that was believed to lead to transformation of Spirit. When making art, alchemy can heighten awareness and cause greater understanding of our environments. Considering that any space mission will reach its communal low might artistic interventions with an alchemical twist help improve social relations, enhance relaxation and create new meaning in an environment that might become ‘stale’ for crews? Zero Gravity Arts Consortium (ZGAC) and Mars Academy USA (MAU) are developing countermeasures using multi-media platforms, including VRAR / 360 technologies, and interactive systems to mitigate stress, anxiety and boredom during missions. We collected subjective and quantitative data (ie, eeg, biometrics) over multiple missions in low-, mid-fidelity expeditions while crews conducted immersive “art” creations. The objective is to test feasibility in using art, exponential technologies and principles of alchemy to increase team cohesion, improve conflict-resolution strategies and empower effective leadership decision-making outcomes. We present the results obtained from multiple MAU analog astronaut crews engaged in various creative opportunities to transform their environments during the isolation and confinement, The results of new experiences during the simulation missions were expressed into “art” incorporating new observations with renewed vigor and meaning. Frank Pietronigro, Artronaut, Chief Visionary Officer of ZGAC, led the crews as part of the Remote Space Art Team, (RSAT). The RSAT con-

ducted "real-time" teleconferencing with crews during missions. Our Mind, Body and Spirit is the sum of the "Whole" with conscious and unconscious homeostatic balances that interconnect myriads of complex systems communicating with our physiological and psychological makeup. Without the total engagement with the "Whole" in our experiences, we are behaving "robotic-like" devoid of empathy, compassion, awareness, deep meaning and understanding of Self with our "inner-space" and external environments. Does Humanity lose its Soul as we move into Space? Isn't the journey to inner-space as important as we become multi-planetary species?