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**AFFECTIVE LIFE AND ARTISTIC PROCESSES IN ANALYSIS:
BROMBERG REVISITED IN THE LIGHT OF
PANKSEPP'S THEORY OF AFFECT**

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Abstract

Analysis is, at least in part, an art form – a metaphoric “dancing in the spaces” expanding on Bromberg’s vision of dissociative processes. An overview of Panksepp’s theory of affect as it resonates with Bromberg’s thoughts about analysis is articulated. This articulation speaks to a potential flowing, mutual and simultaneous balancing of top-down (cognitive) and bottom-up (affective) expressions of a fully embodied life force as associated with creativity and artistic processes. According to Panksepp, affect – the subjective attribute of emotion – operates out of Emotional Operating Systems that orchestrate and fuel embodied affect-action states. The action-oriented nature of a vital affective life and implicit communications of subjective and intersubjective experience are linked to an expanded view of enactment phenomena as played out, or danced out, in analytic space. Analytic process is aesthetic in nature to the degree that each partner can be, and be seen as, a “witnessing presence” in the doing, undoing, and redoing of experiences of intersubjectivity.

Key words: affect-action states, art form, Bromberg, “dancing in the spaces,” dissociation, enactment, life force, Panksepp, play