

Conclusion. Physicians reported rapid and sustained clinical improvement among patients with MDD treated with esketamine in this real-world survey.

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Did Bipolar Disorder Enhance Jackson Pollock's Ability to Communicate Through Conscious and Unconscious Images (Polloglyphs)?

Stephen M. Stahl^{1,2}, Debbi Morrissette² and John Gates

¹Department of Psychiatry, University of California San Diego and Riverside, CA and ²Neuroscience Education Institute, Carlsbad, CA

Experts have been fascinated with Jackson Pollock (born 1912, died 1956) and his famous “drip paintings” ever since he began producing them in the 1940s. It is well documented that Pollock began to have mood swings as a child, with symptoms of social anxiety relieved by alcoholic binges from his teen years until his death. He received psychoanalytic psychotherapy, psychiatric hospitalization and some psychopharmacologic treatments from age 23 until his death at age 44. Most of his treatment was by psychiatrists trained in Jungian or Freudian psychoanalysis. Pollock was first hospitalized at New York Westchester Hospital in 1938 with his first “breakdown,” likely a manic/hypomanic or psychotic episode combined with alcohol intoxication. Without modern antipsychotic medications or lithium at the time, he

was allowed to rest and improve and at that time was tested extensively with Rorschach ink blots, a new technology at the time, and which undoubtedly influenced the Polloglyphs embedded in his later works.

Pollock was afflicted with hallucinatory spells, particularly visual. With his eyes wide open, he would suddenly begin to see whirling images, and Pollock himself realized that for his drip paintings he had seen those images before he painted them. Bipolar experts have written about altered sensory phenomena experienced in bipolar disorder and even theorized a suprasensory world for some patients with enhanced visual perceptual abilities especially when manic or hypomanic. Although Jackson according to his biographers was variably diagnosed as “alcoholic psychosis,” “schizoid” or “a schizophrenia like disorder characterized by alternating periods of violent agitation and paralysis or withdrawal,” in today’s world he would more likely be diagnosed as bipolar. This is supported by other comments from his biography that “more and more the schizophrenic like state described by his psychiatrist was playing itself out in a binary drama of depression and elation.” His older brother Charles was hospitalized in 1942 for a “nervous breakdown” possibly a bipolar episode, suggesting a positive family history of bipolar disorder in the Pollock family.

About 1947 he began his drip paintings and his longest period of uninterrupted productivity until about 1950. During this period, he created his masterpieces, especially during the years between 1948 and 1950, a time when he drank little and was treated with the early mood stabilizers Dilantin and phenobarbital. He stopped his meds and eventually crashed his car after drinking and died at age 44. Experts have long pondered the relationship between creativity/genius and bipolar disorder. For Pollock, the Polloglyphs in his drip paintings seem to be linked to his creativity and genius shaped by bipolar disorder thus expressing his inner emotions as camouflaged images on canvas.