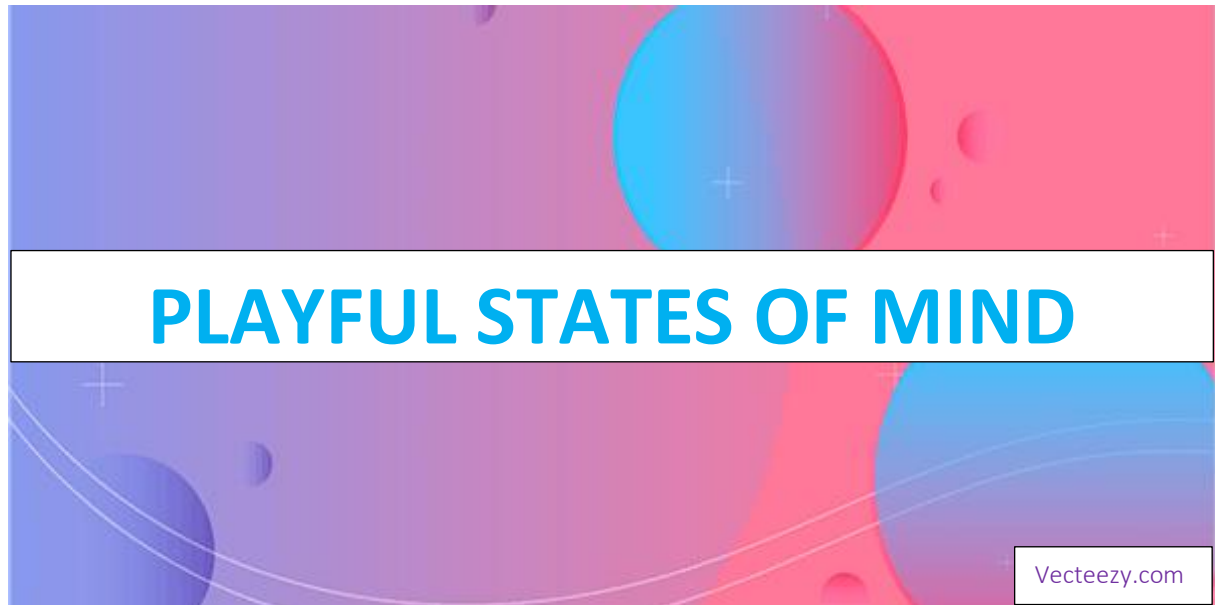


The Association for Psychosocial Studies Presents



**MONDAY 19 DECEMBER 2022 @ 9.45-17.00**

Birkbeck Centre for Contemporary Theatre  
Birkbeck College, University of London

*A one-day experiential event about play,  
focusing on its psychological function and importance in our emotional lives*

Co-sponsored by 'Psychoanalysis +' and the Birkbeck Centre for Contemporary Theatre

### **Venue**

Room G10, Birkbeck Centre for Contemporary Theatre, Birkbeck College, University of London, 43 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PD.

W: <http://www7.bbk.ac.uk/contemporary-theatre/>

### **Description**

What do the terms 'play', 'playing' and 'playfulness' mean in different contexts? How might we understand play as both a doing and a being; an activity and a state of mind? In what ways might play be related to creativity and destructiveness? What kinds of feelings might be enacted, evoked or contained while engaging in moments of play? How do we play and what might we be communicating to ourselves and others, consciously and unconsciously, in our

play and in the ways in which we play? Why is a capacity for play so important for our mental health and general wellbeing? How might psychoanalysis and psychosocial studies help us to reflect on our experiences of play? These questions will frame our event.

This event will offer a series of immersive experiences centred around play, to help us to reflect on and talk about our individual and collective encounters with play. The emphasis will be on experience, reflection and conversation. Participants are encouraged to wear comfortable clothing and be prepared for an encounter with the unknown.

This event will be of interest to anyone interested in play, imagination and creativity. It will be of particular interest to psychoanalysts, psychotherapists, psychologists, counsellors, group analysts, play therapists, arts therapists, social workers and social care workers, mental health workers, youth workers, artists, performers and curators, as well as academic researchers and students in the fields of psychosocial studies, cultural studies, and in the arts, humanities and social sciences more broadly.

Places are limited so early registration is advised. Participants are requested to register only if they are available to attend the whole day, as this event makes use of a group experience.

## Reading Material

We will discuss the following two pieces in the afternoon, so please read them in advance and bring along copies with you:

1. Patricia Townsend, 'Play and Playing' in *Creative States of Mind Psychoanalysis and the Artist's Process* (London and New York: Routledge 2019), pp. 59-67.
2. Lynn Froggett, 'Deep Play and Simulation in Urban Space: Of Art and Video-Games' in *Deep Play and Simulation in Urban Space: Of Art and Video-Games* (London: British Council 2018), pp. 16-35.

## Registration

### Registration fees:

Association for Psychosocial Studies Member (waged): £35

Association for Psychosocial Studies Member (unwaged): £25

Non-Member (waged): £45

### To register:

- Click on the following link to pay the registration fee:  
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/playful-states-of-mind-tickets-448238151377?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>
- Email a brief note (c. 100 words) to [n.giffney@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:n.giffney@ulster.ac.uk), [cyates@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:cyates@bournemouth.ac.uk) and [LFroggett@uclan.ac.uk](mailto:LFroggett@uclan.ac.uk) as to why you are interested in attending this event and what you hope to get from the day.

## Conveners

**Dr Noreen Giffney** is a psychoanalytic psychotherapist and a psychosocial theorist. She is the author of the book, *The Culture-Breast in Psychoanalysis: Cultural Experiences and the Clinic* (Routledge 2021), and the author and/or editor of a number of articles and books on psychoanalysis, critical theory, and gender and sexuality studies, including *Clinical Encounters in Sexuality: Psychoanalytic Practice and Queer Theory* (co-edited with Dr Eve Watson). She is particularly interested in the emotional and unconscious use we make of cultural objects and experiences (film, art, literature, music); the writings of the psychoanalyst Wilfred Bion; and the clinical impact of psychosocial factors on the transference-countertransference dynamic. Noreen is the Director of 'Psychoanalysis +', an international, interdisciplinary initiative that brings together clinical, academic and artistic approaches to, and applications of, psychoanalysis. She teaches and researches psychoanalysis and psychosocial studies at Ulster University in Belfast. She is a Founding Scholar of the British Psychoanalytic Council (BPC), a member of the Editorial Team for the BPC's *New Associations* magazine, and a Contributing Editor for the journal, *Studies in Gender and Sexuality* (Routledge).

E: [n.giffney@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:n.giffney@ulster.ac.uk)

W: <https://www.ulster.ac.uk/staff/n-giffney>

**Professor Lynn Froggett** is Professor of Psychosocial Welfare in the Lancashire Institute of Citizenship, Society and Change at the University of Central Lancashire. She moved to her current academic post after a career in social work practice and management and social policy, but as a researcher gradually reverted to earlier interests in applied arts and humanities. Over the last twenty years she has led a succession of research programmes concerned with the 'uses' of art and the nature of aesthetic experience in settings as diverse as health, social care, criminal justice, education communities and museums. More recently, in 'Curating Third Space', she has worked with colleagues in Australia and Singapore on the nature of the knowledge that emerges 'in-between' art, science and technology. At the University of Central Lancashire, she is co-Director of the trans-disciplinary Lancashire Institute for Citizenship, Society and Change. She is a Founding Scholar of the British Psychoanalytic Council (BPC), and also Chair of the UK Association for Psychosocial Studies – a field she has worked to develop and promote for many years.

E: [LFroggett@uclan.ac.uk](mailto:LFroggett@uclan.ac.uk)

W: <https://www.uclan.ac.uk/academics/lynn-froggett>

**Professor Candida Yates** is Professor of Culture and Communication at Bournemouth University. She is leading a transdisciplinary BU project that applies insights from group analysis to examine the potential for empathy within face to face and online community group settings in a polarised UK Brexit landscape. She is writing a book on 'Political Leadership and the Psycho-Cultural Imagination' that explores the meanings of different political leaders and their wider cultural and affective significance in the contemporary age. She is Director (with Professor Caroline Bainbridge) of the Media and the Inner World research network; a Director on the Executive Board of the US Association for the Psychoanalysis of Culture and Society; and Deputy Director and Trustee of the UK Association for Psychosocial Studies. She has published on a range of psycho-cultural and political subjects in monographs, edited books, journal

articles and special editions. She is a Consulting Editor on *Psychoanalysis, Culture and Society* (Palgrave), *The Journal of Psychosocial Studies* (Policy) and Joint Editor of the book series 'Psychoanalysis and Popular Culture' (Routledge).

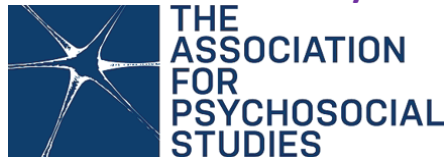
E: [cyates@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:cyates@bournemouth.ac.uk)

W: <https://staffprofiles.bournemouth.ac.uk/display/cyates>

## Tea, Coffee and Lunch

Tea, coffee and a light lunch will be provided. Please let us know if you have any allergies or dietary intolerances.

## The Association for Psychosocial Studies



Psychosocial Studies is a vibrant field of academic inquiry that has been emerging in the UK since the 1980s, and that is increasingly attracting international interest. It studies the ways in which subjective experience is interwoven with social life. Psychological issues and subjective experiences cannot be abstracted from societal, cultural, and historical contexts; nor can they be deterministically reduced to the social. Similarly, social and cultural worlds are shaped by psychological processes and intersubjective relations. Psychosocial Studies is characterised by (a) its explicit inter or trans-disciplinarity, (b) its development of non-positivistic theory, method and praxis and (c) its orientation towards progressive social and personal change. Psychosocial research draws inspiration from a range of sources including sociology, psychoanalysis, critical psychology, critical theory, post-structuralism, process philosophy, feminism, post-colonial theory, queer theory and affect theory. Various “dialects” are in the process of emergence. Psychosocial Studies has a strong link with several fields of practice, particularly psychotherapy and counselling, psychoanalysis and group analysis, social work and social policy, group relations and organisational consultancy.

The Association for Psychosocial Studies was formed in 2013 in order to formalise and carry forward the work of developing Psychosocial Studies in the UK. The APS emerged out of the Psychosocial Studies Network, which had organised annual conferences at the major university bases for Psychosocial Studies since 2008. The APS is a charitable trust and is recognised as a Learned Society by the Academy of Social Sciences.

Our objectives are:

- a) the advancement of education and research in the field of Psychosocial Studies, and publication of the results of such research,
- b) the promotion of the field of Psychosocial Studies as an academic discipline and the dissemination of knowledge concerning Psychosocial Studies,
- c) the advancement of education for the public benefit in Psychosocial Studies across different disciplines and educational sectors,

d) to contribute to the advancement of public health and well-being, particularly in relation to mental health.

W: <https://www.psychosocial-studies-association.org/>

## Sponsors

This event is hosted by the Association for Psychosocial Studies and sponsored by 'Psychoanalysis +' and the Birkbeck Centre for Contemporary Theatre.

## Psychoanalysis +



Psychoanalysis + is an international, interdisciplinary initiative founded and developed by Noreen Giffney, a psychoanalytic psychotherapist and psychosocial theorist, in 2013. It foregrounds psychoanalysis as a clinical practice and a theoretical tool for understanding culture, society and politics. Psychoanalysis + brings together individuals interested in clinical, theoretical and artistic approaches to, and applications of, psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis + points to the collaborative and interdisciplinary nature of activities and events forming part of the initiative. Psychoanalysis exists in an interdependent and mutually enriching relationship with the cultures and societies within which we as clinical and theoretical practitioners find ourselves. The '+' in the title gestures towards the fact that psychoanalysis is always more than itself. In other words, psychoanalytic practitioners have always drawn on and incorporated insights from other clinical and non-clinical fields into our work, for example, literature, psychiatry, music, neuroscience, art, psychology, drama, mathematics, medicine, philosophy, nursing, classics, social work, film and so on. The space between 'psychoanalysis' and '+' recognises the gap needed for productive things to happen which cannot be known in advance. The '+' also symbolises an openness to new possibilities and collaborations. I am interested in forming interdisciplinary collaborations (clinical, theoretical, artistic), especially collaborations that focus on bringing psychoanalysis into creative and productive dialogue with other disciplines and creative practices around psychosocial and psycho-cultural issues. The next event will be an online series of three public conversations entitled 'Psychoanalysis and the Culture-Breast' at the Freud Museum, London. The first conversation will take place between Noreen and conceptual artist, Jennifer Rubell (New York) in January 2023. Click [this link](#) for details.

E: [n.giffney@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:n.giffney@ulster.ac.uk)

W: [www.pschoanalyticpsychotherapyclinic.ie/psychoanalysis](http://www.pschoanalyticpsychotherapyclinic.ie/psychoanalysis)

## Birkbeck Centre for Contemporary Theatre



Birkbeck Centre for Contemporary Theatre is a space in which theatre makers, critics and audiences gather to share knowledge, ideas and practices relating to contemporary theatre and performance. We host an extensive programme of public events including workshops, seminars, lectures, symposia and performances. Our events are led by the research interests of Centre members and the current concerns of its Fellows and visiting artists. Our research falls into the following main strands:

- Cultural politics and identity
- Socially engaged practice
- New writing, dramaturgy and technology
- Making contemporary theatre
- Early modern theatre and performance

Through our work, theatre makers, writers, scholars and critics make use of the resources available in our Arts building at 43 Gordon Square. The Centre's work is also closely associated with Birkbeck's BA, MA and PhD programmes in Theatre and Drama Studies, Directing, Dramaturgy, and Creative Writing. The Centre's Co-Directors are Professor Fintan Walsh and Dr Louise Owen. Our thanks to Professor Fintan Walsh, Co-Director of the Birkbeck Centre for Contemporary Theatre, for facilitating us using the Centre for this event

W: <http://www7.bbk.ac.uk/contemporary-theatre/>

### Further Recommended Reading

- Steven H. Cooper, *Playing and Becoming in Psychoanalysis* (London and New York: Routledge 2023).
- Tamsin Cottis, *How It Feels To Be You: Objects, Play and Child Psychotherapy* (London: Karnac 2021).
- Laura Dethiville, 'The Area of Playing in the Cure' in *The Clinic of Donald W. Winnicott*, trans. Susan Ganley Lévy (London and New York: Routledge 2019), pp. 113-123.
- Joanna Fortune, *Why We Play* (London: Thread Books 2022).
- Lynn Froggett and Noreen Giffney, 'Knowing from the Inside' in Jill Bennett (ed.) *The Big Anxiety: Taking Care of Mental Health in Times of Crisis* (London: Bloomsbury 2022), pp. 41-54.
- Noreen Giffney, *The Culture-Breast in Psychoanalysis: Cultural Experiences and the Clinic* (London and New York: Routledge 2021).
- Annette Kuhn, 'Cultural Experience and the Gallery Film' in Annette Kuhn (ed.) *Little Madnesses: Winnicott, Transitional Phenomena and Cultural Experience* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris 2013), pp. 159-172.
- Mark O'Connell, 'Play' in *The Performing Art of Therapy: Acting Insights and Techniques for Clinicians* (Abingdon, OXON and New York: Routledge 2019), pp. 76-88.



- René Roussillon, 'Play and Potential' in *Primitive Agony and Symbolization* (London: Karnac 2011), pp. 89-106.
- Donald Winnicott, 'Playing: A Theoretical Statement' and 'Playing: Creative Activity and the Search for the Self' in *Playing and Reality* (Abingdon, Oxon and New York: 2005[1971]), pp. 51-70 and 71-86.

### Upcoming Events

Visit the website for the Association for Psychosocial Studies for details of upcoming events:  
<https://www.psychosocial-studies-association.org/>