Kolaiti, Christina (2022) The Teddy Bear
Cabinet - Photography Project and Exhibition. [Show/Exhibition]

RaY

Research at the University of York St John

For more information please contact RaY at ray@yorksj.ac.uk

The Teddy Bear Cabinet

Dr Christina Kolaiti

Est. 1841 | YORK ST JOHN UNIVERSITY

Institute for **Social Justice**
York St. John University

The *Teddy Bear Cabinet* features a series of sepia toned portraits of handcrafted teddy bears. The images resemble 19th century *cabinet cards*; an early form of portrait photography, which became associated with the family album. Often displayed in glass cabinets or exchanged between individuals, it established a practice of memory preservation through a physical object, the photograph.

Made from keepsakes such as baby clothes, muslins, pregnancy jumpers and baby blankets, the material presence of these treasured *memory bears* exhibits relatable narratives of nurturing in the elusive cabinet of stories of early motherhood.

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Caoimhe

Rufus

Telini

Isabella

Orestes

Annabel

Harris

Oliver

Cataleya

Heidi

Rowan

Seth

Caoimhe

Rufus

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Christina Kolaiti
Inertia: The Teddy Bear Cabinet

Christina Kolaiti is a senior lecturer in photography at York St John University. She is a visual artist whose interdisciplinary research collaborations with healthcare institutions have been recognised 'for an outstanding contribution to the art and science of photography' (rps.org). Her research activities have positioned the narrative properties of photographic portraiture as a form of reflective practice, within a diverse range of scientific and pedagogical contexts.

Christina's current research challenges the conflicting landscape of early motherhood, as this is conveyed through social prescriptions, which interpret the body as a metaphor for self-worth and aim at controlling the mother-infant physicality. She will be presenting her project Inertia, which explores the transitional identity of the new mother during the early days of post-birth experience, through a series of visual narratives, artefacts, and collaborative poetry.

The Teddy Bear Cabinet [Exhibition]
Creative Centre Atrium, 4th-7th July 2022

Exhibition: The Teddy Bear Cabinet

Series of 13 framed portraits of handcrafted teddy bears

Creative Centre Atrium
York St John University

July 4-7, 2022

Selfhood

Creative Explorations of Art, Health and Lived Experience

Institute for Social Justice

Est. 1841 | YORK ST JOHN UNIVERSITY

Tuesday 5 July 2022
York St John
Creative Centre
5.00pm to 7.30pm

FREE TO ATTEND

Selfhood

Creative Explorations of Art, Health and Lived Experience

The Institute for Social Justice brings together the creative practice of researchers in dance, film and photography to present Selfhood.

Our selfhood –our identity, our sense of who we are – is intimately connected to our health and mental and physical wellbeing. This event gives voice, motion and image to the lived experience of mental health, and explores how this impacts on selfhood.

The event will incorporate screenings, exhibition, audio performances, discussion and debate.

Elaine Harvey
Dancing with Dementia

Elaine Harvey is a dance artist whose current research uses dance and participatory practice to explore embodied experiences of living with dementia. Her work examines how the body might be better incorporated into the discussion around diverse conceptions of the self and lived experiences of dementia, and seeks to problematize the implicit assumption that selfhood depends exclusively on cognition. Elaine is a senior lecturer in dance and performance at York St John University.

Dancing with Dementia is an audio documentary which aims to animate and reimagine the metaphorical discourse around dementia by asking people affected by the condition to conceive of it as a dance.

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Tracy Willits
Pip, Pop and a Pandemic

Filmmaker Tracy Willits is a senior lecturer in media production with a background in health documentaries for broadcast television. Her current research project Pip Pop and a Pandemic was filmed over an 18-month period and aims to give a voice to people with schizophrenia and their carers. Filmed against the backdrop of the Coronavirus pandemic this documentary exposes the consequences of cuts to mental health services and the inadequacies of the benefits system. Tracy describes the project as a real-life 'I Daniel Blake' with deeply honest contributions from vulnerable people for whom everyday life can be a struggle.

Selfhood is a collaboration between the Institute for Social Justice and the School of the Arts. The event profiles the creative research of academics conducting socially engaged practice that impacts on students and the wider community.

Institute for Social Justice

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Selfhood: *Creative Explorations of Art, Health and Lived Experience*
Event organized by the Institute for Social Justice
Creative Centre, York St John University, July 5, 2022

Event documentation
Selfhood: *Creative Explorations of Art, Health and Lived Experience*
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The Teddy Bear Cabinet
by Christina Kolaiti

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The Teddy Bear Cabinet

by Christina Kolaiti

Christina Kolaiti is a senior lecturer in photography at York St John University. Her practice has converged the fields of arts and healthcare through collaborations with healthcare institutions and was recognised 'for an outstanding contribution to the art and science of photography' by the Royal Photographic Society in 2011.

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This project aims at engaging audiences with the concept of *secure attachment*, a theory introduced by British psychologist John Bowlby in 1969. This approach associates the physical mother-infant connection with emotional nurturing and has been described as "the lasting psychological connectedness between human beings".
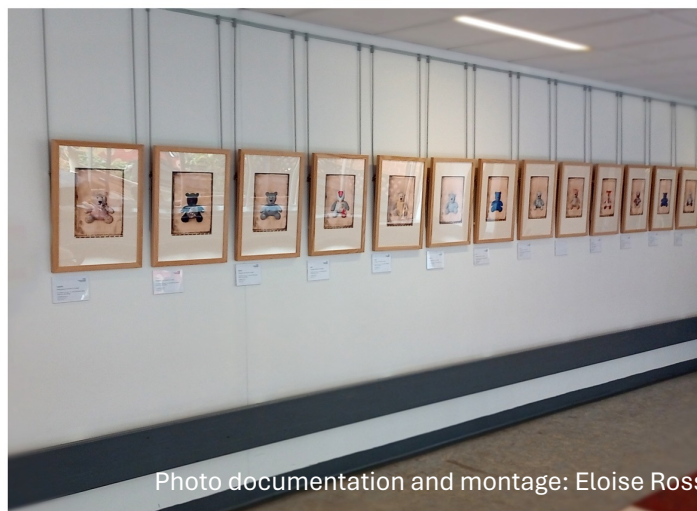
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Y&S Hospitals Charity

Photo documentation and montage: Eloise Ross

Exhibition: The Teddy Bear Cabinet

York Hospital Arts, York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Contemporary Art Gallery

York Hospital

July 8 – September 15, 2022

Hi Christina,

We took down your exhibition this week, it is now ready for collection from Park House (map attached) as we did one of the staff members said how much he would miss seeing the Teddys 😊