

# Art Therapy Online: ATOL

## **a group unconscious**

What do we mean by 'the unconscious'? The staff team on the MA in Art Psychotherapy began to explore this question on hearing the increasingly frequently stated view that the 'unconscious' was no longer relevant for consideration in the therapeutic process. We decided to use art-making and tapes of our focussed discussions in response to the art made as the data for our exploration. The Group Analytic Symposium has given us the opportunity to share the art of the early stages of this research with an audience sympathetic to our experiential method of teaching, that is, in psychodynamic interlocking groups, held together by a large art therapy group. Paralleling our students' end of year exhibition, this exhibition, 'a group unconscious', has raised issues about the potential of, and limitations to, art therapists' personal and social art practice and the role of art in art therapy. Trusting 'the unconscious', art-making and the group process in creating the exhibition has been a form of staff team development that feeds reflexively into the students' learning in their progress towards becoming art therapists.

Chris Brown, Jane Dudley, Kevin Jones, Lesley Morris, Dean Reddick, Sally Skaife, Robin Tipple, Diana Velada and Jill Westwood

15<sup>th</sup> Symposium in Group Analysis, Goldsmiths, University of London, 2011.  
Exhibition 'a group unconscious' in the Whitehead building foyer 28<sup>th</sup> August to 9<sup>th</sup> September 2011.