



Toronto
Institute for
Contemporary
Psychoanalysis

The Art (s) of Traumatic Loss and the Work of Mourning: Art-Making, Collaboration, and the Journey from Bystander to Empathic Self-Witness

"In a dark time, the eye begins to see"
Theodore Roethke

Donna Bassin, M.P.S, Ph.D

Saturday May 3, 2025 - 10am-4pm (EST)

IN PERSON and Online Streaming Available

Innis Town Hall Theatre
2 Sussex Ave, Toronto

This program has been approved by the Ontario Psychological Association (OPA) to offer continuing education for psychologists and psychological associates. This program meets the criteria for 4 continuing education credits.

About the Day

Donna Bassin will give a two-part 'artist talk' informed by psychodynamic insights and illustrations from her artwork, public installations, and films, delving into her multifaceted 'life-work' as a psychoanalyst, community activist, filmmaker, and photo-based artist. The aftermath of September 11 profoundly influenced her artistic and clinical work, reshaping psychoanalytic perspectives on traumatic loss and collective mourning. Her long-term projects critically examine the psychological scars of war, the erosion of democracy, and, more recently, the climate crisis and the environmental destruction of our planet.

Drawing from personal experiences and collaborations with those who have endured traumatic loss, she investigates art as a relational reparative force that can mitigate trauma's lasting impact, foster self-witnessing and community support, and transform absence into presence. She highlights the power of art to communicate psychological states that resist verbal language, create dynamic memorials, and cultivate spaces for healing, resilience, and post-traumatic growth.

About the Presenter

Donna Bassin, Ph.D., is a psychoanalyst, art therapist, artist, filmmaker, and author. A graduate of IPTAR, she serves as an associate professor at the NYU Postdoctoral Program for Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy. She has published work on gender, motherhood, community activism, and mourning; exhibited her art-based photography in museums and galleries; and screened her two award-winning full-length documentaries, *Leave No Soldier* and *The Mourning After*, at professional conferences and international film festivals.



She served as a consultant for the New York City Department of Mental Health after September 11 and co-founded Frontline Arts, a community for veterans involved in art-making. Her solo exhibition, *Portraits of a Precarious Planet*, is currently on display at the Newport Art Museum in Rhode Island. You can view her artwork at www.donnabassin.com.

Learning Objectives

After this presentation, participants will be able to:

- 1) Critically examine the intersection of psychoanalysis and artistic practice in facilitating mourning, self-witnessing, and the transformation of traumatic loss.;
- 2) Analyze how collective trauma—especially post-9/11, war-related, and ecological crises—reshapes psychoanalytic perspectives on grief and memory;
- 3) Evaluate the reparative role of art as a medium for externalizing unconscious processes, expressing psychological states beyond verbal communication, and fostering resilience.

Schedule

09:15-10:00 – Registration

10:00-12:00 – PART ONE (Including questions, reactions, and group discussion)

12:00-14:00 – Lunch

14:00 -16:00 – PART TWO (Including questions, reactions, and group discussion)

Fees

General Attendee \$180 Early Registration Date* \$210 after this date

TICP Member, Guest, Faculty: Before April 18th \$ 160 After \$175

Students \$100

*Prior to April 18th

Register Here

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