



IN MEMORIAM

Dr. John Casson

PhD, MA, BA (Hons), P.G.C.E., Dip. Dth., Dip. Psychd.

John Christey-Casson from the United Kingdom died on February 1, 2019 after a short illness. He passed away peacefully. At John's funeral and open reception guests were told there was to be NO BLACK, only bright colors please at John's request. All donations to the Bolton Hospice.

John was a drama therapist, Psychodrama therapist, Supervisor and Senior Trainer. He also taught English and Drama. His MA research was into the shamanic healing dramas of Sri Lanka (Birmingham 1979). He has written numerous academic articles and contributed seven chapters to edited books on dramatherapy and psychodrama, as well as writing his own book. He also taught English and Drama. His MA research was about shamanic healing dramas of Sri Lanka and he wrote numerous academic articles and contributed seven chapters to edited books on drama therapy and psychodrama, as well as writing his own book.

John was one of the most experienced therapists in his field. During a decade in adult mental health, he set up the largest team of Arts Therapists in the North of England and he established a service for women survivors of sexual abuse, (1990). He later ran the first groups for male survivors of sexual abuse with Madeline Andersen-Warren, (1999-2000). Throughout this time he worked with people who struggled with serious and enduring mental health problems including psychotic experiences. He registered for a doctorate at the Metropolitan University of Manchester in 1996 and completed his PhD research in 2002. In this groundbreaking study he showed how drama therapy and psychodrama could be safely and effectively used by people who hear voices. His book "Drama, Psychotherapy and Psychosis: drama therapy and psychodrama with people who hear voices" is based on that research and is published by Routledge. He wrote a five act play "Voices and Visions" also based on his research.

He was a founder member of the Northern Trust for Drama Therapy and the Northern School of Psychodrama. He was given a Life Time Achievement Award at the 2012 conference of the British Psychodrama Association. Before training as a therapist, John's background was in theatre and education. From 1973-84 he worked in theatre as a puppeteer, mask maker, playwright and director, performing in England, Europe, USA, Turkey, Iran and India.



A note from Bud Weiss

to his daughter, Anna-Marie:

Your father will be sorely missed. In addition to his brilliant scholarship and co-author partnering on the issues of Sir Henry Neville and Shakespeare which have so enriched my and thousands of others joy in the works. John's contributions to his version of psychodramatic work and the inventive tools he developed in helping to heal those whose lives were seared by trauma leading to breakdowns is singularly inspiring.

His wonderful spirit filled comical grace in his theatrical offerings which were both entertaining and often inspiring needed dialogue. His poetry, which I was blessed to read in our exchanges, was of the finest most rewarding I have been privileged to read and deeply enjoy including his patience and support for my poor offerings in return. I hope you will be publishing his poetry and let us know of it's publication. I was inestimably graced by our brief relationship in email exchanges.

John left this world having fully contributed to the betterment of all lives touched by him in the words of G.B. Shaw, John, in joy and with courage indeed helped the torch of life to burn as brightly as possible, passing it on so gloriously enhanced:

"This is the true joy in life, the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one; the being a force of nature instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy.

I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community, and as long as I live it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can.

I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work the more I live. I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no "brief candle" for me It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations."

George Bernard Shaw

My deepest condolences to you, your family and all John's friends in his loss. He will come again no more; "Never, never, never, never, never!"

Bud Weiss