

# ROYAL CENTRAL

SCHOOL OF SPEECH & DRAMA

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

**DR ALYSON COLEMAN,  
MA, PG CERT, PHD**

**Job title**

Lecturer, Drama and Movement Therapy

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## PROFILE

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As a working dramatherapist, I bring twenty years of clinical experience to my role of lecturer on the MA Drama and Movement Therapy Training. My strong interest in theatre began at the age of sixteen with a Performing Arts Diploma at Italia Conti Academy of Performing Arts, followed by several years of professional acting and dancing. Theatre workshops with older adults in nursing home settings introduced me to how drama enabled people to tell their stories, be moved by their experiences and get in touch with hidden aspects of themselves. Impacted by these early experiences I studied for a Pg Dip in Drama and Movement Therapy (Sesame) at Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in 1995. Since graduating I have worked with many different client groups in social, health and educational settings. Part of my academic development was a research MA in 2001 looking at a dramatherapy group of boys in a Pupil Referral Unit with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The findings of this project sparked my interest in the emotional, behavioural and psychological impact that bereavement and loss may result in. Twelve years ago Ali Kelly, a dramatherapist colleague, and I set up an NHS core funded bereavement service. In effect my working week is a partnership of training student dramatherapists, NHS clinical practice and supervision.

My professional doctorate, completed in 2015, focused on dramatherapists' experience of working with children with life limiting or life threatening illness. Part of the research involved focus groups with palliative care paediatric nurses, special educational needs school staff and therapists working with this client group. Out of the heuristic research phase I devised the play 'How Do You Think I Feel' which was performed several times as part of my dissemination of findings. During this exciting time I also won the Jenifer Elton Wilson Award for an 'outstanding Professional Knowledge' paper at Middlesex University.

I am Course Leader of the Creative Arts Supervision Training Diploma (CAST) which will be housed within Central from 2018. Since 2017 I have served as Chair of The British Association for Dramatherapists (BADth) which involves a key leadership and management role of the development of dramatherapy in the UK and internationally.

## EXTERNAL MEMBERSHIPS

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British Association of Dramatherapists

State Registered Dramatherapist, Health and Care Professions Council (HPCP)

## TEACHING AREAS

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Performing Research

Preparation for Clinical Practice  
Childhood Bereavement.  
Creative Supervision

## **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

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Dramatherapy with children with life limiting or life threatening conditions and or their siblings.  
Co- facilitation in dramatherapy.  
Childhood bereavement training for academic, health, social services and educational professionals.

## **COURSES**

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Drama and Movement Therapy, MA

## **KEY PUBLICATIONS**

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2012. Beginnings, Middle, End, Beginnings. *Dramatherapy with children, young people, and schools: enabling creativity, sociability, communication and learning*, Leigh, Gersch, Dix, Haythorne (Hove, East Sussex?; New York: Routledge), pg 117-127.

## **PRACTICE**

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2013 South London and Maudsley Trust – presentation of research and member of Arts Therapies panel.  
2013. Presentations and lecturing at St Christopher's Hospice Education Centre including the Colin Murray Parkes Lecture Series.  
Visiting lecturing on the Childhood Bereavement training.  
2011. Conference performance. European Consortium of Arts Therapies conference, Lucca, Italy.