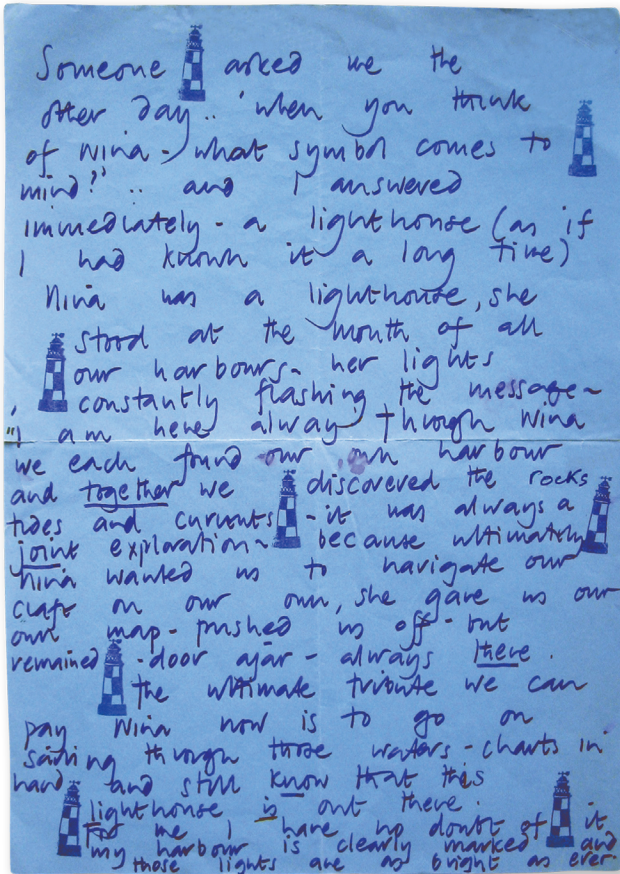


# HER HOUR COME ROUND AT LAST

## A GARLAND FOR NINA COLTART



Someone asked me the other day... when you think of Nina - what symbol comes to mind? .. and I answered immediately - a lighthouse (as if I had known it a long time)

Nina was a lighthouse, she stood at the mouth of all our harbours - her lights constantly flashing the message - "I am here always" through Nina we each found our own harbour and together we discovered the rocks, tides and currents - it was always a joint exploration - because ultimately Nina wanted us to navigate our craft on our own, she gave us our own map - pushed us off - but remained door ajar - always there.

The ultimate tribute we can pay Nina now is to go on sailing through those waters - charts in hand and still know that this lighthouse is out there.

For me I have no doubt of it - my harbour is clearly marked and these lights are as bright as ever.

Edited by Peter L. Rudnytsky and Gillian Preston

THE HISTORY OF PSYCHOANALYSIS SERIES

Series Editors: Professor Brett Kahr and Professor Peter L. Rudnytsky



HER HOUR COME  
ROUND AT LAST



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A Garland for Nina Coltart

*edited by*  
*Peter L. Rudnytsky*  
*and Gillian Preston*

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# CONTENTS

<i>LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS</i>	xi
<i>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</i>	xiii
<i>ABOUT THE EDITORS AND CONTRIBUTORS</i>	xv
<i>FOREWORD</i> Brett Kahr	xxv
<i>INTRODUCTION</i> Peter L. Rudnytsky	xxix
PART I: TRIBUTES (A) PATIENTS	1
CHAPTER ONE Nina-isms <i>Susan Budd</i>	3
CHAPTER TWO Ways of knowing <i>Muriel Mitcheson Brown</i>	11

CHAPTER THREE	
Nina and the parcel	27
<i>Alex Douglas-Morris</i>	
CHAPTER FOUR	
A Buddhist way of seeing	31
<i>Barbara Hopkinson</i>	
CHAPTER FIVE	
A one-off visit	35
<i>Kathleen Murphy</i>	
(B) SUPERVISEES	37
CHAPTER SIX	
A whole attitude to life and work	39
<i>Michael Brearley</i>	
CHAPTER SEVEN	
Charisma	41
<i>Mary Twyman</i>	
CHAPTER EIGHT	
Nina Coltart the consultant: hospitality conditional and unconditional	43
<i>Pina Antinucci</i>	
CHAPTER NINE	
My Nina	59
<i>Maggie Schaedel</i>	
CHAPTER TEN	
An "internal supervisor"	67
<i>Elizabeth Wilde McCormick</i>	
CHAPTER ELEVEN	
Baby Peter	71
<i>Mary Leatt</i>	
(C) FRIENDS	75
CHAPTER TWELVE	
Homage to a valued friend	77
<i>A. H. Brafman</i>	

CHAPTER THIRTEEN	
A recollection of friendship	83
<i>Nina Farhi</i>	
CHAPTER FOURTEEN	
My pen pal	89
<i>Gill Davies</i>	
CHAPTER FIFTEEN	
The silent listener	95
<i>Mona Serenius</i>	
CHAPTER SIXTEEN	
Nina Coltart: a person of paradox	113
<i>Stuart A. Pizer</i>	
CHAPTER SEVENTEEN	
Cometh the hour	117
<i>Brendan MacCarthy</i>	
(D) SCHOOLMATES	121
CHAPTER EIGHTEEN	
School friends	123
<i>Janet Mothersill</i>	
CHAPTER NINETEEN	
That sense of awe	125
<i>Jane Reid</i>	
CHAPTER TWENTY	
A knock on my door	127
<i>Antonia Gransden</i>	
CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE	
A very special time	129
<i>Anne E. Knight</i>	
(E) FAMILY	131
CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO	
Little Christmas	133
<i>Mary Nottidge</i>	

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE	
A chink of craziness	137
<i>Penelope Twine</i>	
CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR	
Memories of Neen	139
<i>Martin Preston</i>	
CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE	
Word games	143
<i>David Preston</i>	
CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX	
A five-minute introduction	145
<i>Gillian Preston</i>	
(F) READERS	149
CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN	
Bare attention: the love that is enough?	151
<i>Gherardo Amadei and Sara Boffito</i>	
CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT	
In praise of Nina Coltart	163
<i>Peter L. Rudnytsky</i>	
CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE	
For Nina Coltart: in memoriam, or calling the thing by its name	187
<i>Anthony Molino</i>	
PART II: UNCOLLECTED WRITINGS	195
(A) TRAVELS	
CHAPTER THIRTY	
The Grand Tour of New England	197
CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE	
The Trans-Siberian Railway	223
CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO	
A Tuscan holiday	231

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE	
Hotel drama in New York	239
(B) ESSAYS	247
CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR	
Diagnosis and assessment of suitability for psychoanalytic psychotherapy	249
CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE	
The assessment of psychological-mindedness in the psychiatric interview	261
CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX	
To go or not to go	267
CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVEN	
Psychoanalysis and Buddhism: does the ego exist?	271
CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT	
Self-regarding	279
CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE	
Ingredient X	283
(C) REVIEWS	297
CHAPTER FORTY	
<i>Reason and Violence</i> , by R. D. Laing and D. G. Cooper	299
CHAPTER FORTY-ONE	
<i>The Technique at Issue: Controversies in Psychoanalysis from Freud and Ferenczi to Michael Balint</i> , by André Haynal	301
CHAPTER FORTY-TWO	
<i>Mother, Madonna, Whore: The Idealization and Denigration of Motherhood</i> , by Estela V. Welldon	303
CHAPTER FORTY-THREE	
<i>Forces of Destiny: Psychoanalysis and Human Idiom</i> , by Christopher Bollas	307

CHAPTER FORTY-FOUR	
<i>Ignatius of Loyola: The Psychology of a Saint,</i> by W. W. Meissner	311
CHAPTER FORTY-FIVE	
<i>Body, Blood and Sexuality: A Psychoanalytic Study of</i> <i>St. Francis's Stigmata and Their Historical Context,</i> by Nitza Yarom	317
CHAPTER FORTY-SIX	
<i>The Electrified Tightrope,</i> by Michael Eigen	321
CHAPTER FORTY-SEVEN	
<i>Cultivating Intuition: An Introduction to Psychotherapy,</i> by Peter Lomas	327
CHAPTER FORTY-EIGHT	
Some comments on "The silent cry", by Mona Serenius	333
(D) OBITUARIES	337
CHAPTER FORTY-NINE	
Dr Maurice Friedman	339
CHAPTER FIFTY	
Jafar Kareem	343
(E) CURRICULUM VITAE	349
CHAPTER FIFTY-ONE	
Nina Elizabeth Cameron Coltart	351
Afterword	357
<i>Gillian Preston</i>	
INDEX	359

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Nina Coltart at High Leigh, Buddhist Society Summer School, 1982.	xxxiv
Alex Douglas-Morris's "Lighthouse letter", read by Gillian Preston at the Memorial Gathering and Tree Planting Ceremony at the Amaravati Buddhist Monastery, Great Gaddesden, Hertfordshire (UK), 4 October 1997, 100 days after NECC's death.	29
Lithograph by Matthew Wright of New End leading to Well Road, mid-1980s, with NECC's house at 1A Well Road indicated by an arrow.	144
"A Human Being", calligraphy by NECC, a practice piece with arrows, lines, and spacings, etc., showing how she worked.	278
"And the sprawling Bear", calligraphy by NECC.	355



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I would be remiss if I did not also voice my gratitude to Brett Kahr—scholar, clinician, and kindred spirit. I am honoured to have been invited to join him in serving as general editor of the History of Psychoanalysis Series at Karnac, and could not be more pleased to be launching our new venture with this book. He and Kim Criswell have provided me with a secure base in London. Special

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Finally, Gillian Preston and I have done our best to secure the requisite permissions to reprint the previously published work of Nina Coltart, as well as the obituaries by A. H. Brafman and Brendan MacCarthy. With apologies for any oversights, we are grateful to Ivan Ward, editor of the collection *Is Psychoanalysis Another Religion?*, as well as to the editors of the *Scientific Bulletin* of the British Psychoanalytical Society, *Contemporary Psychoanalysis*, the *British Journal of Psychiatry*, *Raft*, *Interbeing*, *The Sunday Times*, the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, the *British Journal of Psychotherapy*, *Free Associations*, *Winnicott Studies*, and the *International Forum of Psychoanalysis* for their kind co-operation. The original provenance of any portion of this book that has appeared elsewhere is specified at the foot of the first page of the given chapter.

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**Alex Douglas-Morris** lives in Richmond on the outskirts of London with her husband, David. They have two daughters, Freya, a painter and writer in London, and Tamara, a film composer living in New York. After a three-year textile course at Bournemouth School of Art, followed by a Montessori Teacher Training course, Alex taught art in various schools around London. She now works on commission from her studio in Richmond. Alex saw Nina Coltart over a period of twenty-eight years, in both Hampstead and Leighton Buzzard.

The late **Nina Farhi** was for many years a training therapist and training supervisor at the Guild of Psychotherapists. As an analytic psychotherapist who has also taught, lectured, and written over the past thirty-five years, she was for more than twenty years first assistant and then the Director of The Squiggle Foundation, a “place” where analysts, teachers, nursery nurses, doctors, writers, artists, et al. weekly studied and cultivated the tradition of D. W. Winnicott. Formerly a literary and political editor, she was married to the writer, Moris Farhi, with whom she had a daughter and a precious granddaughter.

**Antonia Gransden** attended Somerville College, Oxford, as a Coombs Scholar from 1947 to 1951, graduating with a First Class degree in Modern History. She received a PhD from the University of London in 1957 and a DLitt from Oxford in 1984. She was from 1952 to 1962 Assistant Keeper, Department of Manuscripts, in the British Museum. After being a Tutor at University Hall, Buckland, Berkshire, from 1963 to 1965, she subsequently taught medieval history at the University of Nottingham, retiring as Reader in 1989. She has published four books, three editions of texts and many articles and reviews, mainly on medieval historical writing and on the history of the abbey of Bury St Edmunds.

**Barbara Hopkinson** won a scholarship to grammar school, but her formal education ended when the school was evacuated in 1939. She learned shorthand and typing, and had her first job in a large insurance company. She then worked at Elizabeth Arden, the top beauty salon in London, before joining the Navy from 1943 to 1945. In 1947, she married for the first time and set up a mink and poultry farm in the country. Her daughter, Susan, was born in 1950. After living briefly in Canada, she returned to England and, in 1956, she became Secretary to the Assistant to the Superintendent at Claybury Mental Hospital. Remarried in 1963, she took over a lovely country house hotel in Suffolk. In 1968, she made contact with Nina Coltart. After the death of her second husband in 1970, she took over management of a bookshop, and in 1974 left to open her own shop. She sold the business after a few years and took up publishing, dedicating her first book, *Suffolk in Colour* (1982), to Nina Coltart. Reprinted in 1987, it has sold more than 22,000 copies.

**Anne E. Knight** grew up as an “army brat” in places including the Philippines, and graduated from Radcliffe College in 1946. After working in Occupied Japan, she attended Somerville College, Oxford, from 1948 to 1950, where Nina Coltart became her best friend. Their voyage on the *Queen Elizabeth II* in 1950 brought Nina Coltart to America for the first time. Anne Knight worked as a stockbroker in New York, New Haven, and San Antonio, where she lives with her husband, Graham, a chemical process engineer and rancher. They have a daughter, Ellenore.

**Mary Leatt**, born Mary Macklin Webb in Dartford, Kent, worked during the Second World War in Wartime Nurseries as a nursery assistant and then as a warden responsible for arranging meaningful activities for children aged three to five years. After the war, she taught for eight years as an infant teacher and nursery teacher at Dudden Hill Lane Infant’s School in London. In 1955, she married John Leatt, a secondary school teacher, with whom she had three children, Pamela (b. 1958), Peter (b. 1961), and Jeffrey (b. 1963). The Leatts met Nina Coltart when she needed to study a baby, their son Peter, on weekly visits for a year as part of her psychoanalytic training. In 1966, the family left London and moved to Broadstairs, Kent. Although Mrs Leatt did not see Nina Coltart again after leaving London, they exchanged letters, every year, at Christmas.

Born in 1927, the late **Brendan MacCarthy** trained as a physician at University College Dublin, qualifying in 1951, then proceeded to become a psychiatrist, receiving his Diploma in Psychological Medicine in 1956. After training at the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, he rose to prominence as both an adult psychoanalyst and as a child psychoanalyst in the British Psychoanalytical Society. As a Consultant Psychiatrist at the Cassel Hospital, in Ham, Richmond, Surrey, and then at the Child Guidance Training Centre, attached to the Tavistock Clinic in North London, and as a psychoanalyst in private practice on Harley Street, in Central London, he became increasingly interested in the treatment of trauma, especially incest. He eventually became Chairman of the Child Guidance Training Centre from 1977 to 1981, and soon thereafter became the Director of the London Clinic of Psycho-Analysis from 1985 to 1993, as well as a Training Analyst at the Institute of Psycho-Analysis. From 1993

to 1996, MacCarthy served as President of the British Psychoanalytical Society. He died in 2005, and is survived by his wife Doreen MacCarthy, a former psychiatric nurse, and by their three sons and two grandchildren.

**Elizabeth Wilde McCormick** has been a writer and psychotherapist, in London and Suffolk, for thirty years. With a background in social psychiatry, humanistic and transpersonal psychology, and cognitive analytic therapy, she is a founding member of the Association for Cognitive Analytic Therapy. From 1996 to 2001, with Nigel Wellings, she was Director of Training at the Centre for Transpersonal Psychology in London. She currently writes and practises as a contemplative psychotherapist in Suffolk. Her books include *Change for the Better* (1990), *Surviving Breakdown* (1997), *Living on the Edge* (1997), *Transpersonal Psychotherapy: Theory and Practice* (2000, with Nigel Wellings), *Your Heart and You* (2001, with Leisa Freeman), and *Nothing to Lose: Psychotherapy, Buddhism and Living Life* (2002).

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**Janet Mothersill** was a school friend of Nina Coltart's. After graduating from Cambridge with a degree in classics, she taught for a year, then married and devoted her time to raising a family. When her children were in their late teens, she worked from home as part of a team under the leadership of Professor John Morris of London

University preparing for the first time an edition of the *Domesday Book* with a translation alongside the original text. After that, she worked part-time for fifteen years as paid adviser and tutor to her local Citizens Advice Bureau. She was also governor of a girls' day and boarding school in the 1970s and 1980s.

**Kathleen Murphy** was a very ordinary, down to earth basic bank clerk—in the days when all bank clerks were hardworking and honest, and not involved in the financial world as the banking industry is today.

**Mary Nottidge** was born in 1967 and grew up in Essex. At the age of eighteen she spent a year in Zimbabwe teaching English, history, and RE at a rural mission school. She studied modern history at Jesus College, Oxford, and has lived in the Hebridean Isle of Coll, in the former East Germany, in Frankfurt, and in London, working variously for a gap-year charity, as an English teacher, in sales and marketing, and as a head-hunter. She is married with four children and lives in London, where she is writing her first novel.

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**David Preston**, who celebrated his ninetieth birthday in 2008, was educated at Rugby School and Oriel College, Oxford, where he read Politics, Philosophy and Economics, taking his degree in 1939. In March 1940, he was commissioned as Second Lieutenant in the Green Howards, and was a platoon commander in the Battle of

Arras. From 1940 to 1945 he was a prisoner of war in Germany and Poland. He qualified as a solicitor in 1948, and from 1949 until his retirement in 1981 he was a partner in a family firm of solicitors in Bournemouth. He married Gill Coltart on 3 April 1956 in Hampstead Parish Church, North London, and at present lives in the New Forest, Hampshire.

**Gillian Preston**, née Coltart, was born in Kent on 30 April 1932. When her family home was bombed in May 1940, she was moved to a “holiday home” in Cornwall that had recently been purchased for such an eventuality. She was educated at Sherborne School for Girls in Dorset from 1942 to 1950. She trained as a primary school teacher at the Roehampton Educational Institute, West London, from 1950 to 1953. Until her marriage to David Preston in 1956, she taught Reception Class in Middlesex and Northwest London. After the birth of her four children, she established a branch of the Preschool Play Group Movement in Bournemouth. In the early 1980s she joined the newly formed Adult Literacy Scheme, aimed at helping adults—chiefly immigrants—with reading and language difficulties. From 1983 to 1997 she worked as a Welfare Officer for the Donkey Sanctuary, in Sidmouth, Devon, covering West Hampshire and the New Forest. She is currently involved with local groups of Friends of the Earth and Amnesty International.

**Martin Preston** is the youngest of David and Gillian Preston’s four children. After taking his first degree in Biochemistry and Genetics, he went into public relations and marketing. He returned to university to become an osteopath and founded his own clinic, building it up to become a leading regional centre for natural healthcare. He has recently qualified as a Personal Trainer and a Life Coach and works part-time as a Clinical Studies and Technique tutor at Oxford Brookes University. In 2002 he was appointed Team Osteopath to the Red Devils Freefall Team, the display team for the Parachute Regiment and also for the British Army as a whole. The team trained him in skydiving, and he was one of the jumpers on the First Everest Skydive. In addition to enjoying other sports including skiing, motorcycling and martial arts, and to being a registered Tai Chi Chaun instructor, he plays mainly baroque and early classical music on a wooden treble recorder and tenor saxophone with a slightly

mad local jazz band. He lives and practises in Wiltshire, on the north edge of the Salisbury Plain, near Stonehenge, and is the father of two teenage sons.

**Jane Reid** was a school friend of Nina Coltart's. She received her MA in English from Oxford in 1954, and an MA with Distinction from Cape Town in 1982. Owing to her husband's work as a diplomat, her career has been varied, and included journalism, teaching at school and university levels, research, and trust administration. Since 2000 she has served as Administrator of the Incorporated Edwin Austen Abbey Memorial Scholarships.

**Peter L. Rudnytsky** is Professor of English at the University of Florida and the editor of *American Imago*. He is an Honorary Member of the American Psychoanalytic Association and a Corresponding Member of the Institute of Contemporary Psychoanalysis in Los Angeles. He recently became a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and has opened a part-time private practice in Gainesville. A Fulbright Freud Scholar of Psychoanalysis in Vienna in 2004, he received the Gradiva Award for *Reading Psychoanalysis: Freud, Rank, Ferenczi, Groddeck* (2002). His numerous edited books include *Transitional Objects and Potential Spaces: Literary Uses of D. W. Winnicott* (1993), *Ferenczi's Turn in Psychoanalysis* (1996), and *Psychoanalysis and Narrative Medicine* (2008). In addition to *Rescuing Psychoanalysis from Freud and Other Essays in Re-Vision*, published concurrently by Karnac with the present volume in the History of Psychoanalysis Series, he is the author of *Freud and Oedipus* (1987), *The Psychoanalytic Vocation: Rank, Winnicott, and the Legacy of Freud* (1991), and *Psychoanalytic Conversations: Interviews with Clinicians, Commentators, and Critics* (2000).

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**Mona Serenius** was born in Finland and in her early childhood twice evacuated to Sweden for periods of 1½ years each during the Second World War. She studied German and French at the

Universities of Helsinki and Stockholm, earning an MA, and spent several years in Nashville, Tennessee, and Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. She married and moved to live in Sweden in 1963, and is the mother of three grown children. She is the former production editor and managing editor of several scientific journals, including *International Forum of Psychoanalysis*.

**Penelope Twine** (née Preston) is the niece of Nina Coltart. Happily married to Dave with two children, Sam and Tara, she enjoys the wilds of Dartmoor and the seas of beloved Cornwall. She holds a BSc (Hons) in Social Psychology and a Diploma in Psychiatric Social Work. She has served in various posts within Social Services, and is currently working in Devon.

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## FOREWORD

I recently attended a clinical discussion group during which a senior colleague presented the case of a troubled borderline patient who, after attending regular psychoanalytical sessions on the couch, would then, afterwards, visit a Buddhist retreat. The patient also displayed marked suicidal tendencies and had once taken an overdose of barbiturates. After listening to this highly abbreviated report of the patient's long and intricate life, an even more senior colleague in the seminar arched his eyebrows and muttered, in a sneering tone, "Oh, dear, that could be Nina Coltart."

As we know, Dr Nina Coltart practised psychoanalysis for many decades. She also subscribed to the tenets of Buddhism. And in the end, she made the decision to terminate her own life, having developed progressive osteoporosis. Yet, one would have to be a very small-minded, limited, and ill-informed person to remember Coltart as nothing more than a devotee of some mystical Eastern philosophy who died from an overdose.

Psychoanalytical clinicians endeavour to keep a very open mind about our patients, striving to suspend judgement and final diagnostic conclusions until we have accumulated all the evidence. If only we applied that quality of care and thought to our assessments of colleagues.

One need read no further than the opening tributes in Peter Rudnytsky's and Gillian Preston's moving *festschrift* to Coltart in order to appreciate the remarkable way in which this seasoned psychoanalyst transformed so many lives and moved so many others. As Muriel Mitcheson Brown, Coltart's one-time analysand, has observed, "From the start, analysis with Nina was a totally different experience: she made it seem natural, desirable, and above all, full of potential for change. She gave me a new experience, a wonderful sense of optimism." Brown then elaborates that,

Analysis with Nina was a fascinating mix of a very correct, classical approach to technique and an intensely real personal relationship. The sessions were often hard, timing was impeccably accurate, the transference was interpreted over and over again, but there was a flexibility that allowed for the interplay of humour, shared experience, practical advice, and a good dose of common sense. I felt both held and contained and, at the same time, that I had the space to move around.

In truth, I cannot recall such a touching and thoughtful assessment of a psychoanalytical experience.

Another former patient, Alex Douglas-Morris, has described Coltart as a "lighthouse", poeticizing that, "she stood at the mouth of all our harbours—her lights constantly flashing the message—"I am here". And still another sometime patient, Barbara Hopkinson, has reflected that, "Her wise and benign influence has not ended with her death."

*Her Hour Come Round at Last: A Garland for Nina Coltart* brims with similarly loving, reflective personal testimony from other former patients, as well as from supervisees, colleagues, friends, schoolmates, and relatives. Some had only brief contact with Coltart, but nevertheless found themselves very touched and enhanced by their acquaintance. At least one contributor, Mona Serenius, a resident of Sweden, knew Coltart only through correspondence: "I never actually met Nina Coltart in person. Nevertheless, I came to regard her as one of my most intimate friends." Others testify to Coltart's capacity for enduring attachments. Mary Leatt first met Dr Coltart in 1961 when Coltart came to observe Mrs Leatt's baby son Peter for an infant observation as part of the psychoanalytical training. Many infant observers lose

contact with the families whom they study after the completion of the formal course requirements, but Coltart remained in contact with the Leatt family for more than thirty years, and even contributed £500 towards the cost of Peter's college tuition (a princely sum in those days).

Others have noted Coltart's erudition, her lifelong love of learning, her gargantuan capacity for work, her deep devotion to psychoanalytical causes and committees, her practical and financial generosity to those in need, and her healthy suspicion of authority. As publisher Gill Davies has recalled,

Nina's views were such a relief to a publisher in daily receipt of too many self-important, yet inhibited, letters from those who had appointed themselves to the High and Mighty and the Precious. They made me grind my teeth. She told me I had reason to.

This array of beautifully written, heartfelt tributes provides abundant evidence of Coltart's sanity, zestiness, wisdom, good humour, spontaneity, rigour, reliability, and professionalism, as well as her deep capacity to love. These reminiscences challenge and scotch for all time the stereotypes and the gossip that have threatened to surround Dr Coltart in the years since her death.

But Rudnytsky's and Preston's "garland" offers us much more. The editors have treated us to no fewer than twenty-one of Coltart's previously unpublished or uncollected essays, diaries, and reviews, encompassing her travel writings, as well as her considered psychoanalytical observations on a range of topics from Buddhism, to "Self-Regarding", to "Ingredient X", as well as her two classic papers on assessment and psychological-mindedness, arguably her most famous and evergreen clinical contributions based on her extensive experience of conducting consultations at the London Clinic of Psycho-Analysis and in her busy Hampstead private practice. These writings bring Coltart back to life with a touching immediacy, and one can enjoy her *joie de vivre*, her intelligence, and her quest for truth as though listening to a living, breathing person.

Rudnytsky and Preston deserve our thanks for having assembled the contributions, testimonials, and reminiscences of no fewer than thirty people, itself a proof of the love and respect that so many have for Nina Coltart. Peter Rudnytsky, an experienced historian, clinician, author, and editor, has deployed his characteristically

meticulous scholarly skills to shape a durable and inspiring *festschrift*, and Gillian Preston, Nina Coltart's beloved sister, has collaborated closely with Rudnytsky, providing unparalleled access to unpublished materials and contacts. Above all, Gillian Preston deserves our inestimable thanks for her tremendous generosity of spirit in sharing her precious sister with the wider psychoanalytical and historical communities in such a selfless manner. No doubt she possesses many of her sister's fine qualities, and no doubt she helped to foster and facilitate some of these qualities in Nina Coltart as well.

Although deeply appreciative and respectful, this "garland" never becomes hagiographical, and it treats all the aspects of Nina Coltart's life in a refreshing, transparent manner. When I received the first draft of the manuscript for this book, I read it straight through in one or two sittings; and then, some months later, when I received the revised version, I read it again with a complete sense of wonder, as though encountering the chapters for the first time—a rare experience indeed. This book possesses all the best qualities of a riveting biography that one cannot put down.

Sadly, I had only brief contact with Nina Coltart while researching my own biography of Donald Winnicott. After reading Rudnytsky's and Preston's garland, I deeply regret that I did not have a fuller association with Coltart. But reading these tributes allows one to enjoy a rich engagement with Coltart, offering a deeply satisfying experience, as well as a master class in the clinical arts, and a benchmark against which to measure one's own professional and private life.

Professor Brett Kahr,  
Series Co-Editor

# Introduction

*Peter L. Rudnytsky*

*“Si monumentum requiris, circumspice”*. This epitaph on the tomb of Sir Christopher Wren, enjoining those who wish to see the monument of the architect of St Paul’s Cathedral to look around them, which is quoted by Nina Coltart in both her published obituaries of others, stands fittingly also at the head of the present volume. For Coltart, who was singularly unconcerned with any form of personal immortality, is here remembered in the two ways that would undoubtedly have pleased her best: first, by an outpouring of tributes from people whose lives she touched; and second, through her own writings.

The inspiration that has eventuated in this book befell me when I read in the interview Coltart gave to Anthony Molino shortly before her death that “a lot of my papers aren’t anywhere to be found . . . an awful lot of them haven’t been published” (Molino, 1997, p. 184). Since, unlike almost all the other contributors, I never had the good fortune of encountering Nina Coltart during her lifetime, and hence had come to “know” her solely through her writings, the prospect that there might be unpublished manuscripts of hers still extant riveted my attention.

To find out more, I realized I would have to make contact with Coltart's sister, Gillian Preston. But how to do this? Although I had not met Neville Symington, I noted he was one of the contemporary analysts most often cited by Coltart, and I hoped he might be willing to help me. I obtained Symington's co-ordinates in Sydney, Australia, from an article in the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*; we arranged to speak on the telephone, and in due course he graciously provided me with Mrs Preston's address. She and I entered into a correspondence, which culminated in my making two trips to the south of England to visit Gillian and David Preston, in Sway, Hampshire—the first in November 2007, and the second, together with my wife Cheryl, almost exactly one year later.

This book would not have been possible without the steadfast support and unstinting co-operation of Gillian Preston. In addition to making available to me all her meticulously preserved files of Nina's manuscripts—Nina having destroyed all her records of patients prior to her death in 1997—as well as of her own voluminous correspondence with the people whom she had notified of this sad event, Gillian was indefatigable in reaching out to everyone in Nina's vast circle to invite them to contribute to what was now our joint project. For it immediately became apparent during our first meeting that, in order to do justice to Nina's memory, this volume needed to contain not only her own trove of unpublished or uncollected writings but also essays in her honour by those who, through having known and loved her, were best equipped to celebrate the greatness of her spirit.

In weaving our garland, we have been guided by a principle of inclusiveness. This means that we have welcomed each and every person who came forward and offered to write about Nina. We likewise made diligent efforts to recruit all those whom we knew to have been close to Nina, including the members of the British Psychoanalytical Society who were her colleagues or her analysts in the Independent group. The reader may, therefore, conclude, if one or another name that one might have expected to find among our contributors happens to be missing, the explanation is that that individual, for whatever reason, chose not to join us in paying homage to Nina Coltart—a decision we naturally respected, however much we might have regretted it.

The same principle of inclusiveness steered us in compiling Coltart's own writings. To the best of my knowledge, this volume now makes available all the texts by Coltart that cannot be found in the three books she published during her lifetime: the two collections of her papers, *Slouching towards Bethlehem* and *The Baby and the Bathwater*, as well as *How to Survive as a Psychotherapist*. The only exception to this statement is that we have not included any of Coltart's letters. As many of our authors testify, Coltart was a correspondent cut from the vintage cloth of Dickens or Freud: someone who always seemed to answer by "return of post", and whose letters were eagerly anticipated "events". Extracts from Coltart's letters are quoted by Mona Serenius in "The silent listener", as well as by other contributors, so the reader can at least get a flavour of her gifts in this domain. Although limitations of space precluded us from accepting Neville Symington's proposition that we publish his correspondence with Coltart—running to some fifty pages of single-spaced type—in its entirety, I hope he will execute his plan to bring out a book that contains his epistolary dialogue with Coltart along with those with other analysts.

Probably the greatest treat in store for the reader is Coltart's trilogy of travel narratives, with the "Hotel drama in New York" that I have placed at the end of this sequence like an ancient satyr play. In each of her diaries, whether aboard the Trans-Siberian Railway or on holiday in Tuscany, Coltart vividly displays what Gill Davies terms her "gift of experiencing an event, being part of it, and yet watching it as though she were separate from it". The *pièce de résistance*, "The Grand Tour of New England", written in November 1986, allows us to see Coltart, with Christopher Bollas in tow as her cicerone, "after years of humdrum slog", astonished at being greeted as "an extremely distinguished individual" both at the Austen Riggs Center and at the Boston Psychoanalytic Society.

As it turns out, apart from the travelogues, and the 1989 *curriculum vitae* I unearthed among her papers, only one of Coltart's essays, her 1996 Winnicott Centenary Lecture at the Squiggle Foundation, "Ingredient X"—a major find—and at most one book review, of André Haynal's *The Technique at Issue*, had not been published in any venue. Still, I think there is incontestable value in being able to survey the full range of Coltart's achievements as a writer, including her nine reviews and two obituaries. This breadth

reflects her manifold complexity as a person. The reader can contemplate, in turn, Coltart the eagle-eyed observer of manners and morals; the connoisseur of food; the acclaimed diagnostician; the philosopher of the end of life; the Buddhist aware that the “self” is merely an illusion; the judicious critic; the inspiring eulogist. Above all, both in her own writings and in the tributes proffered by others, Coltart comes through in this book as she was in life: not only an exceptionally rich and fascinating human being but also—her own disclaimers notwithstanding—one of the greatest figures in British psychoanalysis, and indeed of psychoanalysis *tout court* in the twentieth century.

Our title derives from the same poem by W. B. Yeats, “The Second Coming”, from which Coltart took the phrase “slouching towards Bethlehem” in the paper that made her reputation. First and foremost, “her hour come round at last” is meant to convey that, here, Coltart is finally being given a measure of the recognition that has long been her due. She never received an obituary in the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*—an omission that can only partially be explained by her decision in 1994 to resign from the British Society—and, as I have noted, even now Gillian Preston and I have not always met with success in seeking to persuade the analysts who surely owe the most to Coltart to acknowledge their debt to her in our pages. But this brings me to a second level of meaning to our title, one that gestures towards what both Neville Symington (in a personal communication) and Muriel Mitcheson Brown have characterized as Coltart’s “darker side”. As Anthony Molino and I discuss explicitly, and other contributors approach more obliquely, Coltart ended her life in suicide—a supremely mysterious and disturbing act, whatever its ethical justifications. Thus, if Coltart counsels us in “Slouching towards Bethlehem” to have the faith in the psychoanalytic process that allows the “rough beast” of the patient’s trauma to be born in its own fullness of time, we cannot escape the realization that Nina herself can also be likened to a “rough beast” whose resolute iconoclasm, culminating in the shock of her death, has had a traumatic impact on the world of British psychoanalysis.

The circumstances not only of Coltart’s death but also of her life were indelibly marked by tragedy. As she made public in her interview with Molino, and revealed to close friends privately, both her

parents died in 1940 in a train crash, when both she and Gill were still very young. This catastrophe perforce affected both sisters profoundly. I mention these “darker” matters here to pay my own respects not only to Nina Coltart but also to Gillian Preston, for whom it must not always have been easy to revisit in my company these memories of her past. While fiercely loyal to her beloved sister, Gill has been heroic in rendering her own best tribute to Nina Coltart by joining forces with me and serving as the indispensable co-editor of this book.

### *Reference*

Molino, A. (Ed.) (1997). *Freely Associated: Encounters in Psychoanalysis with Christopher Bollas, Joyce McDougall, Michael Eigen, Adam Phillips, Nina Coltart*. London: Free Association Books.



And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,  
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

[W. B. Yeats, "The Second Coming"]



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# PART I: TRIBUTES

## (A) PATIENTS



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## Nina-isms

*Susan Budd*

I was one of Nina Coltart's analysands.

It is difficult to write about a relationship that is both so intimate and yet so remote; for example, I never, either during my analysis or after it, ever called her "Nina". But it is inevitable that, during a long training analysis, the patient comes to know the analyst pretty well, and the training analysis is the central part of an intensive apprenticeship by means of which we are turned into analysts and members of the same profession. After I had finished my analysis, I used to write to Nina, and go to see her from time to time, and I took over from her as the analytic consultant to a psychotherapy training in Birmingham. During these encounters, and in the latter stages of my analysis, she told me quite a bit about her attitude to our rather odd vocation, and I have tried to record here some of her various aphorisms and what I think she meant by them. (I did think of calling this piece "The wit and wisdom of Nina Coltart", but I can well imagine just how indignant that would have made her.)