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Cover picture

Darkness by Lucille Marshall.

I am a Core Trainee with two major passions in life: psychiatry and art. When I was in third year of medicine at HYMS in 2012 I took a Student Select Component (SSC) with Consultant Psychiatrist Dr B Adams in York. The SSC was called 'Dark Side of the Moon' and was aimed at understanding how the arts can help describe mental illness and how the arts may help support the mental health of service users. Students were given free range on the media and aspect of mental health that they wished to explore to culminate in a presentation at the end of three weeks. I was eager to create a piece of art using mixed media to express a young woman's experience of perfectionism; perfectionism that exhibited itself in anorexia nervosa and a mixed anxiety & depressive disorder. When I showcased my explorative sketchbook and painting to the service users who had been involved in the SSC and had promoted art therapy, they found the work highly relatable. There is something in the physical manipulation of materials on a piece of canvas that was once blank in explaining mental distress that words often can't do justice. No matter what your background, education or native tongue, art is universally understood; it is felt.

We are always looking for interesting and visually appealing images for the cover of the Journal and would welcome suggestions or pictures, which should be sent to Dr Allan Beveridge, British Journal of Psychiatry, 21 Prescot Street, London, E1 8BB, UK or bjp@rcpsych.ac.uk.

