



columns

schizophrenia during the 1960s. He was eventually helped to recover, and subsequently became a psychotherapist himself. His young therapist, Barbro Sandin, became an internationally famous researcher into psychotherapeutic aspects of the treatment of schizophrenia. She developed the Säter Model at the Säter Mental Hospital; was awarded an International Prize of Honour by ISPS (the International Symposium for Psychotherapy of Schizophrenia) in London, 1997, and in 1998 she instituted in Ludvika a Nursing Home Foundation for young people suffering from schizophrenia.

Carl Unander-Scharin is a largely self-taught Swedish composer, a professional singer who has been composing for some 20 years – on his showing, one whose name should become known outside his own country. *The King of Fools* (1995–1996) is his first stage opera, composed for the voices of the singers in its successful premiere and this 1998 recording.

The small instrumental ensemble has a quartet of solo strings, six winds and

percussion, with recorder, synthesizer and 'radio-organist', all used with economy, precision and inventiveness throughout. The singers double in different roles, sometimes as both patients and hospital staff. The psychotic protagonist is accompanied by high strings in his interaction with the outer world, with the synthesizer for his hallucinations. In the first act he loses his grip on reality and descends into total detachment. In the second act human contact from an empathic social worker leads to therapeutic help and a tenuous recovery.

This is a multi-layered and subtle work. Its brilliantly conceived libretto sharply characterises the world of mental patients in Sweden at the time, with an emphasis on mechanistic physical treatments with drugs and electroconvulsive therapy, ignoring the content and pain of the patients' inner worlds. Elgard Johnsson, writing in 1985, acknowledges changes in standard treatment methods by that time.

Pathos and poetic imagery coexist with cruel caricature. The ward doctor, Napoleon, operates according to the

'medical model' Bible of the medical director, God the Father, and the social worker trainee, who wants to try something different, is God the Mother. There is a drug aria, a neuroleptic chorus, an aria about 'psychotic states of mind caused by biochemical changes in the brain...', occupational therapy 'all evil will be cured by hard work...' and much else that will be familiar to all who have worked in the not-so-old mental hospitals.

The performances and recording are exemplary and the instrumental music, both original and accessible, never overwhelms the singers – music theatre, perhaps, without the elaboration and complexity of most contemporary operas. The lavishly illustrated 100 page booklet has a useful English summary of the Swedish text.

This is an unusual serious theatre work, marvellously realised for CD, absorbing throughout and moving too – once heard, never forgotten. It merits UK production and the attention of psychiatrists.

P. Grahame Woolf

miscellany

Institute of Psychotherapy and Disability call for members

The newly-formed and provisionally-named Institute of Psychotherapy and Disability (IPD) is now inviting applications for membership from psychiatrists and other mental health professionals working in learning disability. Further information, criteria for membership and application forms are available from Nicola Chadd, IPD Membership Secretary, Specialist Psychotherapy Service, Woodlands Road Clinic, Middlesbrough TS1 3BL (e-mail: nicola@chadds.freeseerve.co.uk).

The year 2000 laureate of the Geneva Prize for Human Rights in Psychiatry

The Geneva Prize for Human Rights in Psychiatry was created in 1998 in Geneva

to award individuals or organisations having distinguished themselves through their work in the defence of fairness, humanistic values and human rights in the field of psychiatric care. The first award was given in September 2000 to an association named Geneva Initiative on Psychiatry. Dr Jim Birley (Chairman 1995–2000) accepted the prize. The prizewinner was selected from among a number of candidates from developing and developed countries by an international jury presided over by M. Robert Badinter, former French Minister of Justice. For more information on the prize please contact Fondation Prix de Genève pour les Droits de l'Homme en Psychiatrie, C/O Me Pierre Martin-Achard, Rue du Rhône 100, 1211 Genève 3, Switzerland; tel: +41 76 587 3631; e-mail: contact@geneva-prize.ch; http://www.geneva-prize.ch.

Doctor's Support Network

The Doctor's Support Network (DSN) is a

warm, friendly self-help group for doctors with mental health problems. The group started about 4 years ago with one doctor's awareness of the isolation that can be felt when a doctor is ill, especially with mental health problems. The group believes that contact with and support from other doctors can help recovery and that appropriate support offered before a crisis develops helps defuse the situation.

The group is not group therapy, nor does it have other therapeutic aims, rather it seeks to reduce the isolation and stigma of mental health problems. There are London and Scottish branches of the DSN. The London branch meets once a month and there is a monthly newsletter sent to all members.

The group is hoping to start having occasional meetings in the Bristol area. Those interested should contact the DSN; tel: 07071 223 372; e-mail: janetp@uk.packardbell.org (Dr Janet Prentice).

forthcoming events

Mole Conferences are the organisers of a series of four different afternoon seminars being held in London on aspects of cognitive-behavioural therapy: **An Introduction to Using Cognitive-Behavioural Imagery in Trauma Counselling** will take place on

28 March 2001 and **An Introduction to Case Conceptualisation from a Cognitive-Behavioural Perspective in Trauma Counselling** will take place on 16 May 2001; these will be followed by **An Introduction to a Cognitive-Behavioural Framework for Dealing**

with Anxiety and Panic Attacks in Trauma Counselling on 11 June 2001 and **An Introduction to a Cognitive-Behavioural Framework for Dealing with Flashbacks and Intrusive Thoughts and Images** on 28 June 2001. Mole Conferences would also like to



announce the following events: **Dual Diagnosis – Steps in the Right Directions** is a 1-day conference that will explore dual diagnosis from a range of agendas and professional perspectives, taking place on 30 March 2001. This conference will present the case of good practice and emphasise the need to tailor the response of dual diagnosis to local situations; and **Survivors of the Boarding School System – Psychotherapy and Healing** is an afternoon lecture being held on 14 June 2001. Mole Conferences are also planning an afternoon seminar on **Social Exclusion** to be held on 15 June 2001. For further information please contact: Mole Conferences, 26 Church Road, Portslade, Brighton BN41 1LA; tel: 01273 242634; fax: 01273 235095; e-mail: enquiries@mole-conferences.com; <http://www.mole-conferences.com>.

Restorative and Community Justice: Inspiring the Future is the title of an international conference taking place in Winchester on 28–31 March 2001. The conference is supported by the Youth Justice Board of England and Wales, Crime Concern, the Restorative Justice Consortium, the Restorative Justice Policing Partnership and Victim Support. The conference has been carefully organised to be of relevance and value to people from a wide range of disciplines and professions, including all those working with victims, offenders, adults and children, as well as health, education and social work support services. For further information, contact: Jill Elliott, BS&LN Manager, Faculty of Law, University of Southampton, Southampton SO17 1BJ; tel: 023 8059 2376; fax: 023 8059 3885; e-mail: bsln@soton.ac.uk; <http://www.law.soton.ac.uk/bsln.rj>.

The World Federation for Mental Health will be holding its Biennial Congress in 2001 in collaboration with the Canadian Mental Health Association and supported by many national and international organisations. The theme of the event, which takes place in Vancouver, Canada, on 22–27 July 2001, is **Respecting Diversity in Mental Health**. For further information contact The World Assembly for Mental Health 2001, C/O Venue West Conference Services, 645–375 Water Street, Vancouver, British Columbia V6B 5C6, Canada; tel: +1 604 681 5226; fax: +1 604 681 2503; e-mail: wamh2001@venuewest.com.

The **57th Residential Revision Course for the MRCPsych examinations** will be held at the University of Surrey, Guildford, on 5–12 April 2001 (Part I) and 28 March–5 April 2001 (Part II). For information contact The Belmont Postgraduate Psychiatric

Centre, Chiltern Wing, Sutton Hospital, Cotswold Road, Sutton, Surrey SM2 5NF; tel: 020 8296 4176/77; fax 020 8296 4375.

The World Association for Psychosocial Rehabilitation is organising a seminar on **Psychosocial Rehabilitation – An International Perspective** in collaboration with Midland Psychiatric Research Group on 23 March 2001 in Coventry. For further information contact Dr M. A. Javed, The Medical Centre, 2 Manor Court Avenue, Nuneaton CV11 5HX; tel: 024 7632 6111; fax: 024 7638 8604; e-mail: afzal.javed@ntlworld.com.

A Medico-Legal Study Day will be held at Downing College, Cambridge on 21 March 2001. The study day will provide a multi-disciplinary approach to medico-legal issues that can arise when caring for vulnerable patients. It is intended for psychiatrists, geriatricians, general practitioners and other professionals who work with vulnerable people. Topics will include material abuse of the elderly; the role of the court of protection; drugs and disease affecting capacity; legal issues; ethical issues; and practical guide to assessing capacity. For further information contact Barbara Ashworth, Cambridge Conferences, The Lawn, 33 Church Street, Great Shelford, Cambridge CB2 5EL; tel: 01223 847 464; fax: 01223 847 465; e-mail: b.ashworth@easynet.co.uk.

The German Society and the European Association for Mental Health in Mental Retardation are the organisers of the **Third European Congress – Mental Health in Mental Retardation, Theory and Practice**. The congress will take place in Berlin, Germany, on 27–29 September 2001. The deadline for submission of proposals for symposia, workshops, papers and posters is 30 June 2001. For further information contact Congress Secretariat, Accept GmbH, Kongress- & Veranstaltungsagentur, Siegfriedstr. 49–60, D-10365 Berlin, Germany; tel: +49 30 5577 1515; fax: +49 30 5577 1514; e-mail: kongressagentur@acceptberlin.de; <http://www.accept-kongressagentur.de>.

Want in the Midst of Plenty is the title of a group-analytic weekend workshop to be held at The North London Centre for Group Therapy on 29 June–1 July 2001. For further information contact Lesley Holmes, 138 Bramley Road, Oakwood N14 4HU; tel: 020 8440 1451; fax: 020 8449 3847; e-mail: NLCent@aol.com.

The World Psychiatric Association Regional Meeting and the Annual Meeting of the Psychiatric Association of Turkey, namely the fifth of the Spring Symposiums, will take place in Antalya, Turkey on 24–29 April 2001. This regional meeting of the World Psychiatric Association is an opportunity to strengthen the relationship between the psychiatric community of Turkey and the world psychiatric community. For correspondence of scientific issues contact: Symposium Secretariat, Yeşim Sokak No. 20, 80630 Akatlar, Istanbul, Turkey; tel: +90 212 351 2660; fax: +90 212 351 2659; e-mail: bahar@psikiyatri.org.tr; <http://www.psikiyatri.org.tr>; correspondence for registration contact: Flap Tour, Metin Tansu, Cinnah Caddesi No. 42, 06690 Cankaya, Ankara, Turkey; tel: +90 312 442 0700; fax: +90 312 440 7799; e-mail: aysin@flaptour.com.tr.

Biopsychosocial Aspects of HIV Infection – Fifth International Conference will be held by AIDS Impact in Brighton on 8–11 July 2001. Topics will include: access to treatment, adherence, alternative therapies, developing countries discrimination, ethics, human rights, impact of new treatments, intervention, qualitative and quantitative research, terminal care and bereavement and vaccines. Further information is available from AIMP 2001, PO Box 26919, London SE21 8FG; tel/fax: 020 8670 1964; e-mail: admin@aimp.freemove.co.uk; www.aidsimpact.com.

Leicestershire and Rutland Healthcare NHS Trust would like to announce a 4-day workshop on interpersonal psychotherapy (IPT), to be held on 23–26 April 2001 at the Leicester General Hospital. This workshop will provide a basic understanding of the theory and practice of this effective short-term psychotherapy. The course leaders are accredited IPT supervisors trained by the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry in Toronto. Further information is available from Lynne Reeve, Eating Disorders Service, Brandon Mental Health Unit, Leicester General Hospital, Gwendolen Road, Leicester LE5 4PW; tel: 0116 225 6230.

The Transcultural Special Interest Group is hosting a 1-day conference entitled **Working with Refugees: Traumatic Therapy or Social Support** on 14 March 2001 at the Royal College of Psychiatrists. The group's Annual General Meeting will also be held on the same day. Continuing Professional Development points will be available. For further information contact Dr D. J. Khoosal, tel: 0116 225 6209; fax: 0116 225 6315.