

# BJP The British Journal of Psychiatry Psych



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### Cover picture

*"Untitled"*

© Grace Farman

I have battled mental illness from a young age, spending many of my developing teen years in psychiatric institutions. Art has always been a constant in my life. It is always available in one form or another and translates my chaotic, manic thoughts to those around me when words often cannot. I struggle with concentration but yearn for a distraction from my distressing thoughts and overwhelming emotions. I go long periods without making work and this tends to be when I struggle more with my mental health. I can then hyper-focus for hours and days on end, obsessing over every minor detail to the point of over-working before I find a good balance. I suppose the process of making my art is Bi-polar in itself to me.

My work centres around the 'abject' and decay in nature. Abject is the human reaction to a threatened breakdown in meaning and is usually referred to as repulsion. I am attracted to this because I struggle so much with my own existence. The threat of borders and rules being broken down are irrelevant to me because my existence is abject. I struggle with the perseverance of my heart to still beat and my mind to still send signals and function. When I strip my body back to what it is - organs, flesh, fluids, cells - it's beautiful. No matter how much I fight it, poison it or curse it, it carries on. I feel my soul and being is impure, I feel that my life is the disease, and I can't make sense of my mind. So, I use medical imagery and references to nature to portray this.

The work I have produced for this cover is 'Untitled, 2020'. It is a digital collage designed to intrigue and evoke emotion from the viewer. Each time you look, another layer reveals itself. Floral imagery merges into repulsive, grotesque imagery of what resides within our bodies. The colours interwine to make something beautiful out of polar opposite themes.

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](mailto:bjp@rcpsych.ac.uk).

