

# BJP Psych

The British Journal of Psychiatry

Editor-in-Chief: Professor Gin Malhi



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Ayers et al

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### Cover picture

Artists work several days a week at the supported art studio above Outsider Art Gallery in the Hermitage Amsterdam. This studio and gallery were set up in 2016 for people with mental and learning disabilities by care organization Cordaan, Museum Hermitage Amsterdam and Museum of the Mind Haarlem.



Cordaan has various initiatives to involve its residents and clients in art and culture.

With the Art & Care programme, we use music, dance, theatre, poetry, literature, heritage and visual arts to improve the quality of life of residents and to connect participants to society.

The focus is not so much on the disabilities, limitations and possible disorders of a person but rather on the 'sane' and vital part that all people have: development and celebration of artistic talent, connection with society through art.

### Ben Becker (Amsterdam, 1971)

Ben Becker has been affiliated with the Outsider Art Studios since 2019. His artwork shows a fascination for visual language and typography. International soccer clubs such as Ajax and FC Barcelona have his particular interest besides the epic space opera Star Wars and other subjects. The strong, colourful and rhythmic lines and composition make his paintings an adventure to watch.

In his painting 'Welcome to the Amsterdam jungle' several animals are depicted: a snake, a bird and a grasshopper. The head in the middle is an indigenous person from the jungle, with makeup and feathers. Ben says: 'Animals are beautiful and I like them. I wanted to paint something with animals and indigenous people. I depicted the coat of arms of Amsterdam because the painting is made in Amsterdam and I was born in Amsterdam. I don't want to paint only one subject because I like variety. When I was a young adult I attended a graphical school where I learnt how to make technical drawings. I started to make drawings for myself in sketch books. The care workers who help me at home saw my drawings and said I should do something with that. So that's how I came to the studio, where I paint now three days a week. I want to keep on developing myself. When I paint I feel relaxed and inspired. All sorts of thoughts pop up in my mind, but I also take inspiration from books.'

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 Prescott Street, London, E1 8BB, UK or [bjp@rcpsych.ac.uk](mailto:bjp@rcpsych.ac.uk).