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Cover picture
The Minotaur (2016), by Dr Luselotta Zicackova (b. 1968).

Dr Luselotta Zicackova has worked in psychiatry for over 20 years and has incorporated mental health themes into her art, which also draws upon Greek mythology for inspiration (http://www.e-mothergallen.com/luselotazicackova). Dr Zicackova works in a Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU).

The picture represents bipolar affective disorder, with the left side of the Minotaur’s face exhibiting the energy and irritability associated with mania, and the right side showing a depressive phase with sadness and despair. The left eye is framed by a representation of the labyrinth and the thread given to Theseus by Ariadne is shown next to the right horn.

Dr Zicackova chose the theme because she wanted to represent the challenges that acutely mentally ill patients present, particularly when very aggressive or seized with overwhelming compulsions to self-harm. They find themselves isolated, despairing and very vulnerable – trapped within their own labyrinth – the artist choosing the ball of thread to represent the therapeutic path back to health.

Finally, the picture also incorporates a guitar, a common reference in Dr Zicackova’s pictures, representing the effects of a tranquil milieu on the human psyche.

The picture was painted for Dr Mark Tarn – consultant psychiatrist and chair of the St Andrew’s Healthcare PICU Clinical Effectiveness Group – for his 50th birthday. Image kindly supplied by Dr Tarn.

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 bjpsych@psych.ac.uk.