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The British Journal of Psychiatry



Lithium in drinking water and suicide mortality

Nestor Kapusta *et al*

Disease-modifying properties of long-term lithium treatment for amnesic mild cognitive impairment: randomised controlled trial

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Annual high-dose vitamin D₃ and mental well-being: randomised controlled trial

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Previous prenatal loss as a predictor of perinatal depression and anxiety

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Cover picture

The Drinker (1964). Fred Page (1908–1984)

Fred Page was born in Utrecht, in South Africa, but is mainly remembered as a Port Elizabeth artist. This painting is autobiographical and the artist depicts himself as a down-and-out alcoholic. He portrays poignantly the despair of a dishevelled drinker. He sips his drink quietly with his shoes on the wrong feet, impossibly baggy trousers and elongated limbs. Page's very striking, mainly black and white paintings have a quality reminiscent of Giorgio de Chirico (1888–1978), the Italian metaphysical painter, with their eerie visions of empty buildings, long shadows and bleak harshly lit landscapes.

This painting, from a White artist, seems to pass judgement on the ravaged apartheid society of which he was a part. The background shows an empty fortress-like building (reminding us of the barriers and prisons of the apartheid state). There are many vertical lines in the painting: the falling dove (usually a sign of peace), the cypress trees and the drinker's long body. The viewer's attention is drawn downwards to the second dead bird on the ground. This memento mori enlists the viewer to reflect on the artist's sense of hopelessness about his own life and the society he lived in.

Page studied at the Port Elizabeth School of Art under Jack Heath. He first began exhibiting his work in 1948. Members of my family were Fred Page's first patrons. He was a reclusive softly spoken man who never sought the limelight. He lived most of his life in abject poverty. Today he is a highly venerated South African artist.

Text and image supplied by Judy Rubinsztein (*née* Kerbel).

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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, 17 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8PG, UK or bjp@rcpsych.ac.uk.

