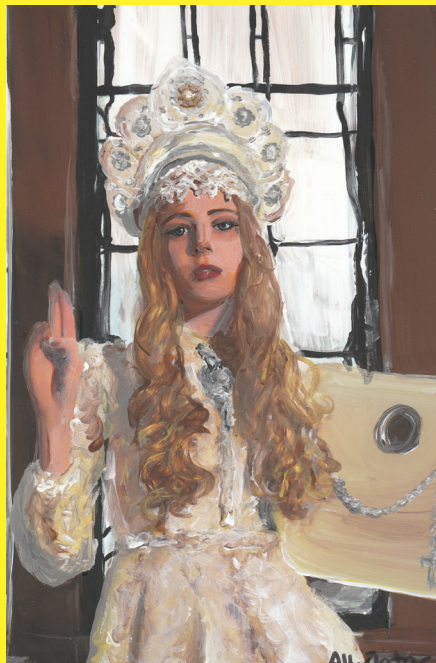


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The British Journal of Psychiatry



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Cover picture

"Sunday Service (1-3)", 6 x 4", Acrylic, 2021

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One of mine and many others' main frustrations about the societal representations of an eating disorder is how "soft" or "light" the portrayal of the illness is. Normally, we see those teen girls struggling to eat a carrot for fear of being fat or looking sadly at their bodies in a mirror. This can be evident in films such as "For the love of Nancy" and "Girl, Interrupted." The lack of authenticity in the struggle causes detrimental effects of how society understands the illness. It makes it seem superficial, or not that serious. My objective through these works is to convey the depth of struggle, the torment and grim reality of what it is like to live with an eating disorder. At times I utilize metaphorical imagery to explore the subject of living in an unwell eating disordered body through alternative perspectives. It is important to include this contrast since it reminds us of all that despite being a grim subject matter, I can see the humor in the illness, and at times see the lighthearted nature of it. I created a satire called "The Church of Thin". I constructed a fictitious religious community that believes there is a strong link between thinness, food, and God. This church believes in salvation through starvation. They adhere to the belief in calorie counters as the inspired word of God, which must be memorized accordingly. The artworks are inspired by my lifelong fascination with religions and cults. The metaphorical "church" allowed me to explore how eating disorders to me can be viewed similarly to a religious community. In the piece "Sunday Service" it portrays myself as a priestess giving a sermon to the masses of Anorexics, Bulimics and Othorexics. Eating disorders can indoctrinate individuals with the media saturated perception that life is better if you follow the "cult of thin". Eating disorders can make you abide by their commandments and influence your beliefs and cultural identity. Unless we learn to separate church from state (mind from the body) we will be proselytized in the Church of Thin where we will continue to suffer from what we eat and feel judged for it.



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