

Haberdashers' Aske's School

Occasional Papers Series in the Sciences



Occasional Paper Number Twelve

**Visions: Charles Bonnet Syndrome, Hallucinations and
Delusions**

Lynn Bird

Teacher of Art

bird_1@habsboys.org.uk

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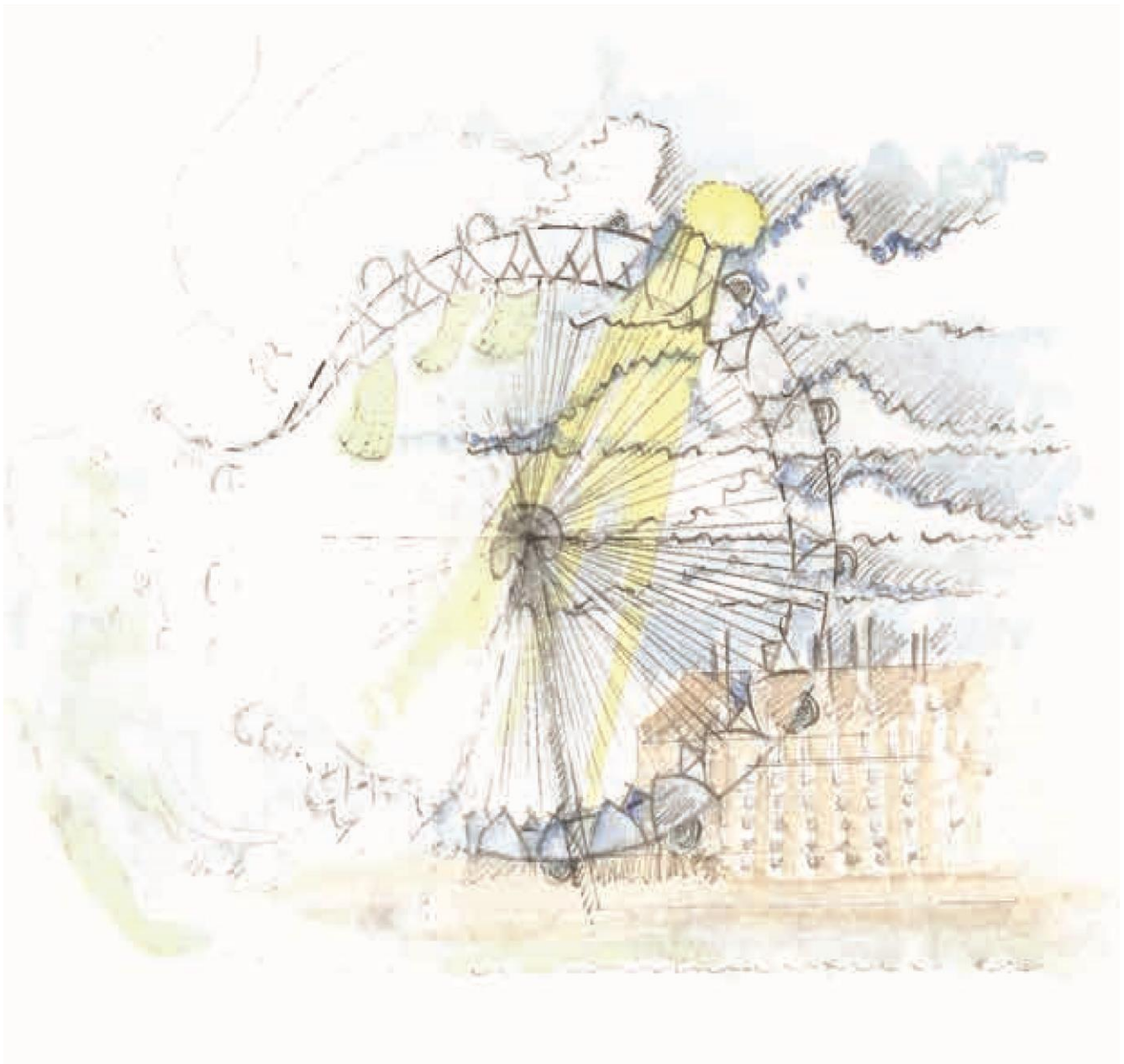
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VISIONS: Charles Bonnet Syndrome, Hallucinations and Delusions

Lynn Bird



Abstract

This sketchbook shares images of the visions I experienced following a craniotomy and the Charles Bonnet Syndrome that ensued. I decided to create it as I found that little imagery of this sort exists and I wanted to give the medical professionals who had cared for me my findings. I believe that seeing the images experienced by the patient, rather than just hearing them described, could be a valuable frame of reference from which those who care for sufferers could gain a feel for the complete alteration of perception experienced. I have produced a set of images in chronological order, firstly the hallucinations known as Charles Bonnet Syndrome, followed by the images due to delusions, ending with the recurrence of hallucination. Charles Bonnet Syndrome (CBS) is a common condition among people who've lost their sight. It causes people who've lost a lot of vision to see things that aren't really there – medically known as having a hallucination. The main feature of this disorder is the presence of delusions, unshakable beliefs in something untrue or not based on reality. Following this experience I would suggest that my visions were in part created by what I know, what I like and what I dislike. In addition, I found that colour was a reflection of my surroundings and its contents. The asymmetries in some sketches reflect how I now see as I also have Hemianopia as a result of the operation. I must add that although impaired sight has reduced the finesse with which I used to draw, I have endeavoured to reproduce faithfully what I saw.

Charles Bonnet Syndrome (CBS) is a common condition among people who've lost their sight. It causes people who've lost a lot of vision to see things that aren't really there – medically known as having a hallucination.

Delusions: previously called paranoid disorder, is a type of mental illness in which a person cannot tell what is real from what is imagined. The main feature of this disorder is the presence of delusions, unshakable beliefs in something untrue or not based on reality.

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Staff and friends - The Haberdashers' Aske's Boys'
School

d: Oh good, entertainment. Nurse, is that a community theatre circus group visiting the ward?"

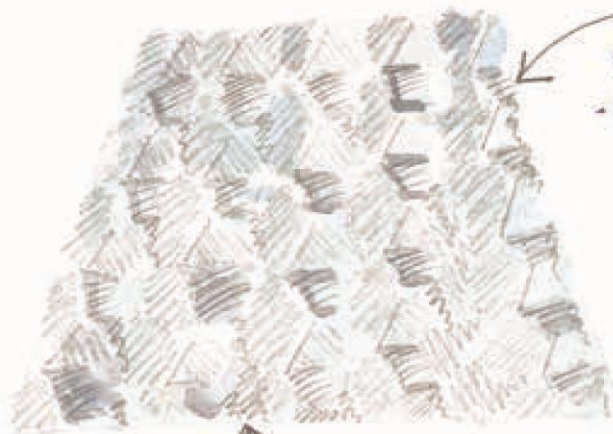
Early Days.



Every night she sat there in her motor bike-wheel chair; hard, large & shiny... like a stern sphinx.



d: "Nurse", was this building a theatre school before it became part of a hospital?"



Scenically painted, textured walls - Canvas/faceted surfaces. No matter how often I tried to touch it, I could never reach it. It receded as I approached.

d: "Nurse", I don't think textured walls are hygienic for a ward!"



d: I loved seeing cats nip past me most days. When a dog brushed by my knee I really wished it would come back so I could stroke its head.

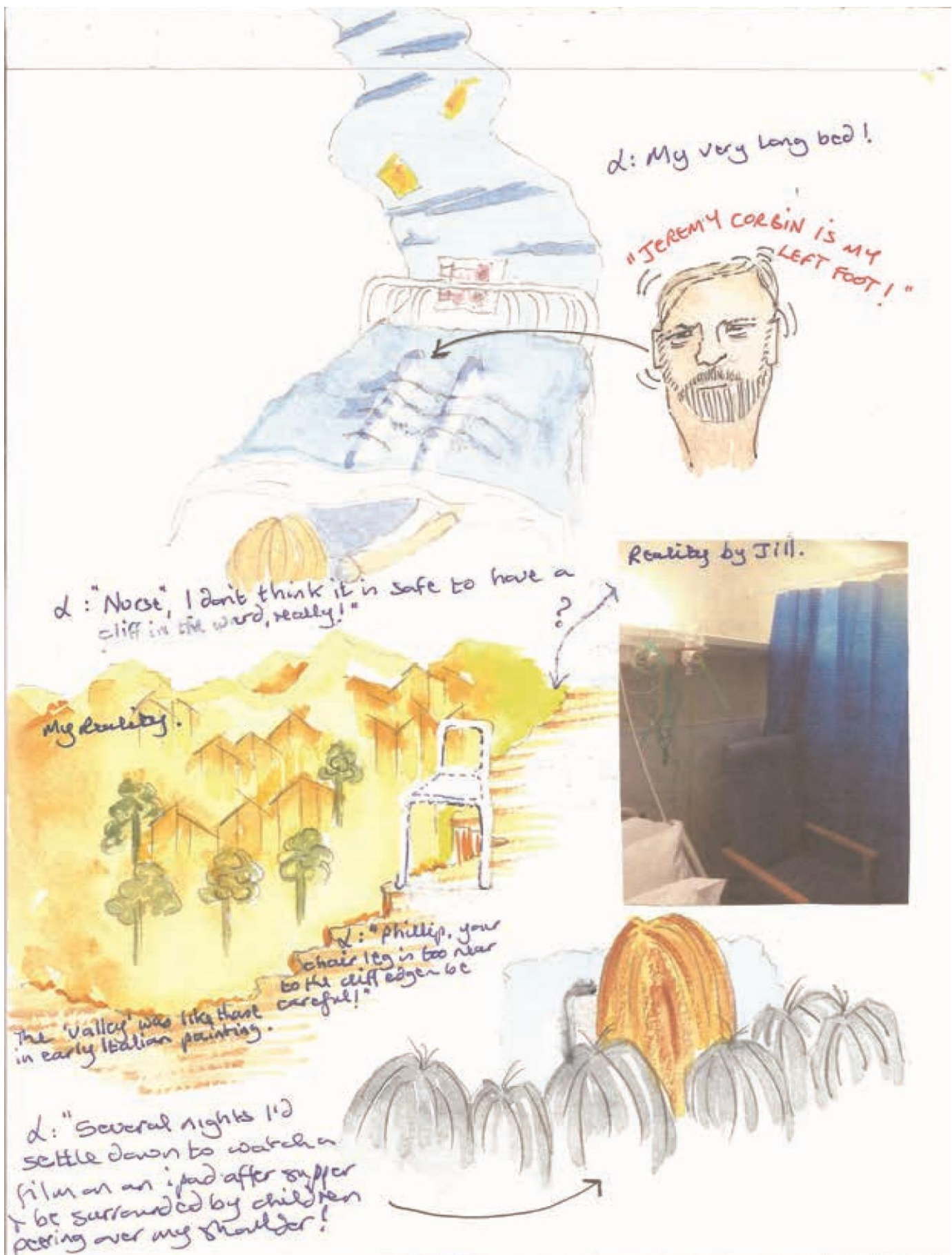
d: "There's Mum & Mark over there but, no matter how I beckon them they won't come over. Then the cougar came in & sat between us!"



d: "Curtains, curtains, everywhere. I don't like them, they confuse me & hide things!"



Drying herrings & nesting birds.



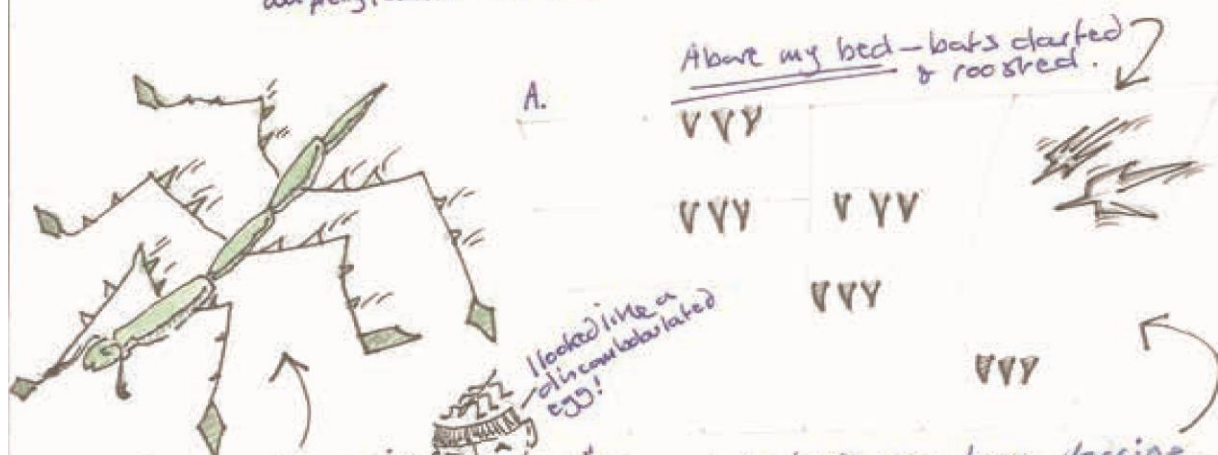
d: A lady friend visits but which of 3?



But which one?

This confusion was the start of **NIGHT ONE!**

- A. 'The ward ceiling'.
 B. 'My bedroom at home'.
 C. and Barnett!



In addition, exotic stick insects buzzed around: they all had feet shaped like builder's trowels!

A: "Nurse, I do hope you have vaccine on the ward incase any of us gets a bite from a bat."

B. Suddenly: **"GET OUT OF MY HOUSE!"**

My bed area was in my bedroom at home - all the equipment nurses were there. I was teased by numerous people who said they were my nurse: I didn't like people touching my head if I didn't think they were a nurse. I told them they should 'be ashamed' of themselves.

"You should be ashamed of yourselves!"

C. Then:

My bed area was in the lounge of a friend's (Ogo's) house. I could see the road & knew how to go home but couldn't find the energy. I knew Kate Ogo was there but didn't want to shout for her in case I disturbed other patients. Then we all moved to another house in Barnett. I asked who was in charge of this venue during the nurse told me Mr Kitchen - when he arrived, I told him he should 'be ashamed' of himself.



MR KITCHEN'S NOSE TWITCHES.

d: Isabel - where is this ward? It is not in Queen Sq.

I: I can assure you Lynn it is, my Sat Nav guided me here, if I could get you to the front door I could prove it.

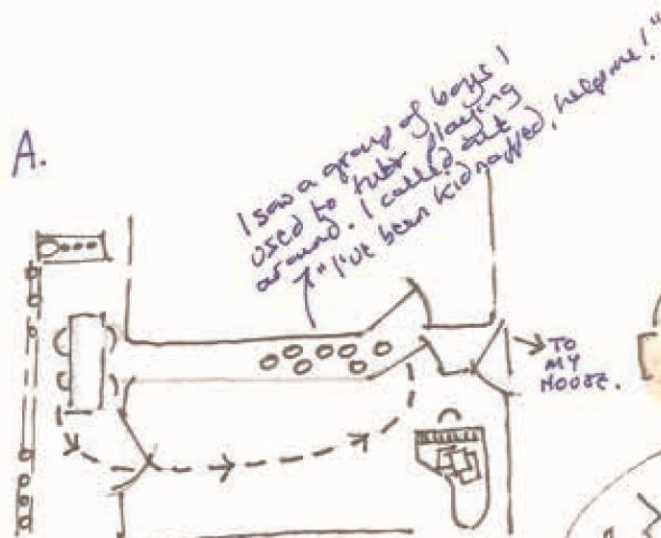
d: "Nurse, is there a pan technician parked outside to keep moving this ward and contents to different places?"

d: "Does a hospital maintenance man go along to screw up all the curtain rails? That's misuse of labour and equipment!"

NIGHT TWO!

A My neighbour's (opposite) home.

B Who?



--- I tried to escape through the house but nobody would give me the front door key without fulfilling tasks!



d: A man with a syringe approached. I think it is a boy I used to tutor -

"Robert Lynch, I wrote your reference to study English at University, not Medicine. You are not sticking that in me!"

- THE SCAM**
- d: I believed that the ward was involved in strange (maybe even criminal) activity. I also thought Maddie was in charge!
1. ART - Illegal sales: with a strange interest in Léger!
 2. NEAR EXTINCTION - The breeding of nearly extinct animals in the abdomen of teenage boys! from my school!
 3. BODY ENHANCEMENT - for clever boys from my school!
 4. ILLEGAL SELLING of - early ethnographic Art & Dinosaur parts & fossils.



