We have gathered to night to pay tribute to Prof. Sandler, a great psychoanalyst, teacher and friend.

Born in Cape-Town in 1927, Prof. Sandler received his first degree in psychology at 18 and his masters by 19, both from the university of Capetown. At 23 he received his Ph.D. from the university of London, where he emigrated as protest against the South-African social and political regime of those days. At the encouragement of his analyst, he started medical education at University College Hospital immediately after completion of his Ph.D.. By the age of 25 Prof. Sandler was a qualified psychoanalyst of the British Psychoanalytical Society.

Prof. Sandler prowess of creativity, immense intellectual capacity, originality and humanity, combined with clinical and research skills, soon made him one of the leading figures in psychoanalysis, a position he retained for several decades, until his death in October 98.

He was the author and co-author of some 200 papers, quite a number of them together with Anne-Marie, and was the co-author and editor of 44 books. Sandler enriched our psychoanalytical knowledge by his creative and unique way of translating complex ideas and concepts into more simple language (Think of the Hampstead Index). His writings reflect the evolution of his conception of the theory of psychoanalysis: a focus on the analytic relationship rather than just interpretation; on wishes and feelings rather than instincts and drives and development being more than a biological maturation stressing the evolution of increasingly complex mental structures where the child’s relationship experiences could be represented. In this context I have in mind his original papers on the background of safety, the Superego, the representational world, his book on the patient and the analyst, the past
and present unconscious, and many others, all expressed in the famous Sandlerian
clarity and integrity of formulation. It led to what Fonagy named “the quiet
revolution”, which psychoanalysis underwent from the seventies, attracting many
young people into the field.

To these merits where added excellent organizational skills, the ability, good will
and authority which enabled Sandler to help facilitate the work of others. Thus,
Sandler was the editor of several journals: The British Journal of Medical
Psychology and the International Journal of Psychoanalysis. He was also founder and
editor of the International Review of Psychoanalysis. Over the last three years of his
life Sandler was Founding Internet Editor of the International Journal of
Psychoanalysis Website (he loved electronics and all kinds of gadgets). He held
many positions within different psychoanalytical organizations, which expressed
the honour and appreciation held by his colleagues towards him, culminating in the
office of President of the International Society of Psychoanalysis, between the years

Sandler was one of the first psychoanalysts to enter the academic world and had a
splendid academic career. It started in 1968 when he was appointed Chair of
psychoanalysis applied to Medicine in Leiden University. He was founder and
director of the Sigmund Freud Center here in Jerusalem, was elected to the office of
the first S.F. Professor, which he held between 1979-1984. He returned to England
in 1984 and was the first to hold the Freud Memorial Chair in Psychoanalysis at
University College London. Along the years he held more than twenty visiting
professorships, and received some honorary doctorates (including from Clark
University).
Like many of us I came to know Joe Sandler and Anne-Marie in 79, when he came to Jerusalem.

In his office as Freud Professor Sandler organized and led the first two Freud Center Conferences, starting a tradition that continues (up to last week). As far as the Society at large is concerned: I believe he, and Anne-Marie, had great impact and influence on our society, contributing to the breaking down of previously held inflexible and somewhat antiquated ideas about psychoanalytic theory and practice.

About Prof. Sandler the formal teacher and researcher we shall presently hear from his former students and colleagues. I would like to say some words about Joe the teacher of "everyday life".

He loved to talk about his clinical work, as he loved to share his ideas about whatever occupied his mind at the time (no wonder he co-authored many of his writings). Thus one could learn from him at every step, by just being around him. I admired his flexibility of thought and attitude; his intellectual honesty, his clinical perceptiveness, human wisdom and humanness. I remember one day, when I was a guest at the Sanlders’ place in London, one of Joe’s patients’ failed to arrive. Joe then started a conversation: if one wanted to use the break for a short nap, would one use the patient’s couch or choose to go some other place? The conversation rolled on and he talked about patients’ and analysts’ inhibitions, social taboos, of oedipal feelings and transference love. I remember him concluding the conversation with something like: when one loves emotionally, one feels the need to complete
that love physically. That simple. It seems as if things of importance boiled down for him, in the last analysis, to what is simply humane.

I admired Sandler’s freedom of thought and the respect he held for other people’s freedom. There was an openness about him that did not allow him to fall prey to jealousy, or to force others to think like him. I was lucky to receive from Sandler copies of his books upon their publication, but he never asked me whether I used any of his writings in my teaching or work in general. I believe that similar reasons explain the fact that he did not create any “school” around him. I admired his willingness to accept personal responsibility: in one of his seminal papers “Counter-transference and role responsiveness” (1976) Sandler, drawing upon his great experience as a clinician and supervisor of many, knowing only too well with what we, psychoanalysts and human beings, enter our treatment room, states: “emphatically... I am absolutely opposed to the idea that all countertransference responses of the analyst are due to what is imposed on him.” I assume this was also meant for the Kleinians. But first and foremost it reflected a deep conviction of Sandler’s.

His conversations were wise and witty. He could joke about himself and certainly about others. And they were full of “psychoanalysis”, psychoanalysis being such an integrated aspect of him, that thinking and observing psychoanalytically seemed completely “natural” for him.

There is plenty to say about Joe, and time is limited, so I would like to add only one small thing, which has to do with painting:

Only after his death did I learn that Joe used to paint. I don’t recall hearing him talk about painting. Once I saw an exhibition in his company (with Anne-Marie I
have seen quite a number), which happened to be of Lucien Freud. I don't remember him making any special comments. But I had a chance, almost accidentally, to listen to a discussion (which was taped) between Sandler and Gumbrisch, the famous art historian. I really felt owe at the richness of what I heard.

Was it timidity or shyness that kept him from exhibiting what he knew?

Sandler was a great psychoanalyst, researcher and clinician. He was also a great friend who extended a helping hand in times of need, silently, efficiently, warmly and generously.