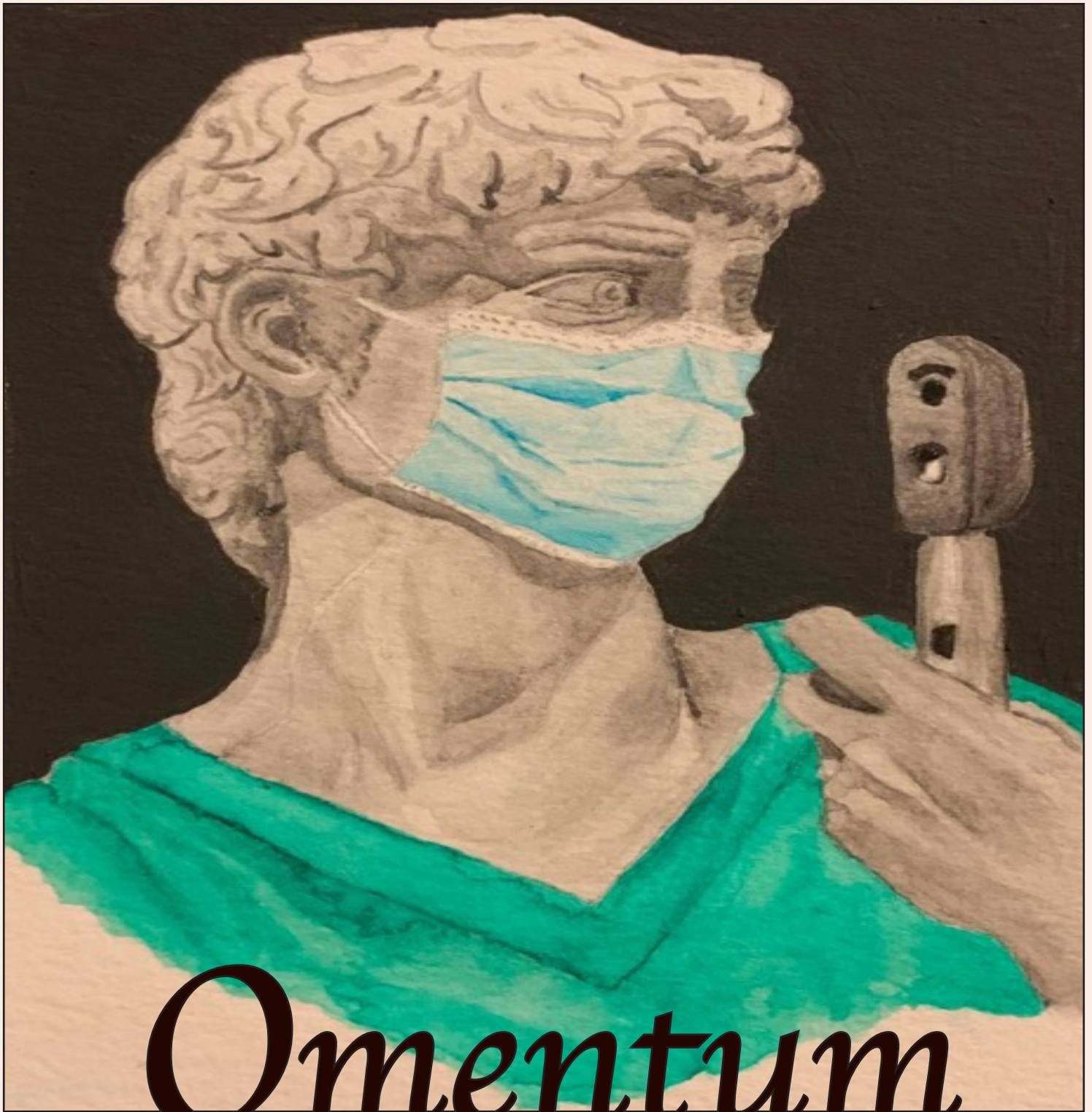


*BAYLOR COLLEGE OF MEDICINE  
LITERARY AND ARTS REVIEW*

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*Volume 3 | 2022-2023*



# Editor's Note



*“Art washes away from  
the soul the dust of  
everyday life.”  
-Pablo Picasso*

It is my great pleasure and honor to present to you the third volume of our annual medical humanities journal. After more than a year of editorial review, we have compiled some of the most thought-provoking and meaningful pieces into this volume. We must thank our contributors, editors, faculty advisory board, the student affairs deans, and the Center for Professionalism for their kind support.

We initially created Omentum to bring our classmates together during the pandemic. I am proud to say it has now flourished into a prolific platform for self-expression over the past three years. In our three volumes, we have published more than 200 works by healthcare workers and patients across the Texas Medical Center. As I behold our most recent submissions, I am enthralled by their beauty and sensitivity. They truly capture the essence of the human experience in medicine marvelously. They reinvigorate our passion for medicine. We hope all our readers find threads of connection and resonate with some of the pieces on display here. We wish that each of you enjoys reading this volume just as much as we loved crafting it. We hope to continue bringing together a syncretic mix of the medical humanities each year and harness the power of the arts to inspire and heal our readers.

-- Rishabh Lohray

# Masthead

Rishabh Lohray	Editor-in-Chief, MS4
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Katie Na	Editorial Director, MS4
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Rebecca Lulu Chen	MS4
Paarth Kapadia	MS4
Rujman Khan	MS3
Thomas Pecha	MS3
Cher Sha	MS2
Samagra Jain	MS2
Elaine Dong	MS4
Trung Nguyen	MS4
John Miggins	MS2

# Submission Guidelines

This annual publication features original poetry, prose, visual art, music, and multimedia from current members and alumni of the Texas Medical Center.

Submissions should connect to the healthcare experience in some way.

The confidentiality of information related to any patient or patient encounter is an ethical and legal obligation of all health care providers, and this publication seeks to uphold those same standards. Therefore, submissions that contain HPI or identify another individual will not be published unless signed permission is included. In addition to written details, this includes artwork and photography that could reasonably identify an individual.

**Contact:** [omentum.editors@bcm.edu](mailto:omentum.editors@bcm.edu)

1 Baylor Plaza, Houston, TX 77030

# About the Cover

Artist:  
Jade Evenstad

Title:  
Renaissance Man

“Renaissance Man,” the title of the first painting, refers to an individual with diverse talents. In this piece, “David,” an emblem of the Italian Renaissance, is depicted with a mask and wielding an ophthalmoscope. This portrayal underscores the idea that healthcare professionals inherently embody the essence of a Renaissance man due to their roles as scientists, educators, compassionate humans, and potentially even artists.”

Jade Evenstad, a second-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine, holds profound admiration for Michelangelo and other Old Masters. She recently realized her long-held dream of viewing “David” in Florence. While she may not have the unparalleled artistic talent of Michelangelo, she is excited to begin her graduate training and embark on her medical career at 26, coincidentally the same age at which Michelangelo commenced work on “David.”

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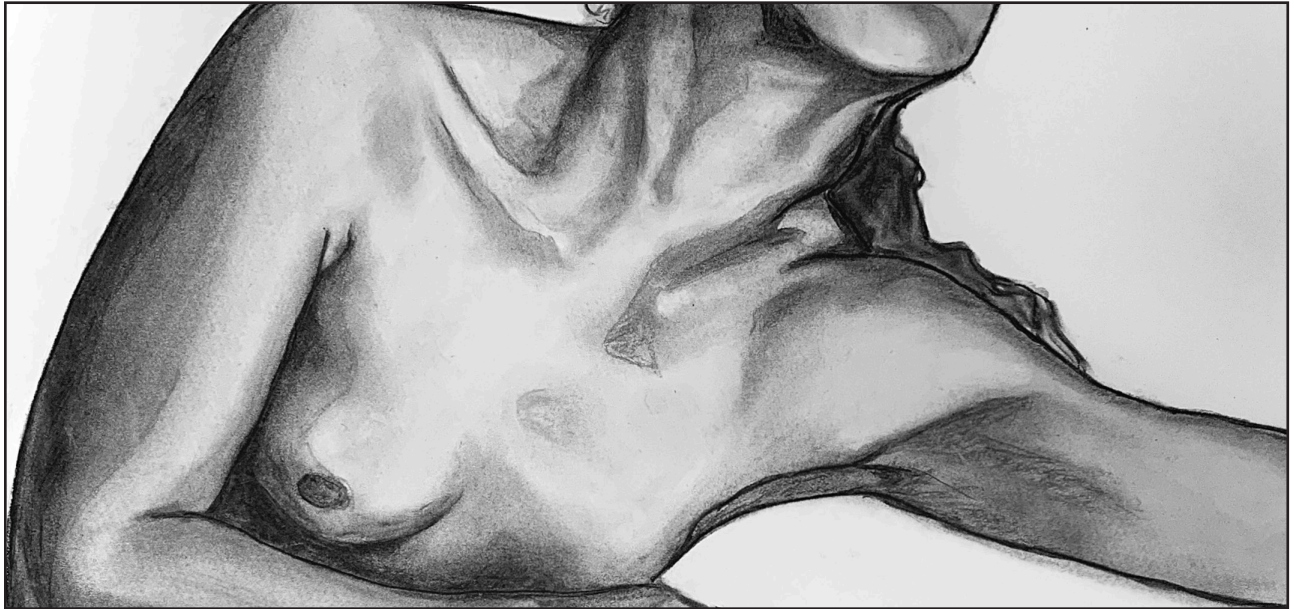
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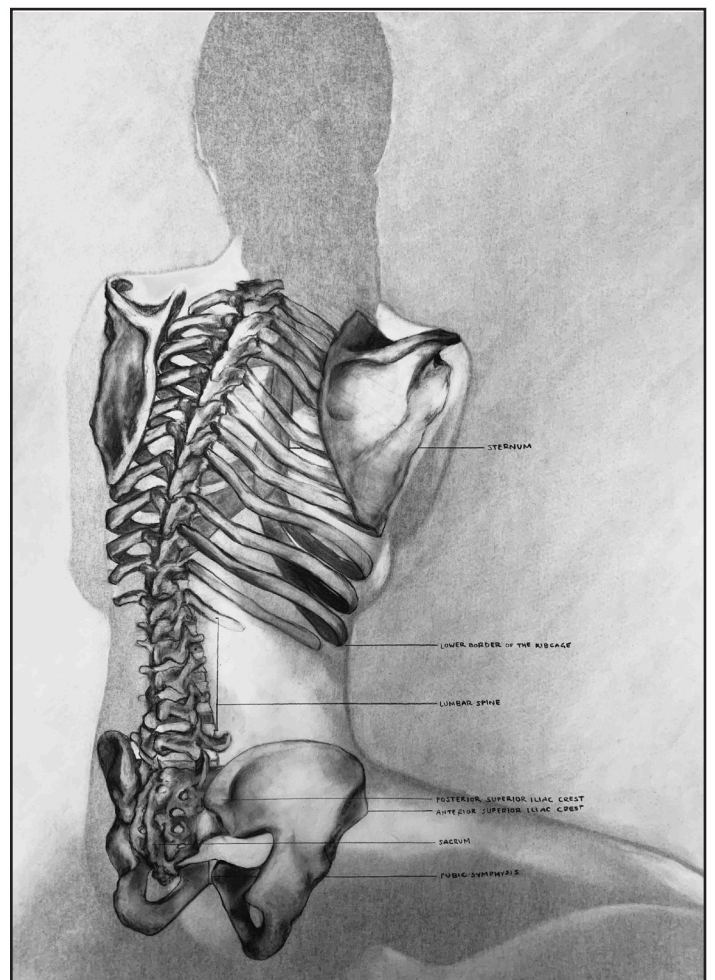
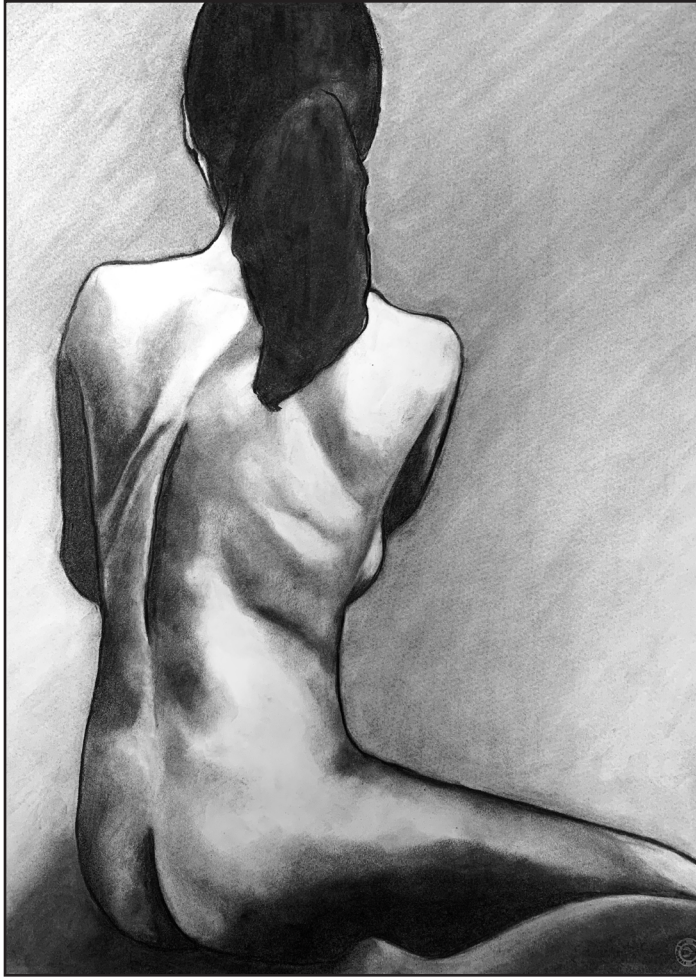
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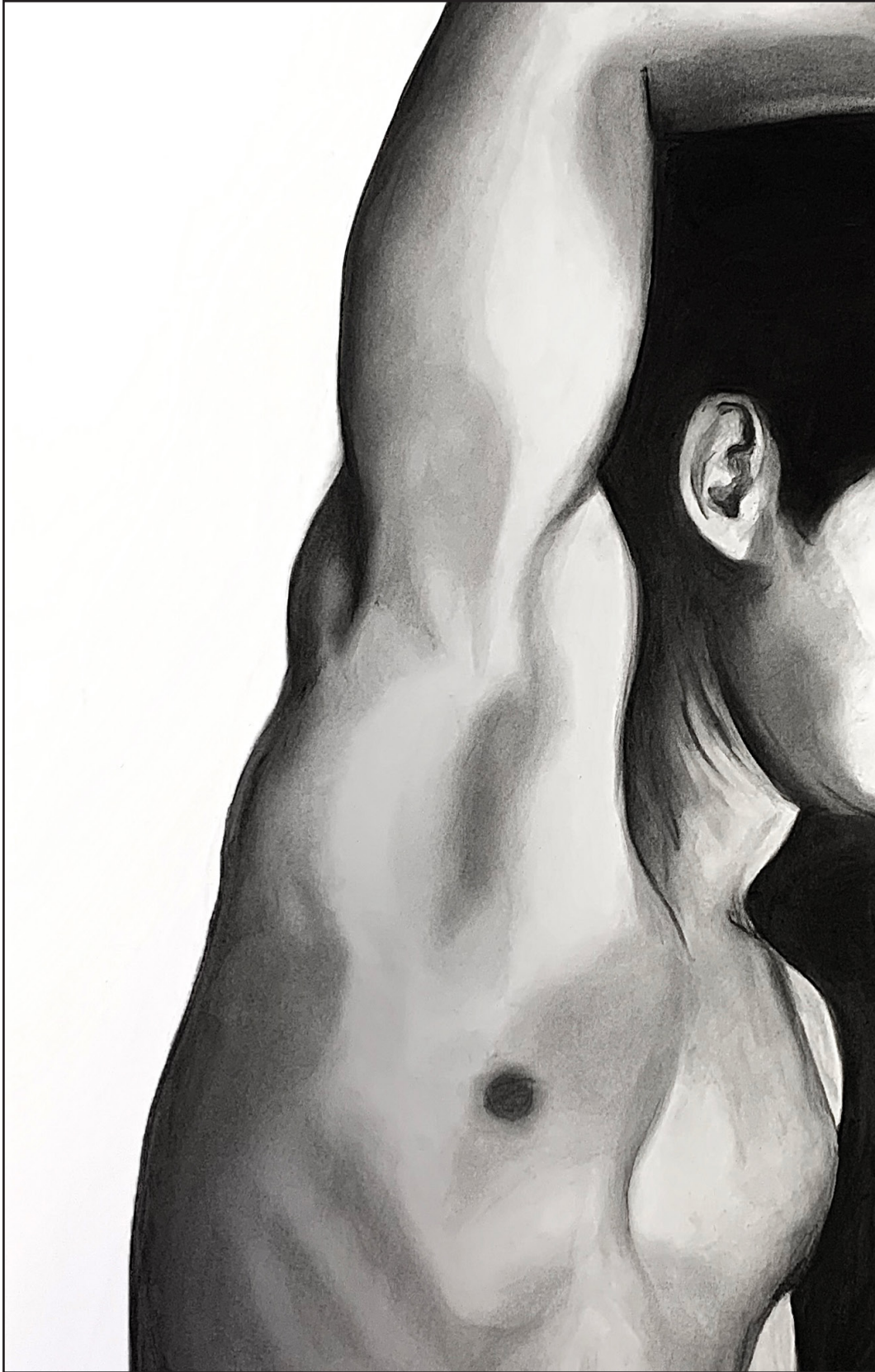
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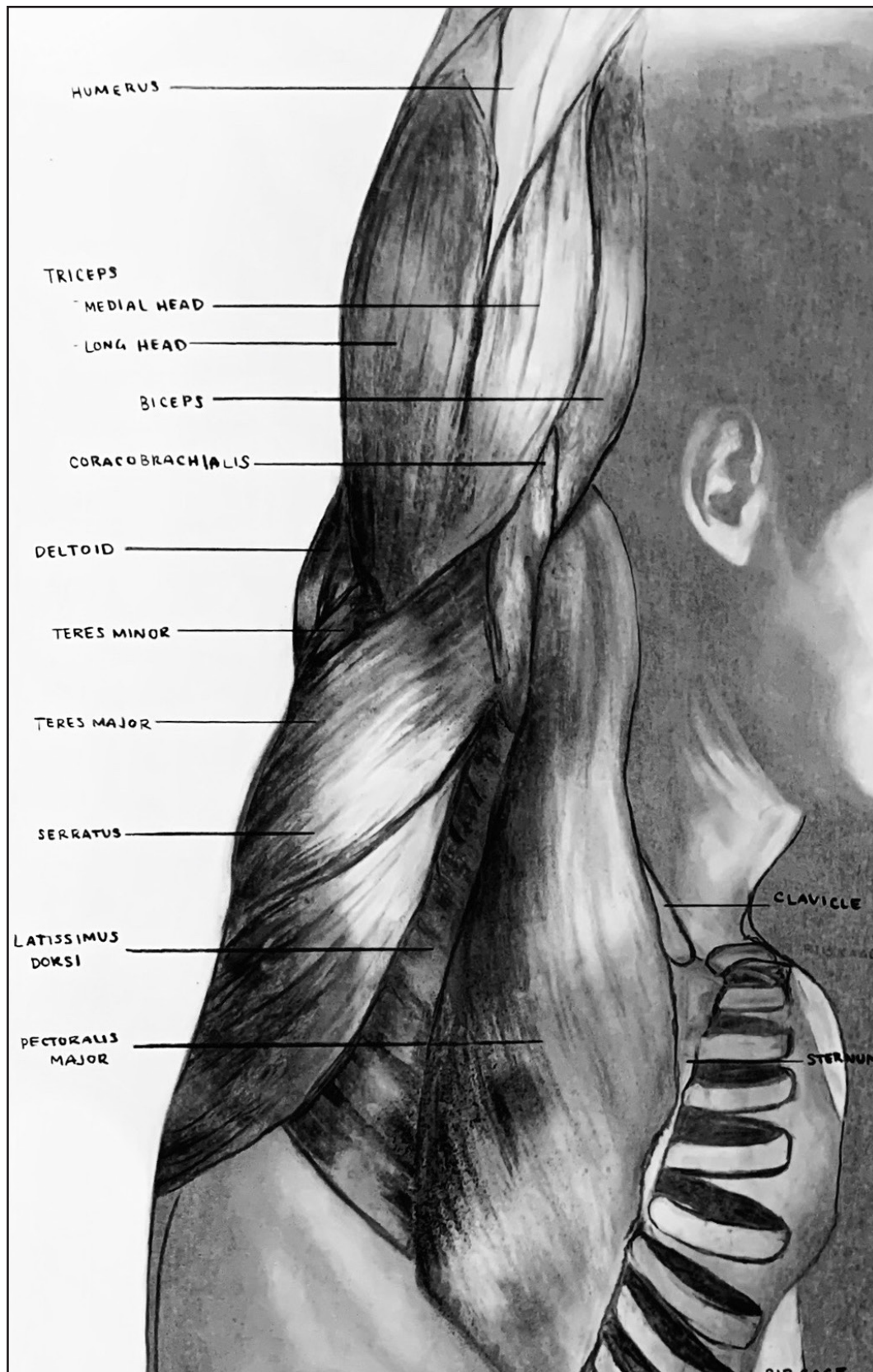
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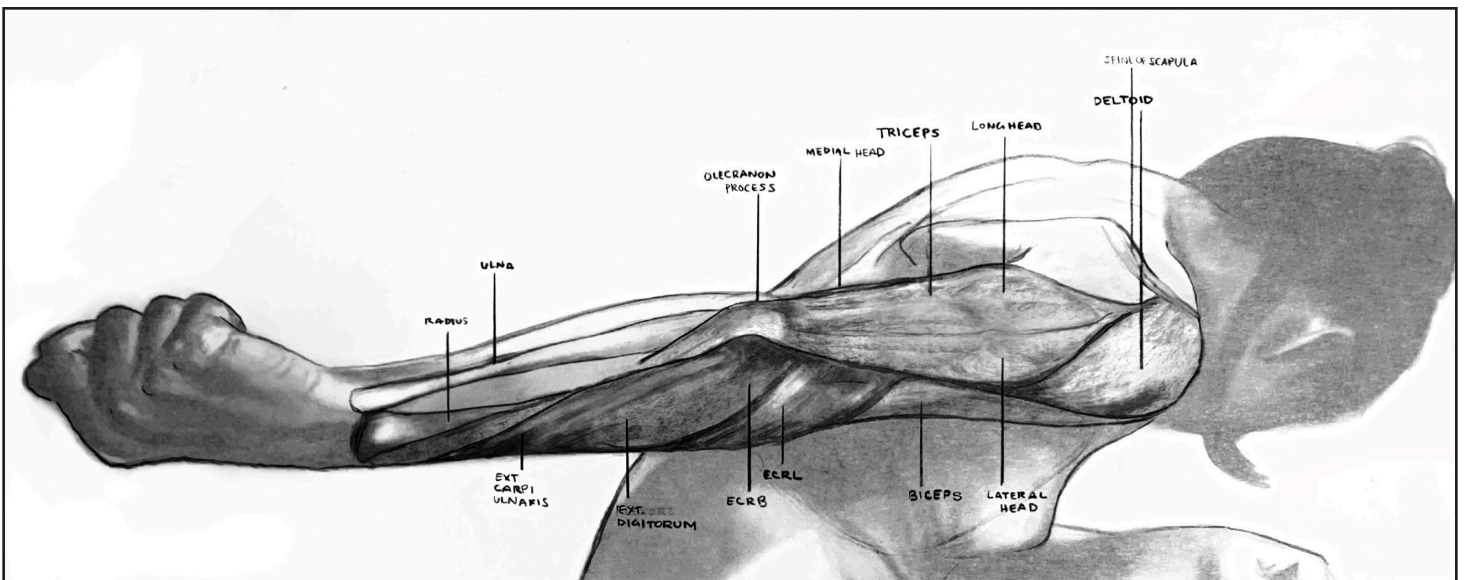
## Artistic Anatomy / Jenny Rival

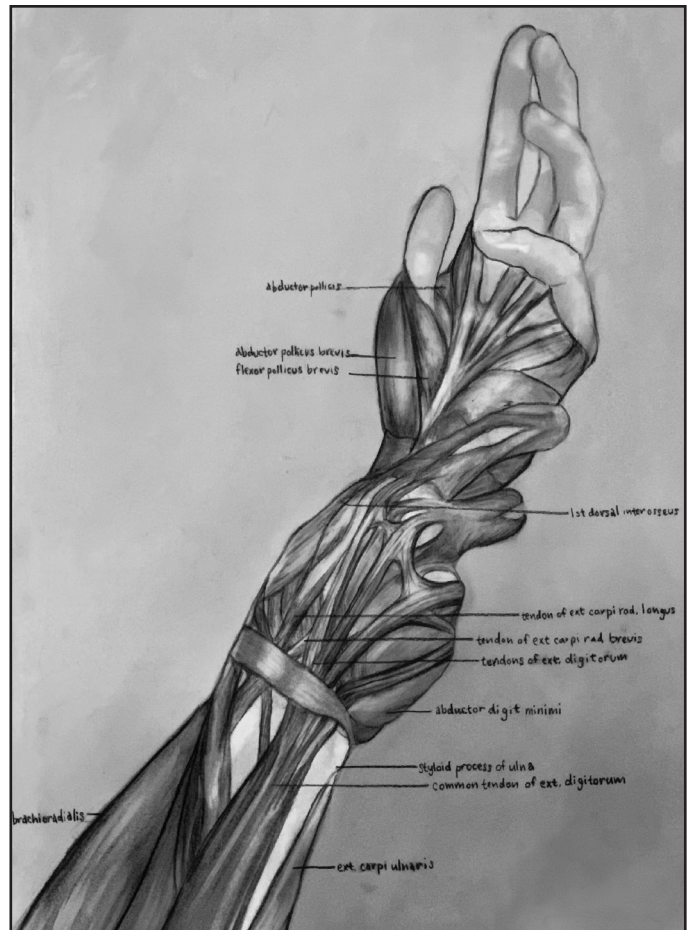


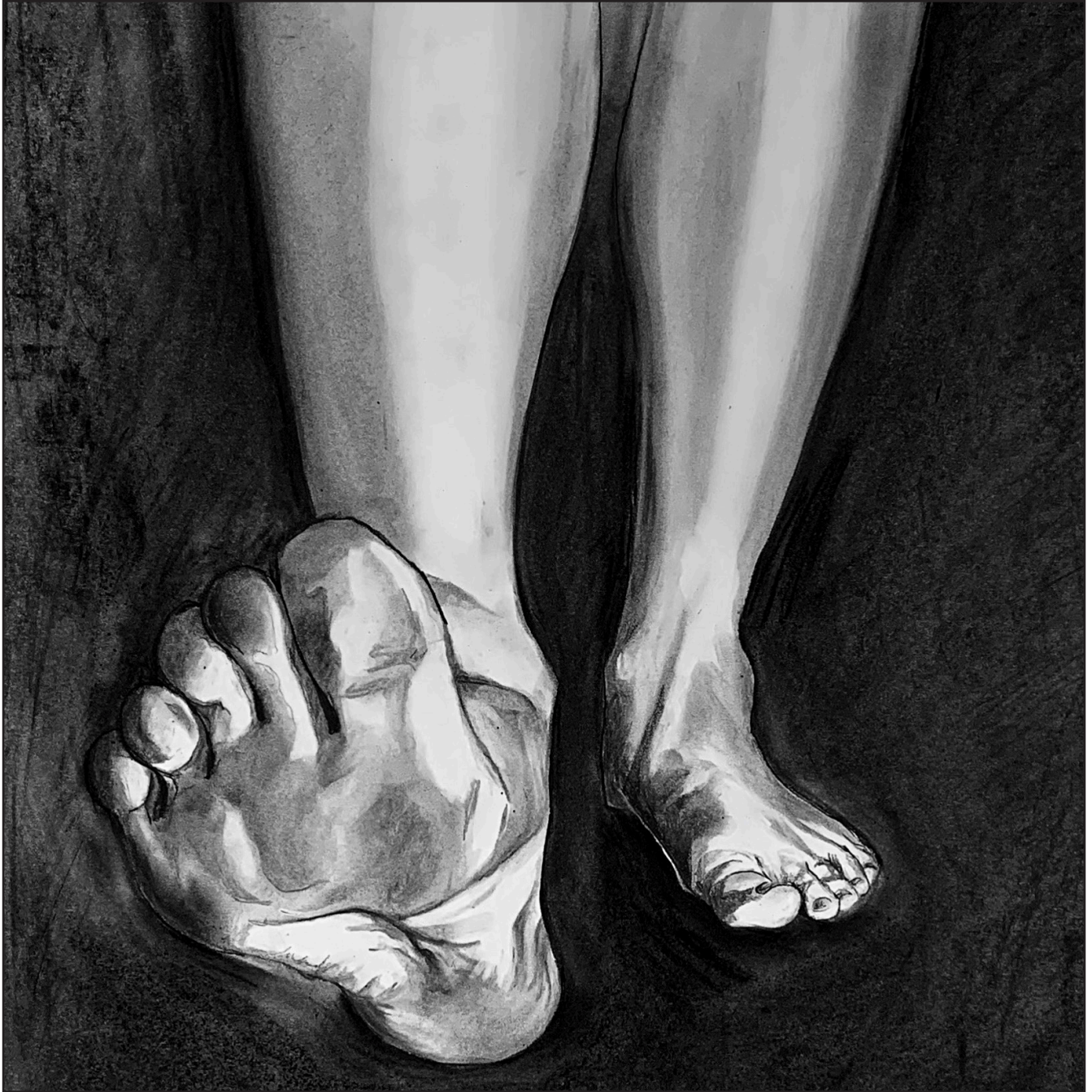


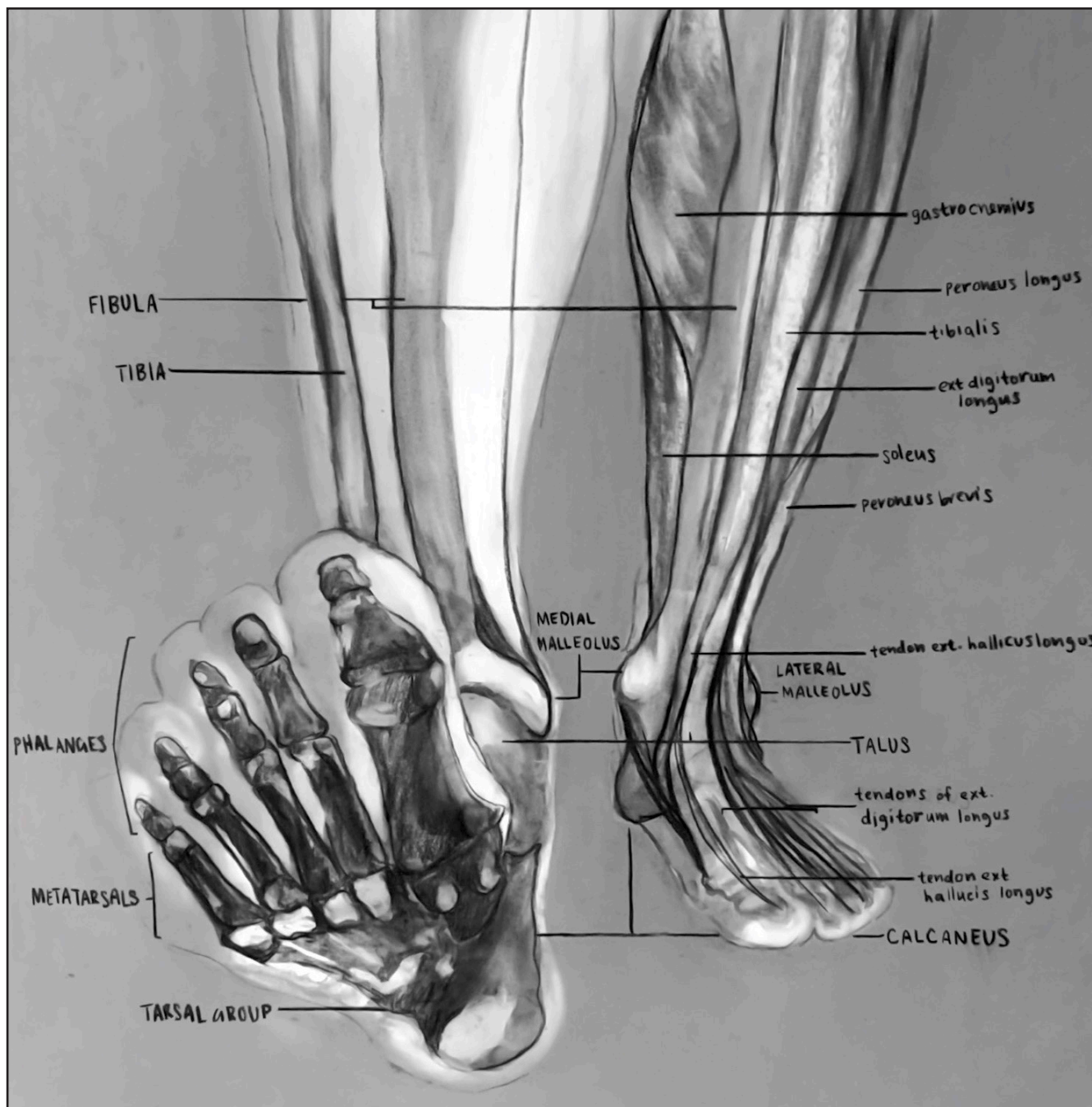












The Artistic Anatomy series is both a method of studying anatomy to gain a greater understanding as well as a tribute to the beauty of the human body.

*Jenny Rival is a first-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine. Her education at Brown University combined a concentration in fine art with a passion for the field of medicine.*

# Ulcer / Nikalina O'Brien

fleshy and beating, marking rhythm and time  
demanding attention to this body of mine  
brace me, melt me for these deeply flung storms  
    piercing through with a saltwater sting

surprising me with fresh contrast to mark the sublime  
forcing me to ponder boundaries and barriers, both  
    fierce and delicate by design

this ulcer: *pyogenic granuloma, a desperation to avoid myself*

this ulcer: all I can say is that  
    some fruit is the sweetest just as it rots, and  
    some lines have never known anything other than taut

so – please take the burning  
    but leave the ache  
I am not ready to lose the briny wisdom  
    of this etched and carved out space

with it, I'm afraid that I am Bad  
but oh, I would choose it – again and again  
    every day, every time

this tending toward Bad  
this kinship with thunder

over the unknown work of being Good.

# Elixir / Nikalina O'Brien

olive oil, honey

you're not alone in this.

this simplicity feels age-old, bone-deep:

the weight of an arm across my shoulders

my hand on yours

a small *squeeze*

what a relief, this resilience

the knowing that we will never outrun or run out  
of this medicine

come, crowd on in

this is just the beginning.

I wrote these pieces while reflecting upon the end of my core clinical year. The year was marked by discomfort and grief, but it was also speckled brightly with numerous profound moments of genuine connection and comfort.

*Nikalina is a third-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine. She is interested in environmental health, fun microbiome facts, and all things related to food.*

## There is Fellowship in Death / Austin Williams



Medium: Oil on canvas over panel; 36.5-inch diameter tondo

Everyone faces death, and many harbor fears surrounding it. Even though death is a universal experience, open discussions about it are surprisingly rare among the living. How does discussing death impact our freedom to live and our connections with those close to us?

In my painting, “There is Fellowship in Death,” I attempt to evoke the warmth associated with conversations about death. The artwork employs a thirty-six-inch diameter round canvas, with colors transitioning from cool to warm as they move from the edge to the central skull, which symbolizes death. As the hands make contact with the skull, a radiant warmth emerges. The heat-mapping technique embodies the warmth of community, juxtaposing it against the chill of solitude.

I’m grateful to my friends for serving as models for the hands, grasping a plastic skull as our prop. Our frequent discussions on deep topics, like death and faith, have enriched our bonds and lessened my personal anxiety regarding death. Through this piece, I hope to inspire others to open up about their feelings on mortality. By facing our fears and exchanging experiences, particularly concerning mortality, we can nurture stronger connections among individuals, irrespective of their beliefs.

*Austin Williams is a second-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine, aspires to specialize in pediatric surgery. He earned his undergraduate degree from Texas Christian University in 2020, majoring in Biology and minoring in Studio Art. Austin frequently paints organic elements, such as plants and skeletons, to encourage the viewer to reflect on mortality, integration with the natural world, and the role of science in society.*

# Day by Day / Ashley Chavana

The first day I met her I didn't know what to expect  
I had no idea just how much we'd connect  
She opened up to me so fast  
And before you knew it, we were having a blast

She's told me about her dreams and fears  
Her favorite snacks, hobbies, and dream careers  
She's given me a glimpse into how she lives  
And all of the troubles her kidneys give  
"I've been on dialysis as long as I can remember  
But maybe I'll get lucky and get a transplant this December"  
I hope and pray that this is the case  
But until that day I will meet her in this space

Each week we meet, I bring her a craft  
And she shares stories that make me laugh  
But I can only imagine how she feels sitting in that chair  
Attached to a machine that provides her care

It is a joy to help keep a smile on her face  
And bring some happiness to a scary place  
That's not to discount her impact on me  
It has been life-changing, I guarantee  
She's taught me that positivity goes a long way  
And the importance of taking life day by day

My poem entitled “Day by Day” was written about my experience mentoring a young dialysis patient. This poem is meant to shed light on the fact that patients often have as big of an impact on healthcare workers as we have on them.

*Ashley Chavana is a first-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine, aspiring to be a pediatric oncologist. She is passionate about working with children who have chronic illnesses and aims to instill hope and tranquility in both patients and their families. Her poems are reflections of her most memorable patient encounters to date.*

# Not Wasted / David Crawford

Mr. Smith was a man in his 40s with over ten admissions in the past year, all for alcohol withdrawal. Many of my co-residents had already taken care of him during his time on the floor, and occasionally in the ICUs when things got especially dicey. On my first day of the rotation, he presented similarly: shaky, anxious, and tachycardic. As soon as he was transferred from the ER, my new intern brain was stressed to a level 10. I feared that each passing moment could result in delirium tremens or withdrawal seizures, and I was also green enough that tasks like checking electrolytes were very stressful. I wondered: *Am I giving enough potassium? Should I ask my upper level first, or can I go ahead and place the order?*

Even so, I found enjoyment in my conversations with Mr. Smith. Though discouraged by his relapse, he seemed to have strong motivation to return to his AA meetings with a goal of sobriety. Amidst his struggle, he still harbored hopes for the future. He wanted to rekindle his relationship with his daughter and dive back into photography, a passion before his drinking spiraled out of control.

I remember having the hubris to think that MY counseling would be what finally freed Mr. Smith from the shackles of his addiction. I spent every extra minute of my day in his room, listening to his story and practicing my fresh motivational interviewing techniques to help him finally break free. He was grateful for the company, and as his condition stabilized, I felt confident this would be the last time our hospital would see him for withdrawal.

The next morning at sign-out, I was shocked to hear, “Mr. Smith left AMA overnight. I wasn’t able to talk to him because he wouldn’t wait for the doctor.” My emotions were a whirlwind: betrayal, frustration, and disappointment in both myself and the patient. None of my co-residents seemed surprised, as he had multiple AMA discharges in the past, but I was so sure that I was the one to make the breakthrough.

*All that time and effort.*

*Wasted.*

As I walked back to my workstation to start the new day, I felt defeated and drained. But then, only an hour later, I received a call from the ER – Mr. Smith was back! But this time, not with elevated ETOH levels... they were undetectable. I went to the room to see him grinning sheepishly at me. “Look, Doc, I’m really sorry to leave you guys like that, but someone had to go feed my dogs!” He had brought a booklet filled with his own photography and gave a signed copy to each member of our team. Holding his autographed artwork, I felt touched but also somewhat guilty considering how I had felt just an hour earlier.

The rest of Mr. Smith’s hospital course was relatively uneventful, but the feelings from that morning have stayed with me. I still have that book on my shelf today, and when I look at it, I’m reminded of what I hope to accomplish when caring for my patients. As I continue my medical training, I uphold this philosophy: it is always worth it to show a patient that you care.

Looking back at my interactions with Mr. Smith, I believe my initial motivations were misguided. It felt as if I were using kindness, empathy, and respect as tools to coax him into changing his behavior. Now, I realize there’s a much simpler reason to act with kindness, empathy, and respect: these are my patients, and this is the kind of physician I want to be.

A burnt-out physician might argue that there’s no point in spending extra time with a patient like Mr. Smith because it won’t impact his disease course. And if that’s the only thing that matters, then perhaps they’re right. But I believe it’s our role as doctors to immerse ourselves in our patients’ stories, to hope and mourn alongside them, and to treat them with dignity, regardless of their pasts or futures.

*Kindness, empathy, respect – these virtues are never wasted; they’re always worth it.* When we cease linking these virtues solely to therapeutic outcomes and recognize each positive patient interaction as its own victory, it sets the stage for each day to be filled with purpose and meaning,

This essay is a brief retelling of a patient interaction during my early experiences in Internal Medicine. The events of this patient’s admission helped me recognize my own misconceptions regarding addiction, respect, and the patient-physician relationship.

*David Crawford is a BCM med school graduate, currently in his second year of Internal Medicine residency. He plans to apply for geriatrics fellowship after residency with specific interest in quality-of-life determinants for seniors with cognitive impairment. impact on the author.*

# Intertwined / Arusa Macnojia

A tear escapes  
As a new moment shapes, For  
gone you are, my brother, And a  
large void remains.

Weeps my heart for another sight, Another laugh, hug, another fight.  
Hopes it that time rewinds,  
And you, my eyes find.

Prays my soul,  
It remembers you whole,  
The pain persists, and the grief bides,  
Keeping you always on my mind.

But reminds it your smile, deeply kind, You  
watch over, protect, and guide.  
Although separated we may be, We  
are Intertwined.

This poem captures my emotions and reflections as I grappled with grief following the unexpected loss of my cousin in 2019. My personal experiences through grief have underscored the profound emotions that permeate our daily lives and the simultaneous vulnerability and resilience of humanity, encompassed in each patient.

*A native of Houston, Arusa Macnojia graduated from the University of Houston and is now attending medical school just nearby at Baylor College of Medicine. Outside of her studies, she enjoys writing, watching basketball games, and cooking.*

## Untitled / Madeline Chaput



This is a photograph of Igor, a skull that once belonged to my grandfather. It now belongs to my father, who lent it to me during my first year of medical school.

*Madeline Chaput is an MS2 at Baylor College of Medicine. She attended Trinity University, where she majored in History and German Studies. In her incredibly abundant free time she likes to read, sew, and plan her next escape from Houston.*

# Thirty-Five Percent / Matthew Morones

Jumping from one white field to the next  
His playgrounds in the summers  
Bearing the weight of a bag full of yield  
To earn the soles of shoes  
Hurting hands take the pain off his feet

He is usually full of stories  
But he rarely speaks of those times  
Left school before he could read  
Still proud of what he became without

From fourth grade to losing count  
Bare, calloused hands to sterile, slick latex  
We are from the same tree  
But grew in different fields  
A blue collar bleached white

A coat with only thirty-five percent cotton  
The remainder just fancy plastic  
But the genes are like jeans  
Woven together like fine cotton threads  
I've learned it's hard to find men like him

Even if I am only thirty-five percent  
He beams with pride  
It's more than enough to see me through  
These cotton threads bind me and you

My grandpa had a challenging childhood, having to leave school at a young age to work in the cotton fields and take on other manual labor jobs to make ends meet. I've been fortunate to pursue my education and medical training for as long I have. Despite the disparities in our upbringings and educational backgrounds, I frequently contemplate on what we have in common and what we can learn from each other.

*Matthew is a fourth-year MD/MBA student at Baylor College of Medicine. He was born and raised in Texas and is the first person in his family to enter the medical field. In his free time, he enjoys playing any sport with a ball, cooking, and watching endless clips of stand-up comedy.*

## From Blue Collar to White Coat: A Grandfather's Dream / Matthew Morones



This painting depicts the journey of a grandfather who worked in the cotton fields during his youth and his grandson looking at his own future. The painting showcases the grandfather's hard work, what he has reaped, and the bond they share through their very different experiences with cotton. The painting captures the legacy of the grandfather's struggles and the opportunities he has made available to his grandson.

*Matthew is a fourth-year MD/MBA student at Baylor College of Medicine. He was born and raised in Texas and is the first person in his family to enter the medical field. In his free time, he enjoys playing any sport with a ball, cooking, and watching endless clips of stand-up comedy.*

# The Misinformed Patient / Kush Maheshwari

Glorified prescription pushers are all they see,  
Leaving the profession with nigh an ounce of dignity

They believe it as sure as they are solemn  
Like a dying leaf's gasp as it falls in autumn

But behind this perceived indemnity,  
What they fail to consider is how it makes us feel, we

They say that we preach and push our desires,  
But who could not be compelled to water the fire?

Scientific studies and facts be damned,  
Apparently health is an opinion and part of someone's master plan

Tireless hours to study, practice, and perform,  
Only to be left in disbelief alone in the exam room, forlorn

To deal with the incessant bouts of discontent,  
And to be told each day you try to save lives you act with malevolence

We took an oath—no harm we would do,  
But what do you do when the harm is directed at you?

A deep breath in, a deep breath out  
How do you figure something that's been figured out?  
Or make someone trust you while assuaging their doubt?

These are the ones who need our help the most,  
The ones who we must diligently meet at our post

For the ones who in good health take our word  
Aren't the ones who are at risk of getting hurt

I'll say the facts just as they are,  
And through kindness I hope it goes far

Because the only way to combat these false notions  
Is to not give credence to unhelpful emotions

This I believe is our only potion,  
A solution to this misinformation explosion

This poem serves as a reminder that medicine is constantly evolving. We must diligently care for our patients, addressing their pertinent issues and the ways in which they manifest.

*Kush Maheshwari is a third-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine. He believes that, in both medicine and life, expressing humanity is what elevates patient care from a profession to an art. He hopes his words remind others of life's beauty and inspire them to spread joy.*

## Troperating Room / Amna Bashir



Gouache and pen on paper. This painting contrasts the sterile orderliness of the operating room with the wild vibrancy of tropical flora. It also illustrates how human technological designs often echo patterns observed in nature.

*Amna Bashir is a third-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine. She has recently taken the plunge into gouache painting with the hope of creating gifts for herself and others.*

# Sacrifice / Mary Hooper

Watch and wait  
Watch and wait  
All my life I've been watching and waiting

Wait and see  
Wait and see  
All my life I've been studying patience

And it's paid off, they tell me  
Or at least it will  
This art of delayed gratification

But do tell me, if you know  
Was it self-control or cowardice  
That allowed me to resist temptation?

There is no undoing what has been done  
No unlosing what has been lost  
At least, that's what I tell myself  
When I look back at all the moments  
I let dust gather on a shelf  
And wonder what all that caution cost

I'm rich with empty spaces  
Dreams are just holes I've yet to fill  
But part of growing up is the packing  
Learning soil works well as stone for the lacking

Medicine is a lengthy journey. At times, especially after exhausting days, it's natural to reflect on the journey's origin and contemplate its destination. I believe it's essential to recognize these thoughts. We all have them, and they don't diminish our worth.

*Mary Hooper is a third-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine. She is originally from Austin but considers Houston a new home. In her free time, she enjoys journaling, playing guitar, and spending time with family and friends. Writing serves both as a hobby and a vital creative outlet for her. She aspires to specialize in pediatrics.*

# To Grasp Two Hands / Michael Wilkerson

The service was unusually long, but I endured three hours of eulogies from family and friends for her sake. Her husband had lived to the ripe old age of 94 and remained active and virile until his last breath. One could attribute his remarkable longevity to many factors, but I believed his Herculean defiance of death was due to one source – her. They had been married for over 70 years, a staggering timespan for any two human beings to spend together. The tale of their intertwined lives deserves its own discussion entirely (by the time of his passing, they had served as missionaries in Africa for six decades). While their marital journey was captivating to me on this somber morning, it was her coming to terms with his death that I was drawn to. As the pallbearers proceeded down the aisle, casket in tow, I navigated my way through throngs of mourners to find the one who remained.

She sat draped in a black shawl, amidst a circle of other funeral attendees. From my vantage point, I couldn't discern her emotions. Drawing nearer, I reached out and gently held her hands. I was taken aback by the frailty and lack of vitality in those two hands, enveloped by a pallor I was unfamiliar with. As I fumbled through my words of condolence, she tilted her head upwards and locked her gaze with mine. Though lasting only for a fleeting moment, I caught a glimpse of love, grief, endurance, and acceptance in her eyes. She spoke softly through trembling lips, "I only wish that I could go back and do it all over again. I would do it all the same."

For some time now, thanatophobia has held sway over many of my waking thoughts. It is difficult to pinpoint precisely when it took hold, but it has since been a specter in the recesses of my mind – spilling over into daily life from the esoteric to the mundane. It is as if one day I woke up acutely, painfully aware of several truths that should be self-evident. Every human being to walk the face of this earth was born into a situation of compulsory self-preservation, independent of their choosing. Most never stop to ponder how preposterous this situation is, but to me, it is at once most curious and terrifying. We are tasked daily with the maintenance and care of the corporeal vessel that houses our conscious sense of awareness and identity. Our minds simultaneously command and are beholden to our physical forms.

As far as we know, humans are alone among the living creatures of this planet to be burdened with the knowledge of our inevitable personal termination. We rage against this realization through the mediums of religion and art – innumerable manifestations of an illusory promise to transcend death through a life lived purposefully. We swim upstream against the current of decay through the marvel of scientific discovery and inquiry. Perchance this basic science grant will pave the way to rezippping the telomere or uploading our minds to the cloud. We resign ourselves to our fate with Epicurean, Stoic, or unexamined lives. Perhaps death anxiety is a luxury of the affluent; billions on this planet are too busy in the enterprise of survival to muse on their impending death. This dearth of introspection into expiration may be a blessing after all, as a true examination into the subject threatens the very semblance of sanity that we have constructed in our symbolic world.

The crux of the matter is that humans are not merely biological creatures, and the true undertaking of a physician begins with the grasping of both hands – not two anatomical structures but two emblematic ones. The physician must summon the courage to peer into those aged eyes and watch a lifetime of memories replay themselves, welling with a plethora of emotions. The physician is charged with supporting the widowed nonagenarian, untethered from matrimonial moorings and adrift in a sea of existential turbulence for the first time. For our geriatric companions, the ineluctable encounter with the hereafter, or lack thereof, requires mental processing and acquiescence. My genuine desire as an aspiring healer is to lend dignity and tranquility to this most taxing season when the unfathomable must be apprehended. It may be tempting to approach this responsibility with an air of detached objectivity; however, as I drove away from the funeral, I couldn't help but remind myself that someday, it would be my hands that someone else holds.

This essay is a brief sketch of a moving moment that helped me to gain a broader perspective on the practice of geriatric medicine.

*Michael Wilkerson is a PGY-1 Categorical Internal Medicine resident at Baylor College of Medicine. His interests include primary care with a particular interest in Geriatric Medicine and end of life care. This short piece highlights a moving encounter with a nonagenarian that made a lasting impact on the author.*

# A Heart's Love / Kelsey Hummel

I hope you know that the love you need  
the one you really desperately need  
is never too far away

I know you look in the mirror  
and sometimes don't even see yourself  
just a body, a shell  
sometimes it feels that hard and that empty  
I have seen you crumpled and crying,  
feeling ashamed that things feel heavy  
and you are not Atlas  
feeling ashamed that others walk away from you and you are not their perfect  
feeling ashamed that the emotions of you and others are so real  
and you are not able to remove yourself from them  
but my darling  
I am here  
and I will always be here

I know your mind is so vast  
it wants to learn and explore and create  
and even when it is terrified,  
it wants to feel and connect  
the most real things it knows how to do  
I know you grasp for the things your hands can touch  
For validation within reach  
But I want to remind you of what you have done, what you are doing,  
and know that where you are going is still within your tangible hands  
Because whatever the future may hold  
I know you will shape it into the most beautiful thing you can  
with the knowledge that you have and are still learning

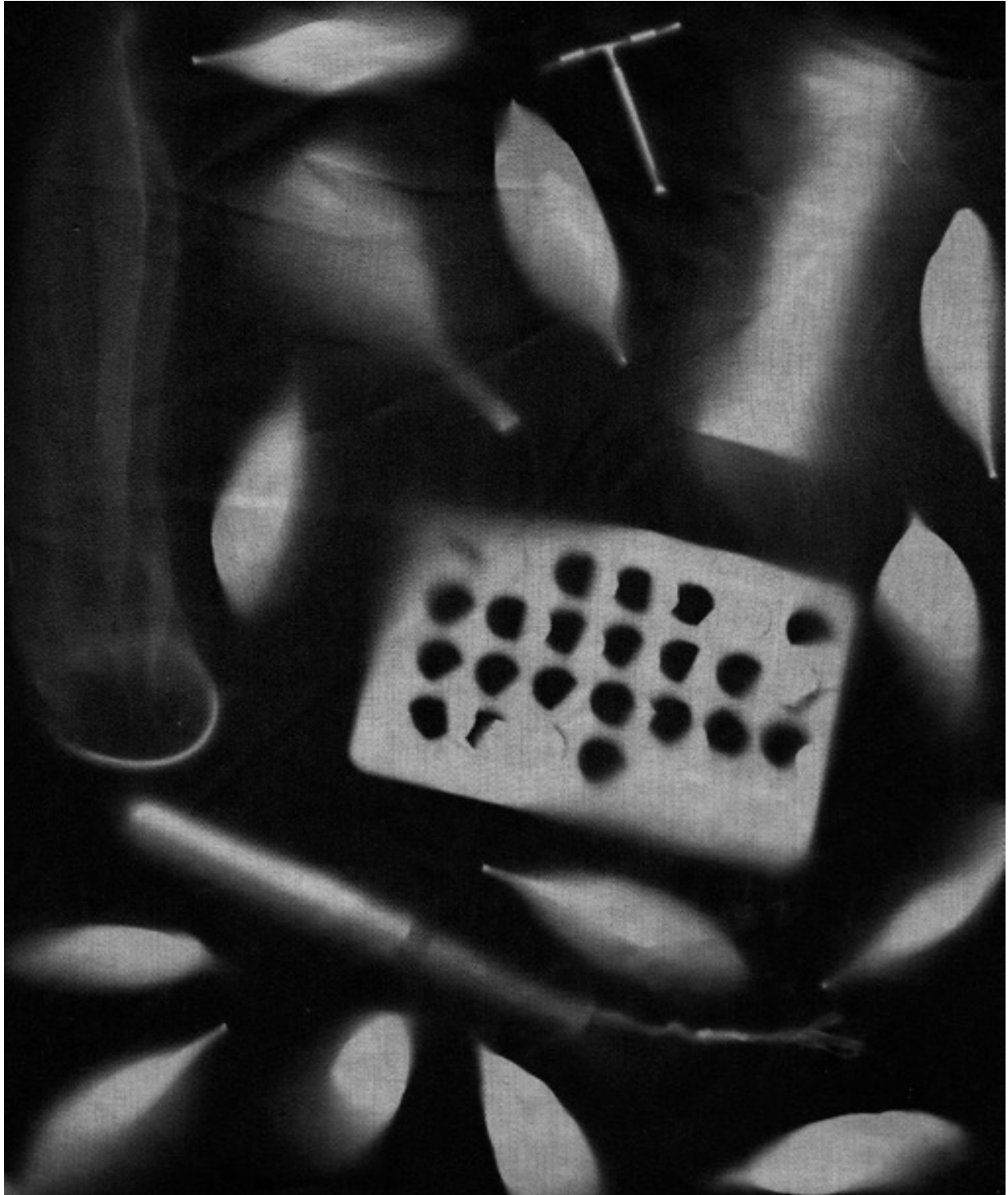
Oh my dear, my sweet kind soul  
I will always work to swell you with pride  
with hope  
and most of all with love  
for everything you do and don't do  
You were never meant to be molded  
or shaped  
by anyone's ideas or hands  
except your own  
everyone else's opinions are just that  
everyone else's

My beautiful love  
I have been with you since the beginning  
I will be with you 'til the end of my days  
right here in your chest  
Singing a song that only you can hear  
A melody, a dance, made by you  
Just for you

For some in the medical profession, thoughts about patients and careers can become so consuming that we lose our sense of self to our work. Unwittingly, we may descend into a despair where medicine becomes our sole lifeline. In the process, we might forget how to laugh, how to radiate joy, and how to eagerly embrace the facets of life that bring us warmth in our coldest, loneliest days.

*Kelsey Hummel is a pathology resident interested in medical education and mental wellness. She enjoys fostering her creative side through poetry, song writing, dancing, and woodburning.*

## Mother Earth / McKenna Gessner



Materials used include a condom, intrauterine device model, pill bottle, pack of oral contraceptive pills, tampon, sunflower petals, pretreated cotton sateen sheet, sunlight, and water.

This cyanotype print delves into themes of reproduction, the divine feminine, disruption of cycles, survival, and the medicalization of the human body.

*McKenna Gessner (she/they) is a third-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine and an aspiring healer who is passionate about sexual/reproductive health and care for the incarcerated. She has a penchant for experimental art that explores new materials, contexts, or the reimagination of the process itself. Besides cyanotypes, McKenna also produces digital art and film photographs.*

# Uncertainty / Muktha Nair

i wish i had less to speak about uncertainty  
tangoing with anxiety on the daily, uncertainty now my intimate companion  
against my wishes  
as i arise, he chills my heart  
with his wily hands  
he clouds my vision as i drive home from work  
with his wily hands  
he twists my stomach throughout the night  
with his wily hands

leaving me sleepless,  
    drowning in my own sheets,  
        wet from my tears  
run  
run while you can, for he is all consumptive

This piece is my attempt to capture the darker moments of my life over the past two years. I hope that whoever reads it can draw strength from it and realize that they are not alone.

*Muktha is currently a third-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine, aspiring to pursue a career in Family Medicine and drive reforms in medical education. She believes that the medical humanities are essential to preventing burnout among healthcare workers*

## Herpes Zoster / Rujman Khan



Oil on canvas. This piece was inspired by Sketchy, an online education platform and memory aid particularly beneficial for medical students learning about pathogens. It portrays the classic description of the Herpes Zoster rash: “dew drops on rose petals.”

*Rujman is a third-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine. She took up oil painting as a hobby in college, and it has since become her favorite form of self-expression throughout the challenging journey of medical school.*

# Four Limericks / Monica Lou

## *Sting*

Lidocaine given, 3 cc's  
Sutures neatly tied off with ease  
Suddenly you woke  
And shifted and spoke  
“Ah! I can feel them, the bees!”

## *OR Nerves*

Patient prepped and draped for ex-lap  
Scrub tech oversees student mishap  
Sweaty hand vs. glove  
Attending looms from above  
Then, latex slides on with a snap!

## *Well-Child Visit*

Stethoscope over the ticker  
Patellar reflex a kicker  
Otoscope in the ears  
Reliably draws tears  
But all smiles when given a sticker

## *UpToDate*

Med student's curiosity abounds  
A query she bravely sounds  
In response: “Great question!  
I have a suggestion,  
Look it up and present it on rounds.”

*Sting:* A patient giving feedback during a minor ENT procedure

*OR Nerves:* My worry every time I scrubbed in for an OR case

*Well-Child Visit:* How most visits went in an outpatient pediatrics clinic

*UpToDate:* A universal medical student experience

Learning on the wards as a medical student can be intimidating at times, but it can also be a great deal of fun! I wanted to use the humorous structure of the limerick to share a few memorable experiences from my time on clinical rotations.

*Monica Lou is a fourth-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine who is excited to pursue a career in Internal Medicine. Over this past year, she has found comfort in reading and writing. She hopes to honor her passion for narrative medicine by earnestly listening to her patients and taking the time to elicit their stories.*

## Colors / Adrian Boehnke



Gouache on paper. The brain is an intricate conglomeration of cells that together form our very being. In a slightly less grandiose way, this painting brings colors and brushstrokes together to resemble an MRI of the brain.

# Neurons / Adrian Boehnke



Gouache on paper. Inspired by my favorite mnemonic: “Neurons are like salty bananas,” which references the neuron’s higher potassium concentration internally and sodium concentration externally. To further the symbolism, these are colorful, molten bananas as a nod to neural plasticity.

*Adrian Boehnke is a first-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine. She pursued neuroscience during her undergraduate studies at UT Austin. Her deep fascination with the brain and mind frequently influences her artwork. She paints as a way to unwind and relax, often drawing inspiration from bold colors, surrealism, and post-impressionist artists.*

# A Letter to My Parents / Mary Hooper

I think I learned more from my mother  
than medical school  
I didn't really realize it till the other day  
when on a walk I passed a classic, tragic scene  
being performed in a driveway:  
A little boy standing by a fallen bike,  
crying crocodile tears,  
and his father knelt before him,  
cooing soothingly as he inspected a slightly scraped knee  
"It'll be alright"

I think of every comforting word, every palliative act  
All the paper plates placed before me at dinner,  
the towels held at the ready at the end of the pool  
All the little things I took for granted  
just as a child should

And getting older means seeing the opportunities for reversal  
I think of my mother filing my grandmother's nails  
after she'd lost the dexterity to do so herself  
Funny, how such a small thing can hold so much love

It was the small things that made me want to be a doctor  
A girl sitting in front of me in class who said she was getting a headache,  
felt like she had low blood sugar  
I gave her an apple from my lunchbox  
and it was the happiest I'd felt in days

I think most people are actually quite kind,  
when given the chance to be  
It's just the average person's day doesn't afford that many chances

But look! The hospital is teeming with them  
Endless opportunities for kindness  
And though I know I won't be able to protect my patients  
any more than a parent can really protect their child,  
I hope to keep handing out comfort  
I even hope they'll take me for granted

This poem is a love letter to my parents, who taught me the compassion I hope to always impart on my patients.

*Mary Hooper is a third-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine. She is originally from Austin but considers Houston a new home. In her free time, she enjoys journaling, playing guitar, and spending time with family and friends. Writing serves both as a hobby and a vital creative outlet for her. She aspires to specialize in pediatrics.*

# An Essay on Plastic Surgery / Tareck Haykal

The mysterious alchemy of plastic surgery merges the external beauty of form with the internal functionality of the body. On the surface, this craft addresses the physical form, correcting abnormalities and imperfections. Yet, beneath this surface lies a deeper purpose: the enhancement of the body's internal workings.

One example of this fusion between form and function is reconstructive surgery. This type of plastic surgery is often performed to repair or rebuild body parts damaged by injury, illness, or congenital defects. For example, consider a patient who undergoes reconstructive surgery on their face after a car accident or on their hand after a burn injury. The goal of these procedures is not only to enhance the physical aesthetic of the affected body part but also to restore, or in some cases, recreate its function altogether. A patient who has undergone reconstructive surgery on their hand might once again grip objects and perform delicate motor tasks.

Another illustration of this harmony between form and function is breast reduction surgery. While improving the appearance of the breasts is often the primary objective, the procedure can also offer functional benefits. Breast reduction can enhance a person's posture and relieve back pain by balancing the upper body's weight.

In addition to reconstructive surgery and breast reduction, other procedures in plastic surgery seamlessly integrate form and function. Liposuction, for instance, removes excess fat from various body parts, enhancing the body's contour and aiding in weight loss and other health-related issues. Similarly, rhinoplasty, or "nose jobs" as they're commonly referred to, can both enhance the nose's appearance and correct functional issues like difficulty with breathing.

I will never forget a patient I treated – a young man who was attacked and needed his entire jaw reconstructed. We used his fibula to fashion a new jaw and elevated tissue from his thigh to cover the defect. Before my medical training, I could not have imagined that such a procedure would be classified as plastic surgery. Now, more than ever, I understand that cases like these define the field as they push the boundaries of form and function simultaneously.

In conclusion, plastic surgery is a realm where form and function coalesce. While many procedures focus on improving appearance, they frequently come with functional advantages. As a result, plastic surgery can not only enhance one's physical appearance but also boost their quality of life and overall well-being.

This piece is simultaneously an appreciation post for the field that I have grown to love and a reflection on how my opinions on it have changed over the past few years as I have grown and learned during medical school. This essay seeks to highlight the two tenants of plastic surgery: form and function. These two values drive the field, and no decision is made without the consideration of both.

*Tareck Haykal is a fourth-year medical student with an interest in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. He is currently enrolled at Baylor College of Medicine and is also completing an MBA at Rice University. Beyond his passion for Plastic Surgery, Tareck is drawn to the visual arts, including ceramics and painting, and is intrigued by the integration of artificial intelligence in this realm.*

# Winning Your Battle / Ashley Chavana

It was a bright Monday morning when I got out of bed  
It was time to get ready for the long day ahead  
When I arrived at the hospital, I saw many children at play  
Smiling and chatting their little hearts away

One thing was different about these kiddos  
They were oblivious to the fact that they are really heroes  
Fighting against something growing within  
Determined as always to win again and again

That's not to discount the war their loved ones are in  
Standing on the front lines trying to defend  
Their child from the pain and suffering they endure  
Hoping and praying that chemo will cure

Then there are the physicians who dedicate their lives to save  
Each day of work, requiring them to be brave  
Providing comfort and guidance  
Together, integrated with science

A compassionate physician does not stop there  
They are attentive to detail and truly care  
A well-trained physician may even shed a tear  
With a patient who is very dear  
It reveals an intangible connection  
A true sign of affection

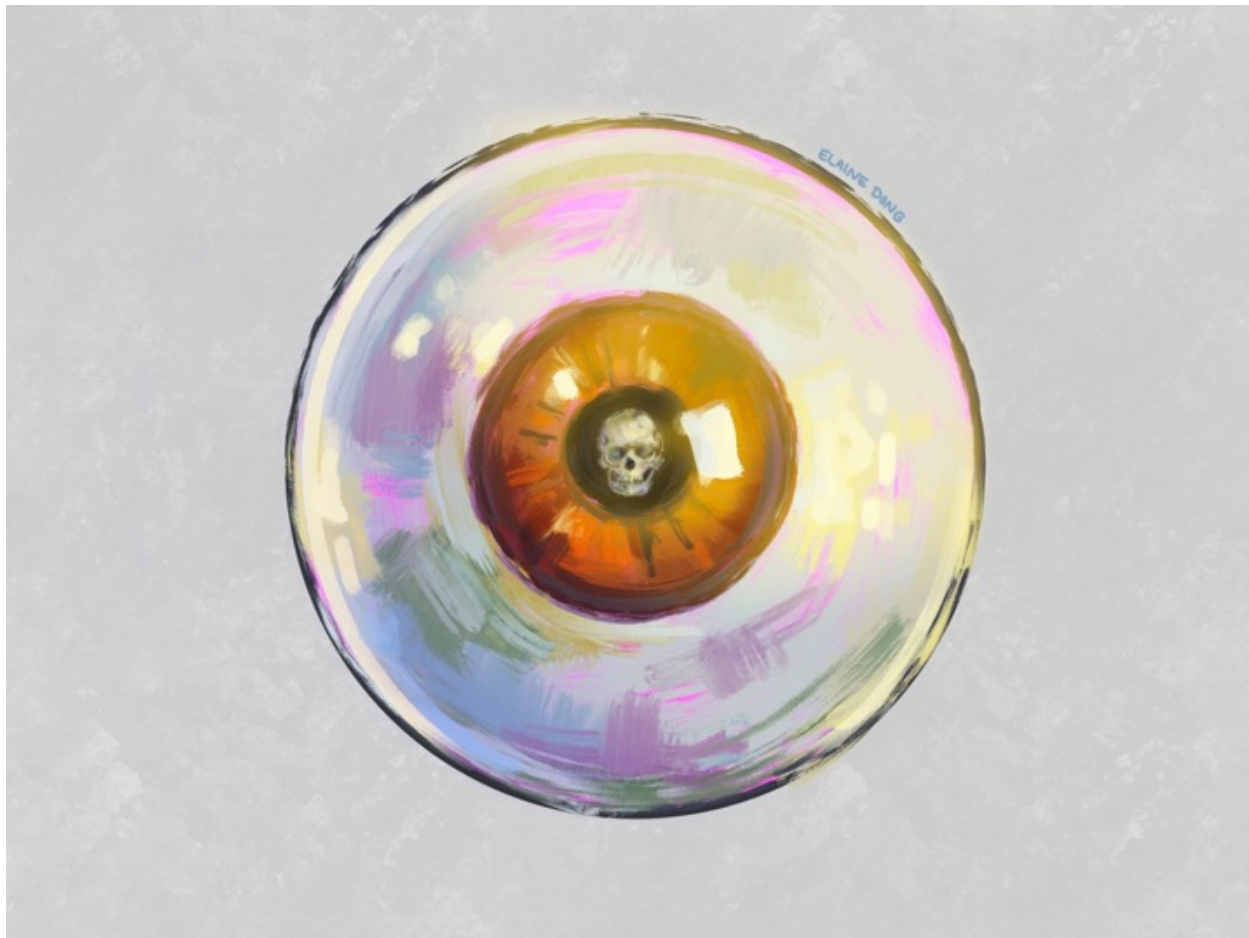
For each of the persons involved, there is a battle brewing  
At the hospital today, that is what I was viewing  
It was almost time to go home for the day  
When I heard someone say  
There's a bell ringing in five  
He is cured and survived!

I watched him ring the bell with family around  
Cheers, clapping, and tears abound  
The battle was won  
And everyone's part was done  
His family and friends and doctor were involved  
And at last, his illness was finally resolved

My poem entitled "Winning Your Battle" was written to elucidate the battle each person must fight when a child is diagnosed with cancer. Each person involved (patient, family, friends, and health-care workers) unite with the hope of finding a cure.

*Ashley Chavana is a first-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine, aspiring to be a pediatric oncologist. She is passionate about working with children who have chronic illnesses and aims to instill hope and tranquility in both patients and their families. Her poems are reflections of her most memorable patient encounters to date.*

## Seeing Death / Elaine Dong



As medical students, we may find ourselves in a situation where we witness death for the first time. The experience is profoundly intimate, eliciting a potent mix of emotions—awe, horror, fascination, sadness—that can be challenging to process. Simultaneously, there's significant pressure to maintain our composure, not to divert our gaze, and to suppress our internal reactions—all in the name of professionalism. Through this piece, I aim to capture a hint of that internal turmoil.

*Elaine Dong is a fourth-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine. During her undergraduate studies, she majored in visual arts. Her portfolio features work inspired by her own experiences both as a patient and as a medical student.*

# The Storm / Armando S. Martinez

Thunder in the night  
I write by candlelight  
On what it means  
~ to me ~  
To be free  
of this dark foreshadowing.

Running into residency,  
I race against time.  
Tormented by the thought  
that in these evermore storms  
moments like those are lost  
like tears in the rain...  
And yet, it finds me pursuing,  
even as the storm clouds are brewing.

The goal,  
to awaken from it still dreaming. Reality.  
To be free  
of this dark foreshadowing.

Written during a torrential downpour, “The Storm” is a metaphor to illuminate the unique challenges impending medical residency applications. As we offer up what many say are our best years of life, some dreams are lost or deferred. The piece ends without an answer, echoing the anxiety that remains until the day we awaken to our reality, whatever that may be.

*Armando S. Martinez is a third-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine, gearing up for an increasingly competitive residency application cycle. Nevertheless, he remains hopeful. He takes solace in the belief that, when the storm clouds eventually clear, it might all prove worthwhile.*

## Progress Scans / Sujal Manohar





These edited photographs reference one of my earlier artworks that showcases flowers emerging from prescription bottles, symbolizing the role of medication in the recovery from mental illness. Yet, recovery isn't always a straight path; it has its moments of darkness even in the light. This iteration presents a grimmer nuance with flowers that have a radiopaque appearance, reminiscent of medical imaging. Ironically, such scans are never utilized for diagnosing mental illnesses. In the absence of concrete imaging or tests, how can we ascertain our progress towards healing?

*Sujal Manohar (BCM '25) flourishes at the nexus of arts and medicine. She views art not only as a medium to connect with others and assist in their healing but also as a platform for health-related advocacy and awareness. More of her work can be viewed at [sujalmanohar.com](http://sujalmanohar.com)*

# A Hobby / Amanda Braddock

Let me have a hobby.

Let me do an activity that will not improve my residency application.

Let me do something that has a neutral effect on my development as a physician.

Do not ask me how my hobby benefits me.

Do not come up with a clever way to relate my hobby to medicine.

Let me read guilty pleasure romance novels.

Let me post silly videos on social media.

Let me obsess over a former boyfriend.

Let me be a human.

Let me exist outside of medicine.

Do not let me end this with “because being human makes me a better physician.”

This poem represents personal musings on feeling pressure to frame my entire life around medicine.

*Amanda is a third-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine. She recently took a Narrative Medicine course and enjoyed expressing herself in a new way. She was encouraged by the facilitators to submit some of her writing, but she admits that she is “absolutely terrified” to have others read it.*

# Miscommunication / Amanda Braddock

I had a patient who was a recent immigrant from Afghanistan, and their family spoke Pashtu.

Most would agree that one of the most important aspects of medicine is communication, yet we had no way to communicate with this family.

Being a medical student with infinite time, I inquired and found out that I needed to email a form to the hospital's interpreter service to request an interpreter.

A form had to be submitted for each day we required an interpreter.

These forms had to include the exact times we needed their service, down to the hour.

I filled out twenty of these forms because the patient was expected to be hospitalized for several weeks.

A few days later, I was informed that there weren't enough Pashtu interpreters available for our patient.

Thus, we had to manage without one.

Every day during rounds, we would clumsily attempt to explain our plan using gestures and Google Translate.

The parents were grateful for our attempt, but communication was clearly lacking.

In a world where cutting-edge medicine is the norm, adequate communication remains a significant hurdle.

A story about miscommunication in the hospital setting.

*Amanda is a third-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine. She recently took a Narrative Medicine course and enjoyed expressing herself in a new way. She was encouraged by the facilitators to submit some of her writing, but she admits that she is “absolutely terrified” to have others read it.*

# Goals of Care / Samyukta Jhavar

How long does she have  
To keep staring at this jar full  
Of half-eaten dill pickles?

I think the breakfast trays should be on the way.

Three minutes since the IV was hooked.  
Two legs flexed in fetal position.  
One ridiculous question blurted out-

Tiene dolor, señora?

Three translucent orange bottles rattling in her purse.  
Two rows of scribbles flashing on the monitor, and I fancifully inspect.  
One collared cotton shirt, pilling and spotted with tears.

Lo siento, señora.

Three fingers pressing on her temple and her mouth, dry.  
Two hours since either of us had coffee.  
One worn woolen slipper kicked to the ground.

No te preocupes, mija.

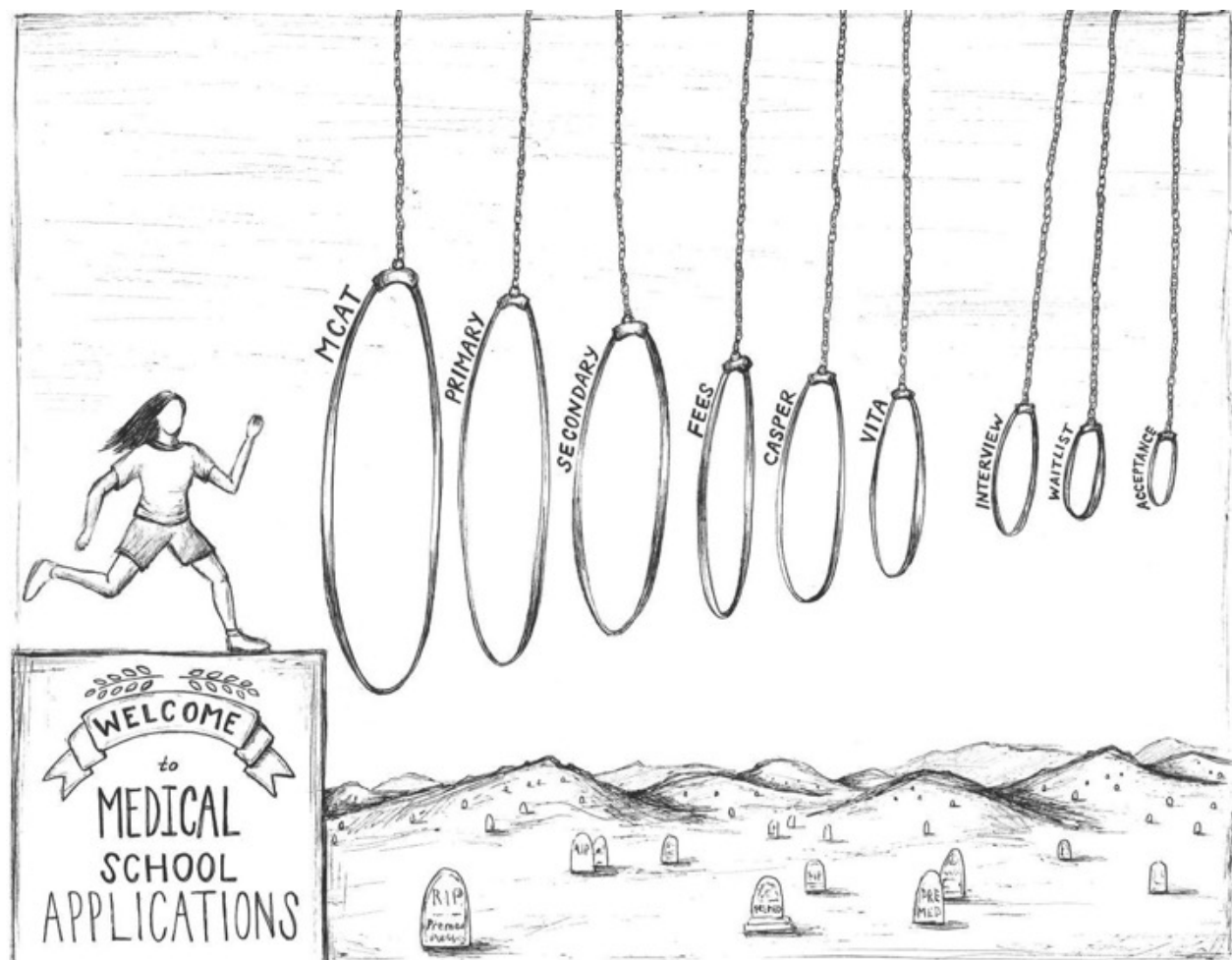
Three months, maybe four?  
Two fragile hands sandwiched between mine.  
One phrase I'll have to Google later,

Dios te bendiga.

This poem is inspired by the fortitude and kindness of a woman I had the privilege of meeting.

*Samyukta Jhavar is third-year medical student at BCM. She graduated from the University of Texas at Austin in 2020.*

# Jumping Through Hoops / Sujal Manohar



This piece emphasizes the many challenges applicants face to secure a spot in medical school. Each subsequent hoop is smaller in size, illustrating how many qualified students are rejected every year. The ground is scattered with tombstones, representing premedical students who never received an acceptance.

*Sujal Manohar (BCM '25) flourishes at the nexus of arts and medicine. She views art not only as a medium to connect with others and assist in their healing but also as a platform for health-related advocacy and awareness. More of her work can be viewed at [sujalmanohar.com](http://sujalmanohar.com)*

# Helping or Harming? / Ryan Sorensen

Distended stomachs growling for nutrition  
Cataracts staring blankly at a cloudy world  
I stand there prophylactically protected from the Anopheles mosquitoes prickling my skin  
I was a visitor, come to help,  
I soon realized I had more to learn,  
Than the Bassa had to learn from me  
What may have seemed like a simple fix on a computer screen at home  
Was a much more complex issue  
If I wasn't careful,  
my work may do more harm than good.  
Caring for the underserved requires constant engagement and revision.  
Doing so sustainably takes planning and scrupulous circumspect.

This poem was written as a reflection of my service mission in Liberia.

*Ryan Sorensen is a second-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine. During college, Ryan undertook a two-year mission with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Throughout his mission, he witnessed both the benefits and detriments of humanitarian aid on a country and reflected on the impact of his efforts on the people he served.*

## Which Variant Will Strike? / Sujal Manohar



In this cartoon, COVID-19 viruses are represented as bowling balls aiming for a set of vaccine bowling pins. Each variant tries to “strike” the existing vaccines, potentially causing a new surge in COVID-19 cases. In the Omicron bowling lane, the coronavirus is heading directly for center of the vaccines, suggesting a high rate of breakthrough cases among vaccinated individuals. The continuity of the lanes implies that future variants might challenge the efficacy of the vaccines.

*Sujal Manohar (BCM '25) flourishes at the nexus of arts and medicine. She views art not only as a medium to connect with others and assist in their healing but also as a platform for health-related advocacy and awareness. More of her work can be viewed at [sujalmanohar.com](http://sujalmanohar.com)*

# Lessons You Won't Find in First Aid / Mary Hooper

I think of myself as a good student  
But I seem to have missed a few vital lessons along the way

It must've been on an Anki card I suspended  
How to lean into the gravity of the lurching train so as not  
to stumble, because you want to look like you know what you're doing  
Or how to sneak glimpses of the sunrise through the window and remember  
to look at the sunset too, because it'll be dark again by the time you get home

And perhaps it was one of the zoom lectures where I dozed off  
that the professor explained how to act around a dying person  
Or the best time to sneak to the bathroom to cry  
quickly, such that your absence will not be noticed

My peers helped to fill in some of the gaps along the way  
They showed me how to get from the metro to the hospital when it's raining  
and how to trick the machine into giving you two pairs of scrubs  
Because medical students only get one pair, and no parking

But still, some things I had to figure out on my own  
Like which frozen meals have the most calories per dollar  
Or how to get the blood out of my shoes and the hospital out  
of my head, because my other friends want to meet up  
and they don't get where you've been recently

There have been plenty of good lessons, don't get me wrong  
I've learned how one person can suddenly become two  
And to hug your mom a little tighter, because she once did the same  
for you, and you never really appreciated it before, nor  
the amazing way you wake up every morning and your heart  
insists on beating

And maybe these lessons are obvious to everyone else  
but there are still plenty I'm practicing  
To remember what ought to be remembered  
forget what should be forgotten  
and how to tell the difference between the two

Luckily for me, time  
is a very good teacher

This poem was inspired by “What You Missed That Day You Were Absent from Fourth Grade” by Brad Aaron Modlin, a beautiful composition about life lessons not taught in school. I believe many would agree that in medical school, there are numerous lessons we learn that aren't found in First Aid, Anki, or Sketchy. This poem highlights just a few of such lessons.

*Mary Hooper is a third-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine. She is originally from Austin but considers Houston a new home. In her free time, she enjoys journaling, playing guitar, and spending time with family and friends. Writing serves both as a hobby and a vital creative outlet for her. She aspires to specialize in pediatrics.*

## From the Same Cloth / Emily Stroupbauer



This is a digital media piece symbolizing the intricate themes surrounding Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD). Through the Latin American Trans-ancestry INitiative for OCD Genomics (LATINO) study at Baylor College of Medicine, I had the privilege of speaking with participants with OCD and learning about their diverse experiences with the disorder.

*Emily Strouphauer, a second-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine, has served as a research assistant for the LATINO Study for the past year, exploring the unique ways OCD manifests in different individuals.*

# We Are One / Charlotte Helena Rivas

*It rises and lays with me*

Pulsing at the base of my head  
An incessant, inconspicuous pulse that meticulously  
Forges the path of an innocent

*It rises and lays with me*

Dancing between life and death, scheming majestically  
Leaving no space for free will, always without  
Manifesting

*It rises and lays with me*

Subduing my amygdala through poignant whispers  
And not a chemical that composes me was normal

A bondservant, and the master is occult

It says: tear your skin apart but I will remain with you  
It's ingrained; *we are one*

Its notorious invisibility impudently points at me as the  
Author of my own life

The most sinister was when the cloak was lifted and I  
Saw its putrid fruits

I thought the association would bring dignity

But it unveiled what could have been

Who bears the guilt, the morally unrestrained or Abandonment?

*There is no room for both*

I originally wrote “We Are One” in Spanish after encountering a perfume scent that was new to me, yet felt quite familiar.

*Charlotte was born in Manhattan, NY, and spent her childhood in Venezuela, Spain, and Texas. Her mother, a devoted clinical psychologist, nurtured Charlotte’s fascination with the brain and behavioral science. Both her father and grandfather, trained research journalists and avid readers, instilled in Charlotte a passion for reading and writing prose and poetry. Charlotte is now a Ph.D. candidate and views science as an artistic endeavor.*

# What About the Parents? /

## Amanda Braddock

When I say I want to be a pediatrician, “What about the parents?” is often the first question most people ask.

I am on the same team as the parents.

The parents of a pediatric patient want nothing but the best for their child.

They love their child. They want the pediatrician to help the child grow strong and healthy.

Even if they sometimes make choices we don’t agree with — be it being anti-vax, frequently buying sugary juices, demanding antibiotics for every earache, or insisting on doctors’ visits for every minor injury — their decisions stem from love.

The parent who opposes vaccinations loves their child just as much as the parent who ensures their child receives all the recommended vaccines. The parent who can’t seem to stop giving his kid sugary drinks loves their child just as much as those allowing only water. The parents demanding antibiotics when physicians deem them unnecessary simply want to cure their child’s pain.

In this respect, parents and pediatricians are always aligned: they both desire the best for the child.

Our role is to show compassion and meet parents where they are.

So no, I don’t mind the parents.

This essay is an answer to my most asked question when I mention my interest in pediatrics

*Amanda is a third-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine. She recently took a Narrative Medicine course and enjoyed expressing herself in a new way. She was encouraged by the facilitators to submit some of her writing, but she admits that she is “absolutely terrified” to have others read it.*

# Transition / Dilshad Dhaliwal

This big city, and my small grudges,  
The adjacent traffic jam and my stomach cramps,  
Adulthood dawned sooner than I expected,  
This usually happens, someone suggested.

My anxieties win over the calm of my soul,  
And then a wave of grey seems to engulf me as a whole.

Posted in the main hospital, I see life with a new perspective,  
My mind still preoccupied with its grey, confused reflective.

A hospital larger than life, where illness and wellness pace,  
The chaos, the crowd, a patient elevator that faces an all-time race.

Multiple tubes, wires, and oxygen cylinders,  
Make me sick, make me go into my self-concealed bunker.

That Ryles tube, the cardiac monitor alarms, the gurneys, and the grief-stricken faces,  
That wheelchair that bears the body and patient's files with their 'cases.'

How do you beat pessimism with that streak,  
How far does one go for the final report and your heart skips a beat.

The hospital maybe the only place where negative is all the way positive,  
And it all hangs in between 'consistent with' or 'suggestive.'

An old saying goes, "I cried because I had no shoes until I met a man who had no feet,"  
When I see that multitude across the OT in this scorching heat,  
I look up and thank Him,  
I am a mere mortal, who cribs and sulks when I don't win.

Little did I realise, my grudges now take a back seat,  
When I see I need to dust myself off, and give the illness a tough beat,

So, I remind myself of the bigger struggles people face on the outer side,  
Which are colossal compared to my tiffs and petty quarrels on the inner side.  
Small things matter, yes, they do,  
Least did I realise, black and white are colors too.

Life will have an answer, sooner or later I realise, with an optimistic high  
and surviving the day, it ends with a piping hot tea latte chai.

I composed the short poem “Transition” during my move to Houston and my rotation at Texas Children’s Hospital. There, I experienced the hospital from an insider’s perspective and its personal impact on me. At first, it was overwhelming, but with time, I began to enjoy my stay.

*Dilshad Dhaliwal is a PGY-1 in Pathology at Baylor College of Medicine. She loves the intricacies of the subject, and a day well spent would mean a soft light, a good novel, a great couch, and a fireplace with a hot cup of tea.*

## Variants / Stephanie Okezie



Inspired by the genetic etiologies discussed in my courses, I created this mixed-media painting using watercolor, acrylic markers, and pen. In this piece, DNA strands are combined with zentangle designs to represent different types of germline variants seen in people.

*Stephanie is a first-year Genetic Counseling student at Baylor College of Medicine. One of her goals this semester was to be more intentional about painting more often. She likes how versatile and easy to clean watercolor paints are and hopes to explore gouache as her next medium.*

# Strangers in an ICU / Nicole Walters

strangers now but never again  
more than a doctor, not quite a friend  
lungs without air, desperation in your eyes  
willing away the unwelcome goodbyes  
the imperative question, asked with great strain  
what will be done about my loved one's pain  
I feel out of place, but don't want to leave  
wishing I could somehow give you reprieve  
once it is done, there's no reason to stay  
so I step out of the room, and elsewhere I stray  
but what of you  
do you leave now, where do you go?  
everything's changed, but nothing that shows  
I return home, not sure what to say  
when the ones in my life ask me of my day

# A Doctor's Biggest Secret / Nicole Walters

I come in the morning  
And tell you my plan  
Sensing you're praying  
For me to be more than I am

A doctor's biggest secret  
I guess there are a few  
Years of schooling, training, reading  
Telling me what to do

A doctor's biggest secret  
Never very well kept  
Curative surgeries and miracle drugs  
Across the internet

And my biggest secret  
Keep it between me and you  
I am praying for the same thing  
With all my being too

I wrote these pieces as an effort to process working with patients with grim prognosis in the ICU. One was written specifically after a patient requested care to be withdrawn.

*Nicole is a third-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine. She began her clinical rotations in January 2022 and has since loved working with patients and learning in a hands-on way. While she relishes the positive aspects of patient care, she finds it cathartic to write about some of the more challenging facets of medicine she has observed or experienced.*

## Ribbit Ribbit / Adrian Boehnke



Gouache on paper. This artwork represents the phrase “a frog in the throat” and its classic remedy: hot tea with honey. Being the first in my family to venture into the medical field, I find pleasure in juxtaposing the colloquialisms and general knowledge about medicine I acquired growing up with the formal education I now receive as a medical student.

*Adrian Boehnke is a first-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine. She pursued neuroscience during her undergraduate studies at University of Texas at Austin. Her deep fascination with the brain and mind frequently influences her artwork. She paints as a way to unwind and relax, often drawing inspiration from bold colors, surrealism, and post-impressionist artists.*

# A Note on AI & Art/Tareck Haykal

The controversy surrounding art generated by artificial intelligence has been steadily gaining attention as these systems demonstrate increasingly advanced capabilities. I created a visual art piece by asking an artificial intelligence machine to create something at the interface of medicine and plastic surgery. The generator created the artificial image of an operating theatre. The image was striking to behold as it seemed to draw heavily from classical themes and trends, rather than the modern techniques and ideas that are frequently portrayed in popular media. This raises questions about the extent to which artificial intelligence systems can be influenced by cultural and historical biases and the potential impact of these biases on our understanding of the world around us. There is also something distinctly non-human about the piece which highlights the existing differences between humans and machines. This separation parallels the existing concerns about the encroachment of artificial intelligence into actual medical care. Ultimately, I did not wish to showcase this artwork because of the uncertainty around the attribution and originality of the piece. Until artists are fully certain that the AI program is not copying other artists without giving them due credit, I think we must question the ethics of claiming ownership for AI-generated art.

*Tareck Haykal is a fourth-year medical student with an interest in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. He is currently enrolled at Baylor College of Medicine and is also completing an MBA at Rice University. Beyond his passion for Plastic Surgery, Tareck is drawn to the visual arts, including ceramics and painting, and is intrigued by the integration of artificial intelligence in this realm.*

# Nuncio 1 / Gianmarco Calderara

The audio recording of this song is available on the BCM Omentum webpage.

This song was recorded during Gianmarco's undergraduate studies. Inspired by a desire to reconnect with a passion that he had put aside for the past few years, Gianmarco decided to re-record the guitar part over the original song. The song is a recognition that our passions outside of medicine can provide fuel to help us connect with our patients, and he tried to write and perform the guitar part in a way that would reflect that.

Credits:

Gianmarco Calderara - Guitars & composition

Isaac Harrelson - Synth & mixing/editing

William Braun - Bass

Izack Redmon - Drums

*Gianmarco is currently a second-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine. Prior to starting school, he was a member of a 4-piece indie band named "Nuncio." This track is the first of 4 on an unreleased EP.*



# Notes:



BAYLOR COLLEGE OF MEDICINE  
LITERARY AND ARTS REVIEW

Volume 3 | 2022-2023