



AD LIBITUM

ART & LITERARY MAGAZINE

VOL. — 20

SPRING 2022

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MAGAZINE

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Spring 2022



AD LIBITUM

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MS III
Photography

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Tara Vijayan
Souvik Sarkar

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LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

It is with great pleasure and excitement that we present to you the 20th addition of Einstein's art and literary magazine, Ad Libitum. Each year we are very grateful to be involved with this magazine, as it gives everyone in our Einstein community a medium to showcase and celebrate their creative talents. We greatly appreciate all the talented members of our Einstein community for their sharing their creative sides. We hope you enjoy this year's collection of artwork and literary pieces.

Our goal at Ad Libitum is to provide a creative platform for all members of our diverse Einstein community, including faculty, staff, postdocs and students, to share their creative talents. Each year we receive a wide variety of photography, painting, poetry, prose, drawing, and even original musical compositions and animated videos. We are extremely grateful that this magazine continues to grow, as this year we have received the most submissions compared to year's past. We believe this magazine is a fantastic way to highlight the importance of creative thinking in our educational environment and to demonstrate that the members within our community are skilled and innovative in ways beyond science and medicine. The encouragement of artistic expression in our highly scientific environment provides both a creative outlet, which can often be therapeutic (especially during the COVID-19 pandemic), and a means to promote cultural understanding in our increasingly diverse community.

We would like to thank the Einstein administration for their continued support of our efforts, especially Deans Tomaselli, Nosanchuk, Benfield, Ludwig, Baum, Meholfi, Freedman, and Burns, as well as Dr. Kuperman, the education Dean who administratively founded Ad Libitum. We thank Martin Penn and the Office of Medical Education for their help in the production and support of the magazine. We thank Karen Gardner and the Department of Communication and Public Affairs, the Graduate Office, the Student Council for both the medical and graduate schools, the Career and Professional Development for PhD Student and Postdocs Office, and our terrific and talented staff and volunteers.

Lastly, we are incredibly thankful to all the participating members of the Einstein community who contributed to this magazine. Without your creative talents and willingness to share those talents, this publication would not be possible. Thus, we are extremely grateful to all the participants.

Olivia Albert Meera Trivedi

Olivia Albert & Meera Trivedi
Editors-in-Chief

LETTER FROM THE DEAN

Ad Libitum is an outlet for beauty, creativity, art and imagination to be used at one's pleasure. As we emerge from this time of a confluence of suffering and healing, Ad Libitum is an oasis for the creators and viewers, a respite from that which occupied us all too often over the past two years. The brain child of alumna Dr. Tara Vijayan as "an outlet to re-experience" the profound human events that are part of medicine that was encouraged by then Associate Dean for Educational Affairs, Dr. Albert Kuperman. With this the 20th issue, Ad Libitum continues to comfort and inspire the Einstein community. We are grateful to all of the contributors for sharing a part of themselves. Thank you.



Gordon F. Tomaselli, M.D.
Dean

LETTER FROM TARA VIJAYAN

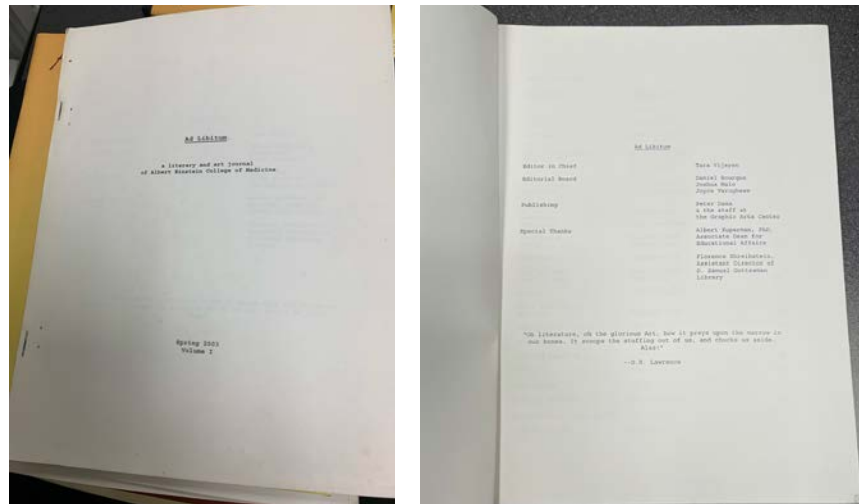
Co-Founder of Ad Libitum

“We are all whispering in a tin can on a string, but we are heard, so we whisper the message into the next tin can and the next string. Writing a book, just like building a library, is an act of sheer defiance. It is a declaration that you believe in the persistence of memory.”

--Susan Orlean, *The Library Book*

In 2002, I began my medical career in that concrete jungle that spanned the corner of Morris Park Ave and Eastchester Road. I daydreamed in Robbins auditorium, found respite in long runs through the forests of Pelham Bay Park (and shorter runs on the indoor track at Falk when the winter air pinched a bit more than I could tolerate). I spent evenings studying in those high towers that barely cost a dime to rent. I created incredible friendships with individuals who would always have my back. I often was consumed by stress, doubt and fear.

The doubt was intense at so many moments, but that first year was the hardest. It was in that space that one night in one of those apartment rooms I, along with my classmates Joshua Malo and Daniel Bourque, decided to create a literary magazine. We soon found that innumerable artists surrounded us at all sides, among our fellow students, our faculty and our beloved staff. Dmitry Kedrin, one of the brilliant “mud-phuds” in our group, was an incredible painter. Another MD-PhD candidate, Souvik Sarkar, who later became editor, was a photographer. There were gifted writers, poets (spoken word and otherwise), sculptors, sketch artists all around.



Copies of the First edition of the Ad Libitum Magazine

We originally did this with no budget, and printed several dozen copies of a document off Microsoft Word at Peter Dama’s office. (It is possible we even manually stapled the pages.) It was my first attempt at creating what I would now call a return on investment for Dr. Albert Kuperman, our then Associate Dean of Educational Affairs. I remember approaching him in his office, intimidated by his literal and figurative stature in our institution. I cannot remember exactly what he said (although I distinctly remember his voice), but it was something along the lines of “let’s see where this goes.” In fact, it did not take much for him to commission future publications. The following year we were gifted a real magazine. And to my surprise, here we are 20 years later with not just a magazine but a true space to create, with art nights and auctions.

Despite the constant doubt in those days, I also was filled with awe. I heard a man with bipolar disease play the violin in his hospital room. I met a teenage woman with HIV, her mouth full of thrush and her body so painfully thin. I learned about grief and resilience, and what a privilege it is to bear witness to all of this. I think back at how this magazine gave me the space to process all of that and to create memories...memories of learning to become a doctor.

I am so grateful that Olivia Albert reached out to me to write about this incredible moment. I am so grateful to all of you who continue to create and document your moments and memories. And I am grateful to Dr. Kuperman who always believed in possibilities. May his memory be a blessing.

Warmly,
Tara Vijayan, MD, MPH
Class of 2007

IN MEMORIAM

Remembering Dr. Albert Kuperman (1931-2021)

Albert Kuperman was born on August 1, 1931; a proud native son of The Bronx. A graduate of Cornell Medical School, Albert followed his passion for science, becoming a professor of Pharmacology. Albert and his family traveled overseas to Thailand where he helped establish the first Pharmacology Department at Mahidol University in Bangkok. Returning to New York City in 1974, Albert began a long and illustrious career as Associate Dean for Educational Affairs at Albert Einstein College of Medicine.



Dr. Kuperman retired in 2013. He was Einstein’s other “Uncle Albert” and in this role, he helped shape the medical school curriculum in ways that placed Einstein at the forefront of medical education. His innovations include introducing the concept of global health education to provide opportunities that expand students’ experiences with healthcare; establishing research project fellowships to encourage inquiry and increase understanding of the science behind medicine; and fostering a culture of humanism among medical students and faculty that is at the heart of Einstein’s approach to medical education and research. Einstein students are especially grateful that Dr. Kuperman encouraged them to think—and act—for themselves.

“Listening well is perhaps one of the most important aspects of being a good leader, a good colleague, or a good friend,” he said. And listen he did, to the kernels of ideas that Einstein students had. He often offered his support and encouragement so that they could realize their vision. To many, his name was synonymous with empowerment. His belief in students and their ability to carry their ideas to fruition has created opportunities for those students and those who followed them. From a project in Haiti for fourth-year students to the BODY Garden aimed at reducing diabetes and connecting with the community, to Einstein’s longstanding art and literary magazine, *Ad Libitum*, Al lent his ear and then his support.

In a feature posted at the time of Dr. Kuperman’s retirement, Dr. Tara Vijayan, a member of the Class of 2007, recalled how he had supported her idea for an art and literary magazine to which all members of the Einstein community could submit their work. “In medicine, you have incredibly profound human experiences, and I felt that having an outlet to re-experience them was helpful, even cathartic,” she said. “He agreed.”

The publication, called *Ad Libitum*, continues to offer a creative outlet for students, postdocs, faculty, alumni, staff and even donors. “The idea of dreaming big that Dr. Kuperman encouraged in us is something that I will always carry with me,” added Dr. Vijayan. “Al has always been receptive to new ideas that could enhance the educational experience,” noted Dr. Katz, summing up Dr. Kuperman’s influence. “He has empowered students and faculty and supported them.”

Dr. Kuperman, passed away on December 21, 2021 at Cornell Weil Hospital; he was 90 years old.





Pandemic Face

Mirna Jaber
Volunteer
Oil on Canvas

PREVIOUS

Desert Stars

Aaron Oh
MS III
Photography

I Can Do it For You

by Julia Holber
MS III

It was 3 am, and it was December, and we were in the I couldn't count what number COVID surge. I was on my surgery rotation, and we had a consult in the emergency department— a man in his early forties who was dying of metastatic colon cancer and found to be COVID+. He needed palliative care and not surgery, and we all knew that, but no one was saying it. I donned my PPE to go meet him.

Your bed was blocking his in the Tetris grid of hospital beds behind the plastic curtain, an attempt to separate those with COVID and those without. I pulled back the plastic, and you sat up briskly, planting your feet on the ground, blocking my path to the dying man.

Don't come in here, you said, your Jamaican accent thick, your voice deep and strong. I paused, thinking maybe you had come here paranoid or scared.

Don't come in here, you repeated firmly, lucidly, your tired eyes looking directly into mine.

I couldn't find my words, maybe because it was late, maybe because I still didn't understand.

We have the virus. You paused. All of your hand motioning to the other patients sitting, crowded behind you— we all have the virus. And you... you have a family. Your voice, suddenly gentler, inquisitive. I'm sure you have a family?

I thought for a moment of my family— hundreds of miles away, all asleep. I assured you that I was okay, that my family you had asked about— my grandmother, my parents, my sisters— they lived far away. I offered a smile, hidden by my mask, hoping you saw my eyes, calm, sure, used to being surrounded by the virus now.

Please, Miss, you persisted. What do you need me to do? I— I can do it for you.

I don't know if you saw the tears well up in my eyes; they well often here— daily, hourly— because of patients like you. See, patients like you are juxtaposed with the nights I spend scrolling, reading the posts about patients yelling at the tired staff. I wake up to texts from my friends— videos of nurses crying in their cars, doctors' posts about the denial, the threats that turn to violence. Time stamped at 4:08 am: Are we really going to do this?

But the patients I've been so lucky to meet here, so many are like you. Maybe you think I am young, naive, but you ask how I am each morning when you are the one sick in the hospital. You call me mija and hold my hands when we talk on the edge of your bed. You are warm and fierce and protective of me. I am strong and laughing the way we learn to be, but you don't care, or you see through it. You take care of me in a way I am not used to. In a way so few outside my family— the family that is hundreds of miles away, all asleep- ever have.

You eventually let me pass you and speak to the dying man behind your bed. He could barely speak back, the virus and the cancer rattling deep in his chest. I thanked you on my way out of the plastic curtain, but you had turned over, fallen asleep. That morning when I returned to my own bed, returned to scrolling, I was searching for you, for the posts and the stories we owe the patients like you— so I am writing them.

Yours is the first of many.



Homeward Bound
Evan Kominsky
MS IV
Photography



A bailarina
Aline Horta
Postdoctoral Fellow
Painting

A Reclamation of Power
by Julia Hyacinthe
MS I

I ask myself so often why I'm protecting you

"You don't like him?" People ask me
"I thought you were friends"
"He's so great though!"
"What happened?"

My replies are vague- not accusatory or incriminating
"oh we just don't talk anymore" or
"we had a falling out" if I'm feeling especially daring

But I wince with every response- each word a shard of glass on my tongue,
The lies spill from my mouth like blood

Why can't I just tell them the truth?
Tell them what you did to me- how your body, in its greed, robbed me of my
freedom
My choice
My power
My consent-
Show them who you really are and watch as the halo crumbles from over your
head

But fear holds me back and shows you the mercy you don't deserve

Am I afraid that my words will ruin your life or mine?

Because the world hates accusers more than the accused and no matter how
vile the crime there will always be someone on your side, not mine

But I'm tired of protecting you

My silence keeps you safe,
And I think it's time to speak up.



Untitled
Stanislovas Jankauskas
Research Fellow
Photography



We can go!!!
Pamela Stanley
Professor
Photography



Spring Mix
Kerry Demers
Admin Assistant
Photography



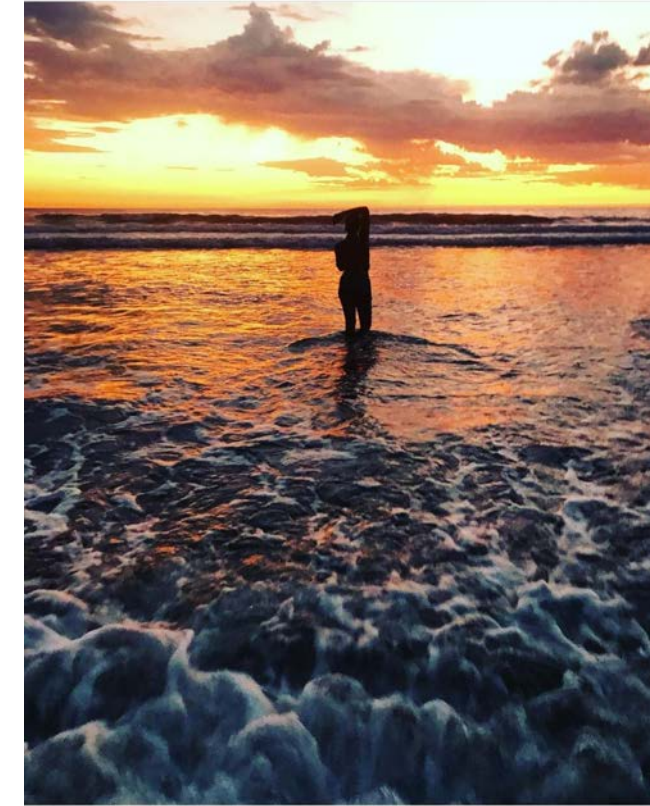
Barn Eagle House
Carl Schildkraut
Professor
Photography



Silhouette at night
Hector Cordero
Associate Research
Scientist
Photography



Nature's Curves
Jane Wee
MS III
Photography

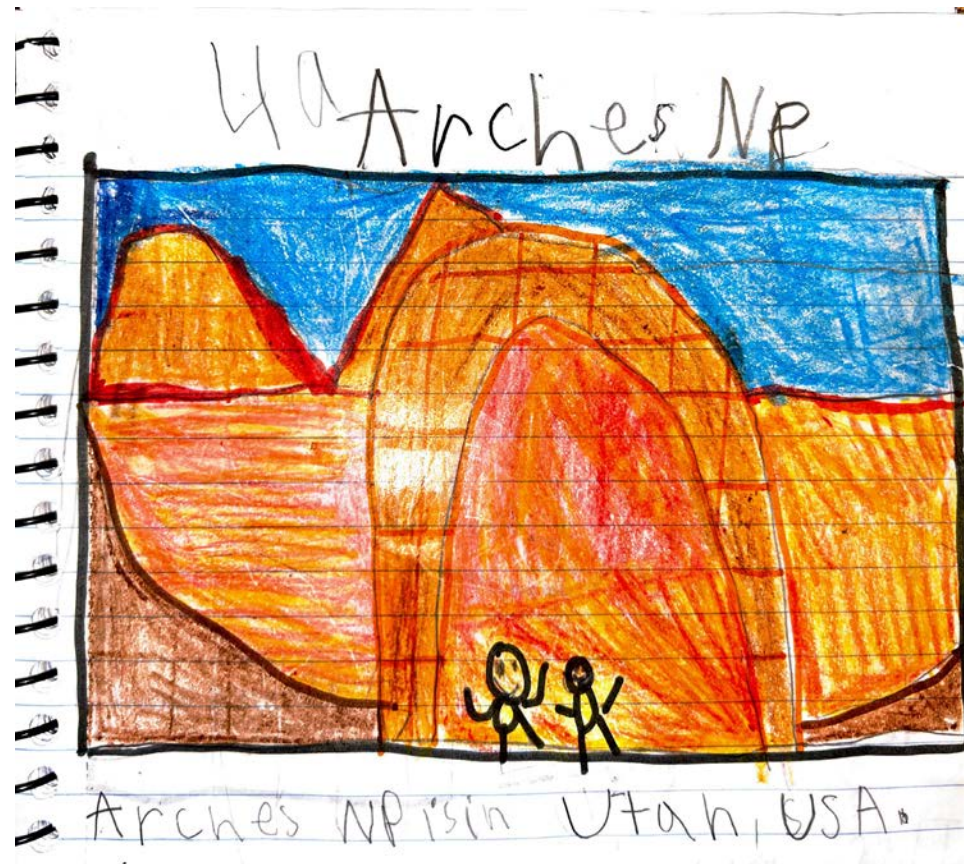


Still here...
Shameka Savoury
Assistant Administrator
Photography

Still here...
by Shameka Savoury
Assistant Administrator

Still Here....
I made it through this blistering storm and grief
I sacrificed and loss but still remain in one physical piece
Where is the light to accommodate in this storm?
I thought I was lost but another me reborn
A version of triumph and peace
A resting place but not end of bereave
I am here still but I carry the memories
Those I loved, my mental anguish and the constant threat of defeat
My hands dry from cleansing, face still masked like Armageddon, soul heavy as concrete
But still here I remain to tell the story
To recall the legacy of those I could not save
But here in the heaviness I reflect, I cry, I remain
I see the light and it is there if we pull close; we can all feel safe.

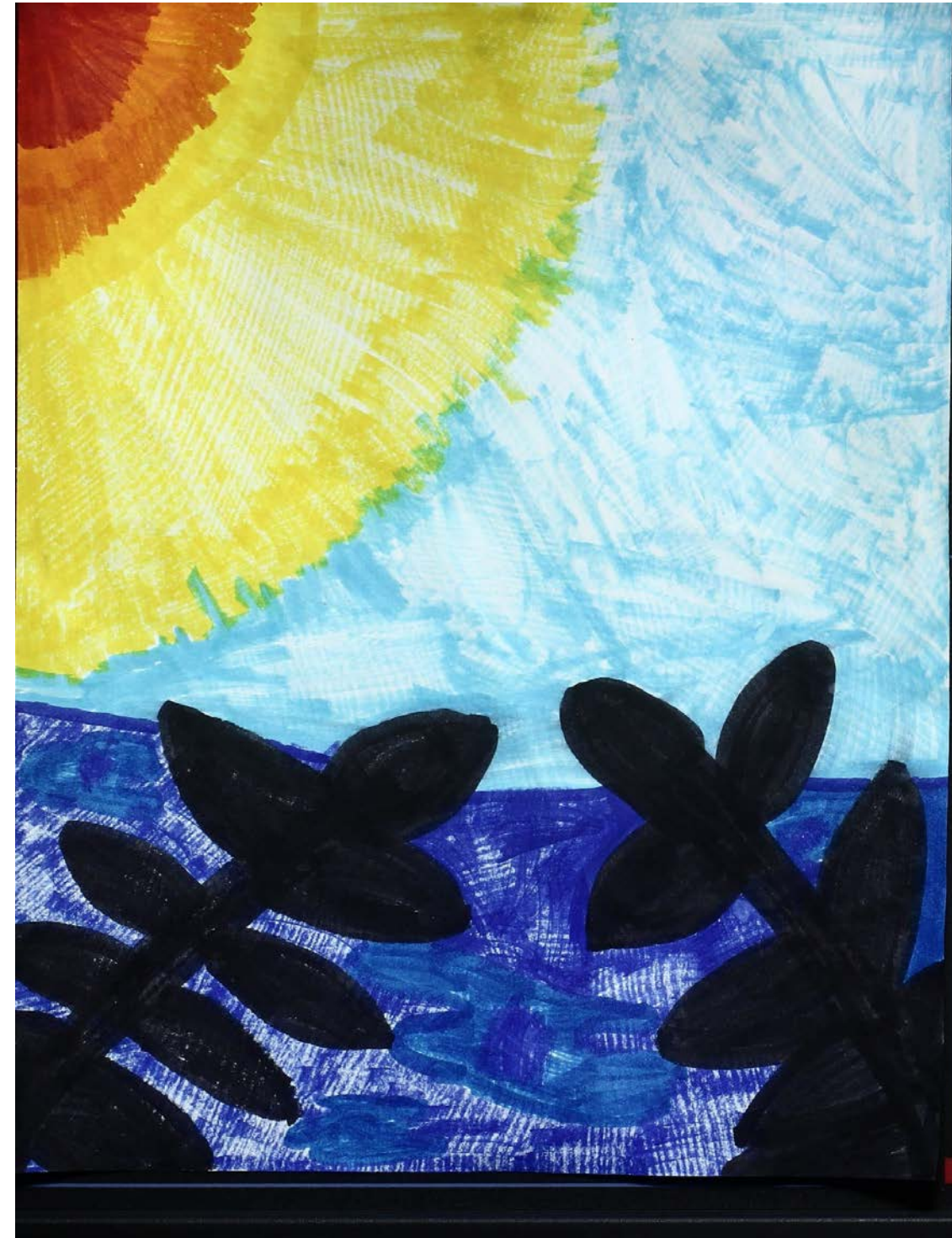
Utah
Neel Mishall
son of Priti Mishall,
Associate Professor
Painting



Rainbows
Seshabruhati Gopi
daughter of Lalitha
Nanduri, Instructor
Painting



**Morning by Sanchir
Aodengtuya**
Fnu Aodengtuya
Research Technician
Drawing



Egyptian Waters

Kevin Liu Kot
MS II
Photography



La Serenissima
Aurelia Minuti
Head, Research &
Education,
D. Samuel Gottesman
Library
Photography

The Sweetest Nectar

Sandy Matos
Surgical Technologist
Photography





Forest for Trees

Jessica Zwerling MD MS
 Director, Montefiore Hudson
 Valley Center of Excellence
 for Alzheimer's Disease
 (CEAD)
Watercolor

I need you, too
 by Rachel Borczuk
 MS IV

Good morning sir,
 I'm so sorry to interrupt your breakfast.
 Would it be okay if I talked to you for a minute
 To see how you are feeling this morning?

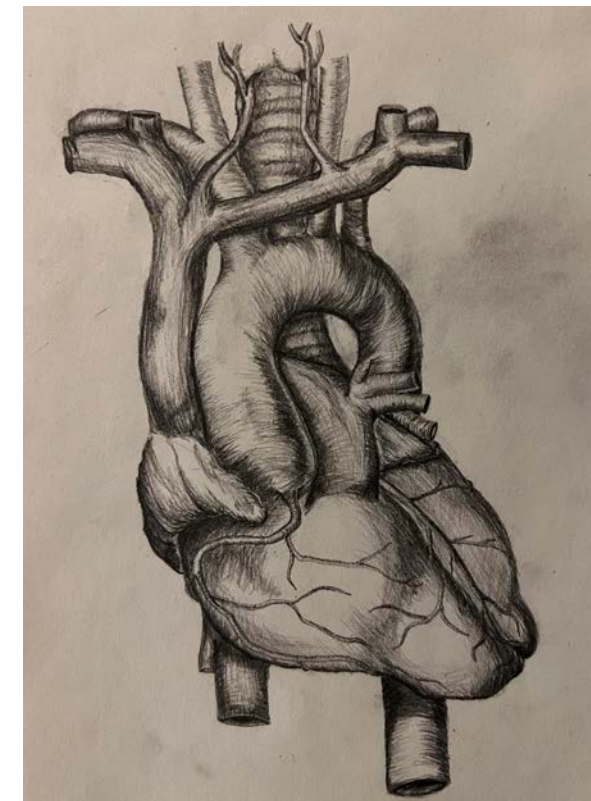
Oh, of course, he said.
 Do what you have to do,
 He grinned.
 I'm the sick one -
 I need you, you don't need me.

It was my turn to grin.
 Why was I surprised
 That my routine script rounding on patients
 Had once again left me speechless.

If only you knew
 How patients like you
 Have imprinted a mark
 On my heart forever.
 How the thought
 Of you in pain
 Had kept me studying
 Until the libraries would shut their doors
 Every weekend
 For years.

A word that is not said much
 In medical school,
 Is love.
 Whether we say it or not, I believe
 We feel it
 As we lend a hand
 To comfort a patient
 Or stay up that extra hour
 To read about their disease
 And hope for them.

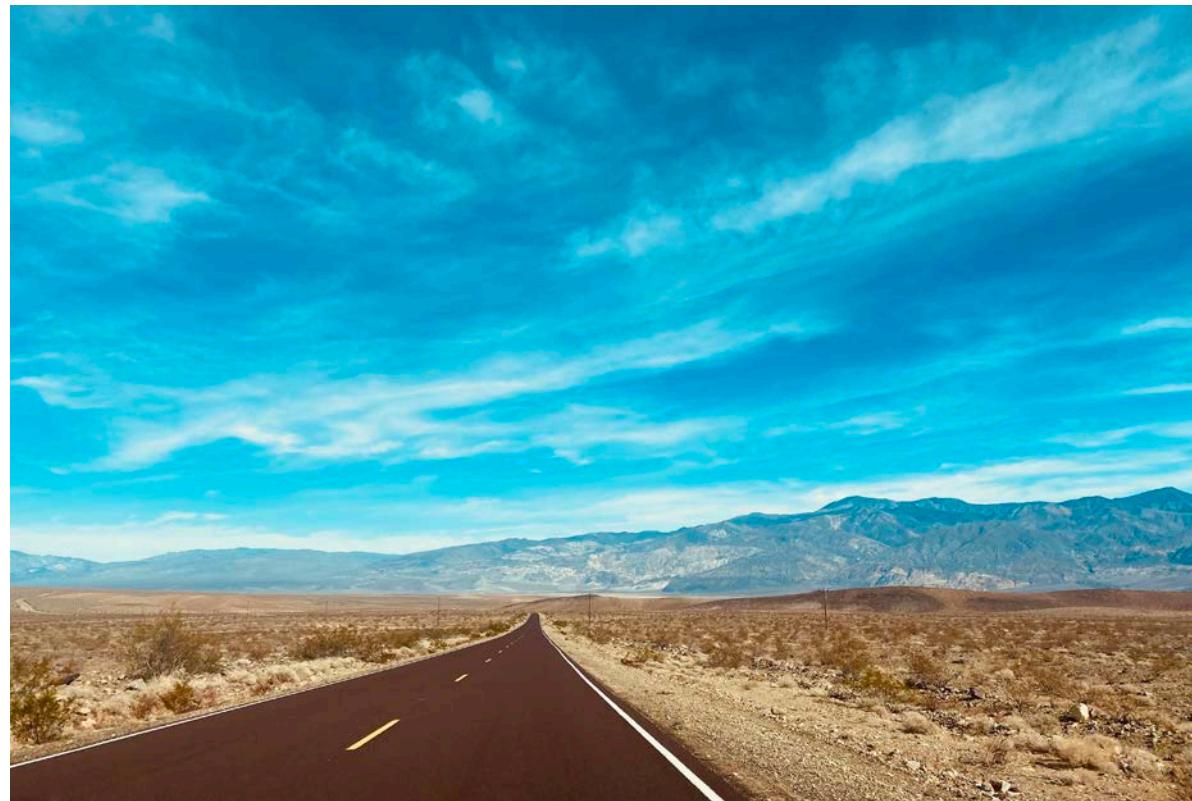
My heart is so full
 From patients like you.
 I need you, too.



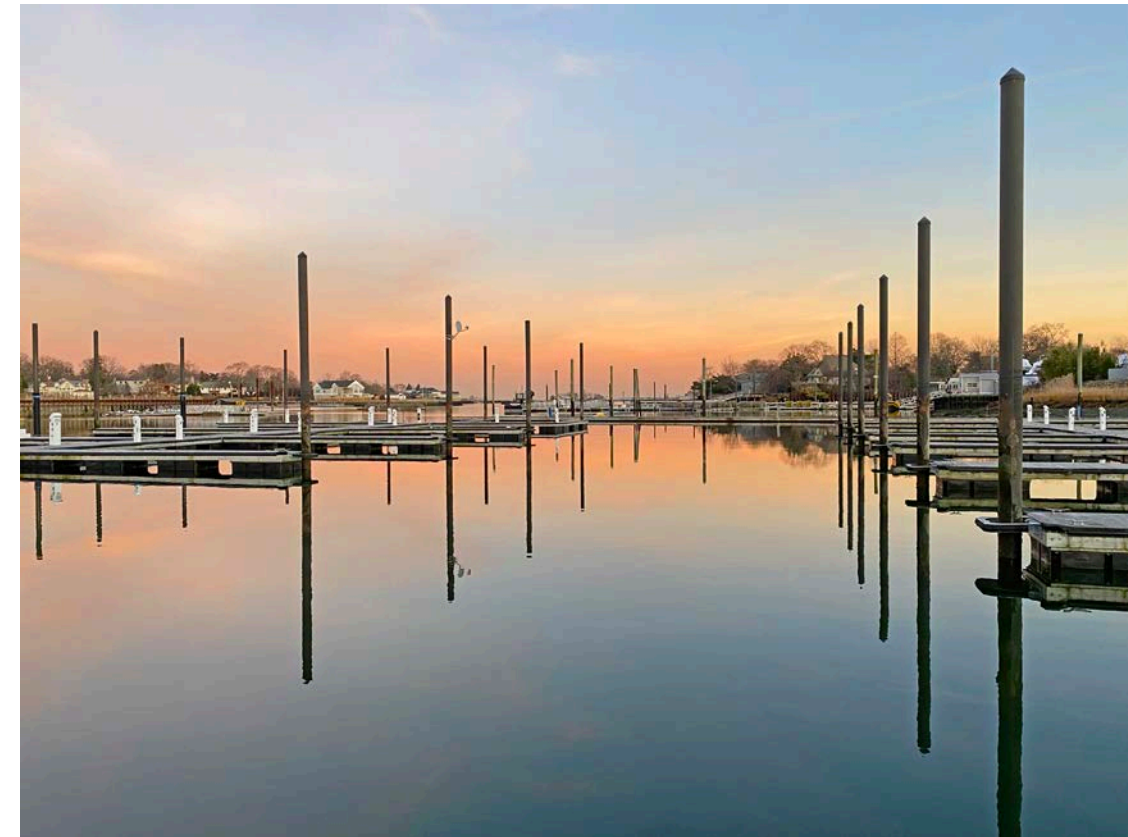
Pulse
 R. Grace Owens-Pochinka
 MS IV
Pencil drawing

Learning The Ropes
by Max Abramson
Medical Student

A patient at peace –
Fumble with my stethoscope
Student invasion



**Follow your path
(Mojave Desert)**
Coralie Berthoux
Postdoctoral Fellow
Photography



Reflections at Sunset
Allan Wolkoff
Professor
Photography



The Bison Highway
Leo Tang
Postdoctoral Fellow
Photography



Hi, I am a fluorescent fly!
Andrea Briceno
Research Technician
Photography



The Samurai
Fadi-Luc Jaber
Associate
Acrylic

Static and Dust
by Stephen Liang
MS IV

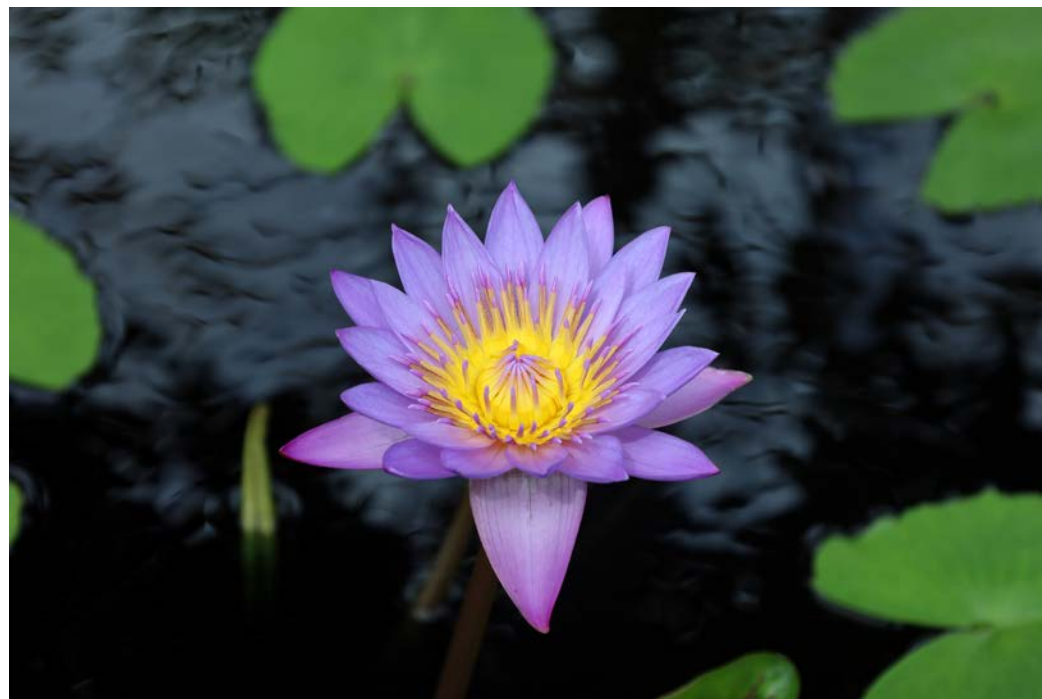
Above, snow falls,
Flakes of ash frozen by their
Time
Away from the ground.

Downwards, they float,
Battered by the wind,
Currents that push and pull them
Through every direction across
Time
As they drift through space.

Frozen stiff, I watch
Dots of white come into focus
Against a canvas of white,
Each speck as distinct as the
Static
That roars between my ears.

A puddle forms beneath me,
Seeping into clothes, hair, skin, flesh –
Water seeking kin with blood and lymph
To make a mush of
Static
Whenever the weather warms again.

Indifferent, the snow falls
And covers up the stain,
Blessing already hallowed ground
With a landscape untouched by
Static and Time
And, when the spring comes,
A bed of flowers and bone.



**A Lotus in New York
Botanical Garden**
Yang Li
Department of Epidemiology
and Population Health
Photography



Ghiaccio
Ezgi Kasikci
Research Fellow
Photography

A of Hearts

by Avigail Soloveichik
MS I

On the train home tonight,
I peeled my heart out
and set it dripping
on the seat beside me,
in that tail crevice
where only the little kid
can fit. Chubby little heart,
pumped up full on feeling.

If it sits outside me for just a little while,
I don't need to deal with all the things inside it.
I can let its illiterate valves roam the subway signs,
let it decipher plastic surgery Spanish
from English scratches on plastic panes.
I ask it questions every now and again.

But funny, too, how it doesn't look that different
from the city potpourri:
greasy dreams served up on wiped-off
subway seats. We're all salivating for gratification;
it's almost as good as having
the cake with the candles.

If I could feel right now,
I'd wonder whether this is what a good-sad
marriage feels like. Or how a heart without a brain
can be such a good listener.
I wish it had words
to take away the untold.

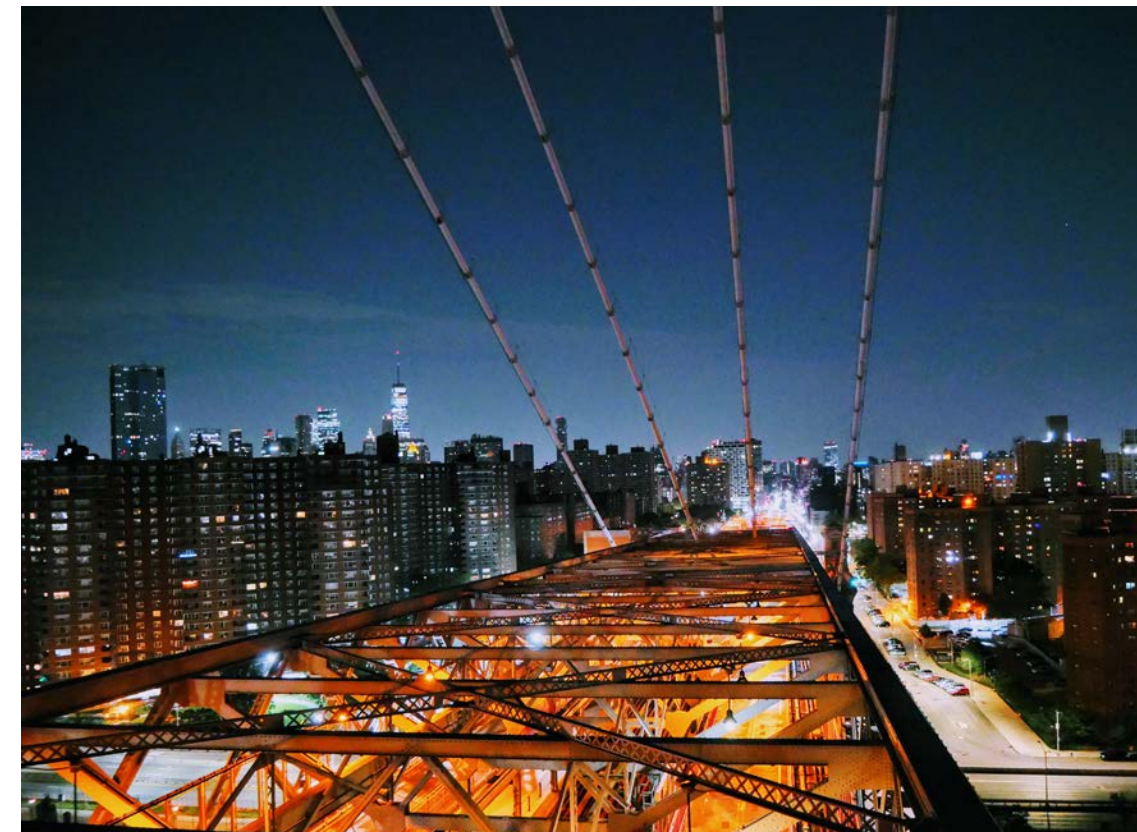
Five quiet stretches of stops,
all the way to Far Rockaway.

The train ends in Queens:
dumping ground of all things,
home to airfare and world fair,
to Tories and cemetery stories
where even morticians
lean on their sun-scalloped spades
and cry in 138 languages.
Borough of baseball and Big Hearts.

Time to pick mine up,
slip it back in,
head on out,
and carry it home.

The Colosseum, Rome

Shyam Twayana
Research Fellow
Photography



undisclosed
Julie Kim
Research Technician
Photography



PREVIOUS
Sunrise Eclipse
Leo Tang
Postdoctoral Fellow
Photography

**Love animals /
Zoi Quispe, 8 years old**
Olga Meshcheryakova,
submitted on behalf of her
daughter
Research technician
Drawing



Golden Hour in Bryce
Urna Kansakar
Postdoctoral Fellow
Photography

Early July Again
by Sophia Liu
MS III

You had never felt the bitter tear through blood to bone,
The phantom wound that twisted cries from me in
haunted dark,
As I thought about what I lost and
What I inherited. But now—

The knife is pressed to your sternum and I watch.
Is 23 too young? All I know is 17.
They say couples grow similar as they
Grow old/er together,
But this was never where I wanted the reflection to
match.

Do you wonder if the cells that travel in streams of
bright lively red,
Will be darkened aflame, inflamed, DNA with self-
ish mistakes retained,
The way I believe kindling has already started
smoking
(only from the inside)
Choking my lungs until they slowly turn black and
burn out?

We are our father's children, and they will never
know ours.
But we carry them in our very being.
Should we be afraid? Of what 17 or 23 may bring
them?
Taken by the same constellation they took their
last breath under—

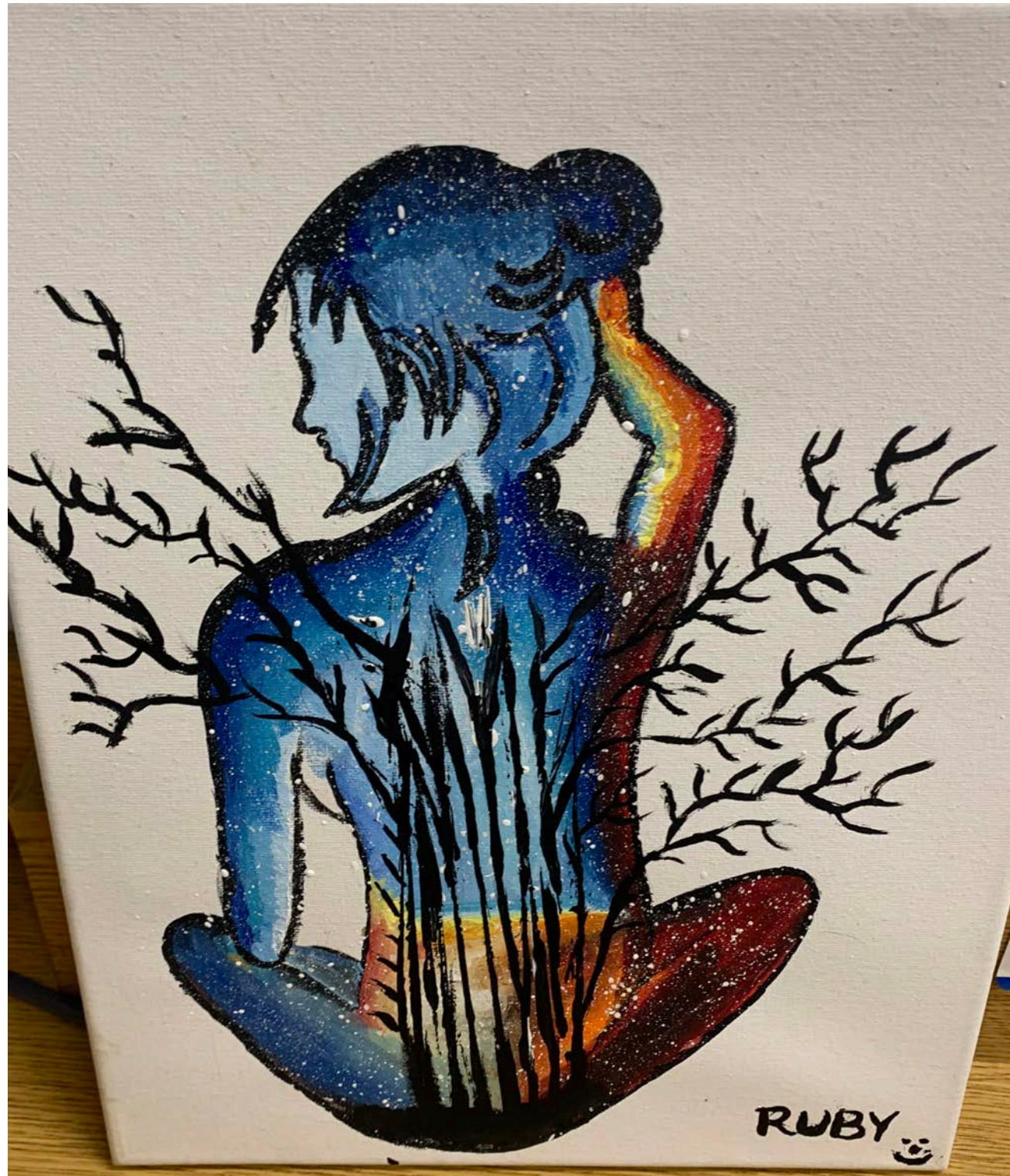
Or shall we rejoice that love regenerates to beat
and balm
That unruly evolution?
One day, once more, you'll close your eyes and
see calm,
Expose yourself and flush bare to the sun
Natural as the air in and out of my lungs.

I know from: "you and me", again.

Big Dipper On a Mountain
Reanna Doña-Termine
MSTP VI
Photography



Eiffel for beignets
Olivia Albert
PhD Student
Photography



**She has all the elements
she can be a Creator and a
Destroyer!**
Ruby Sharma
Postdoctoral Fellow
Acrylic Painting on Canvas



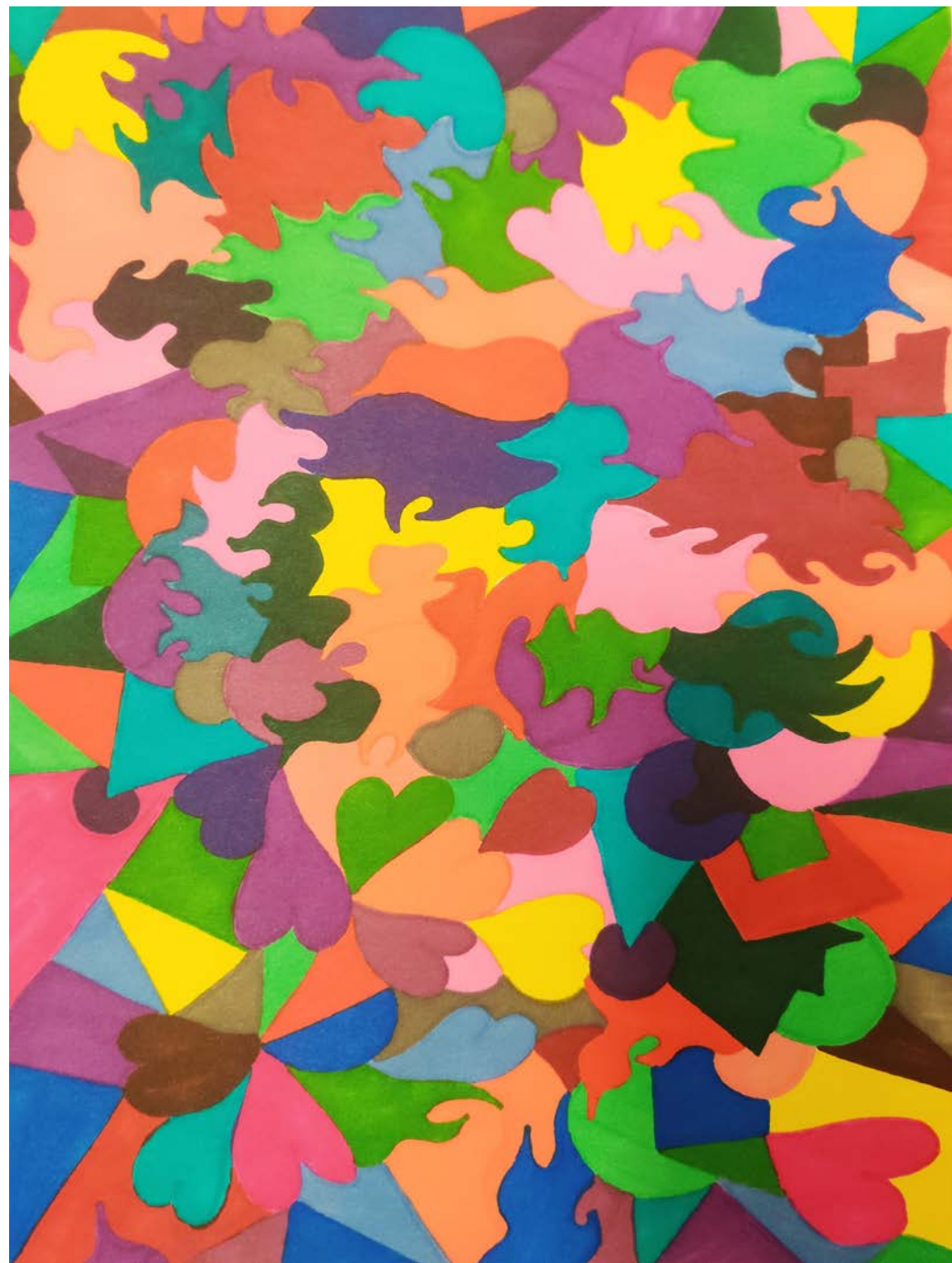
A brand new beginning
Laia Vila
Research Intern
Illustration



**The dance of the
seasons**
Laury Lescat
Postdoctoral Fellow
Drawing



When Prom was Prom
Damien Jackson
Asst Dean-Student
Finance
Photography



Ab-stropical

Fallon Perres
Security
*Drawing with sharpie
markers*

The 6

By Anne Lally
MS I

Spring Street,
An influencer tells me I reek of meat
After running twenty miles
All I can do is smile

Union Square,
After a long stare
She asks
Do I know how to shake my ass?

86th,
Cryptic Wordle hints
From a trenchcoated man
At 2 am

125th,
From the 5 he sprints
Away from her
Tells us he is not the father

E 143rd,
A man dressed in all fur
Sunglasses after sunset
Still know our eyes met

Pelham Bay,
Carried away
No longer in a stupor
Time to call the uber



**Grand Canyon
Love**

Paulina Alariste
González
Postdoctoral Fellow
Photography



Road Trip
Julia Hyacinthe
MS I
Photography



**Denali Park Road -
Alaska**
Indranil Basu
Research Assistant
Professor
Photography

Waimea Canyon
Rachel Nordlicht
MS I
Photography



Palmar Grasp
By Kara Michels
Assistant Professor

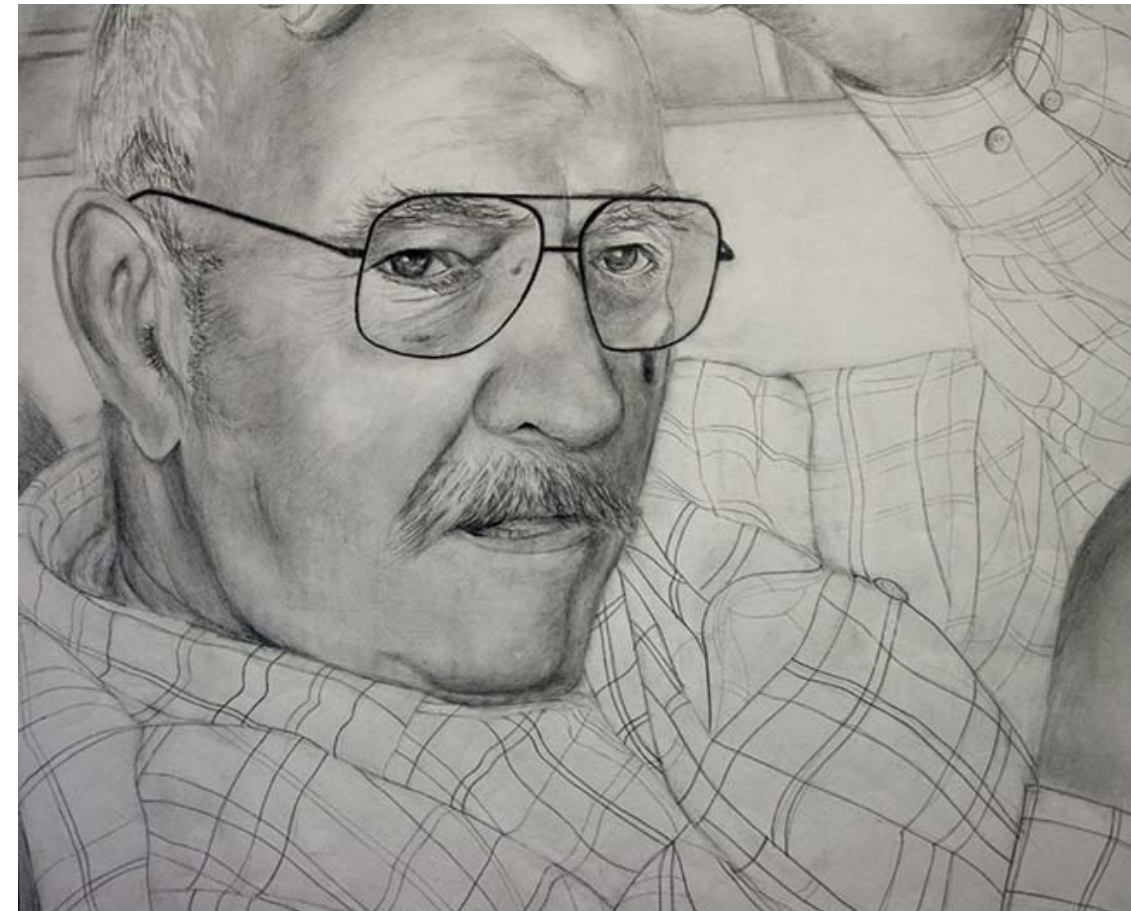
We are creatures of habit,
even with each new step we take
away from that moment
when hands locked around fingers open,
or when hands stop grasping
at things they know should be—
perhaps missing by moments
aligned, malign, conspiring,
wounds of disincorporation.

When we lose that reflex,
how will we be allowed to find shape?
What do we bump into
until we bounce,
we harden like steel,
we bend to be a conduit,
we shatter.

Can we be machines instead?
Dependent on component parts,
but reparable,
moving
to and from.
Pretending we are fit for purpose,
like we know what that will be
and what it can't.

Then, remembering
what we knew
but were maybe never told;
awed by the value we hold
in the hands that end up holding
when we all reach again
or are held
maybe for a last
at the first time.

Understanding these stumbles
circuitous or not,
were in the right direction;
these reflexes toward each other,
allowing us to create something immortal—
how can this perfection
not be mechanical?

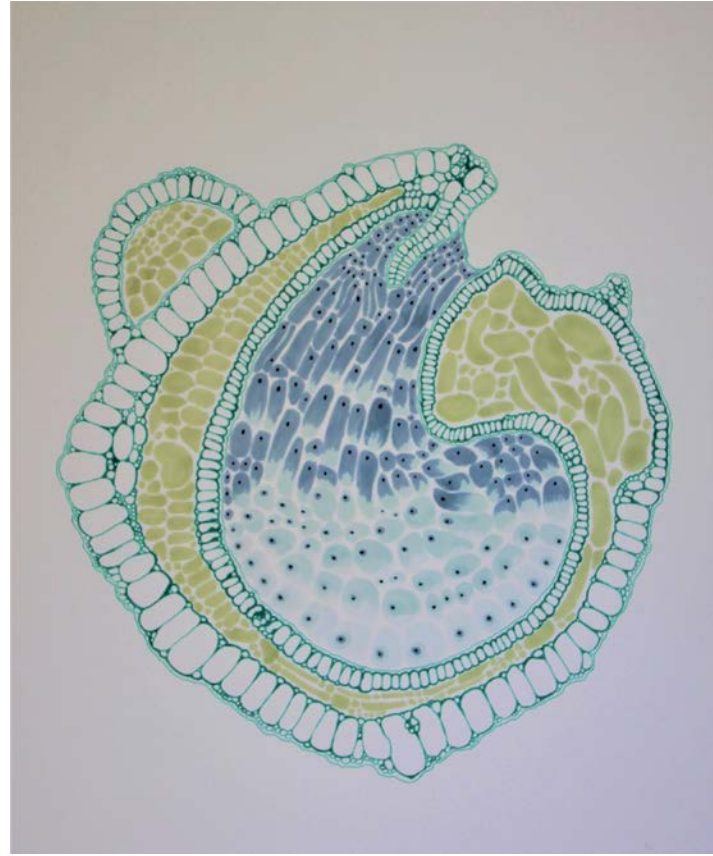


In Loving Memory
Sana Fujimura
MS III
Drawing, pencil on paper

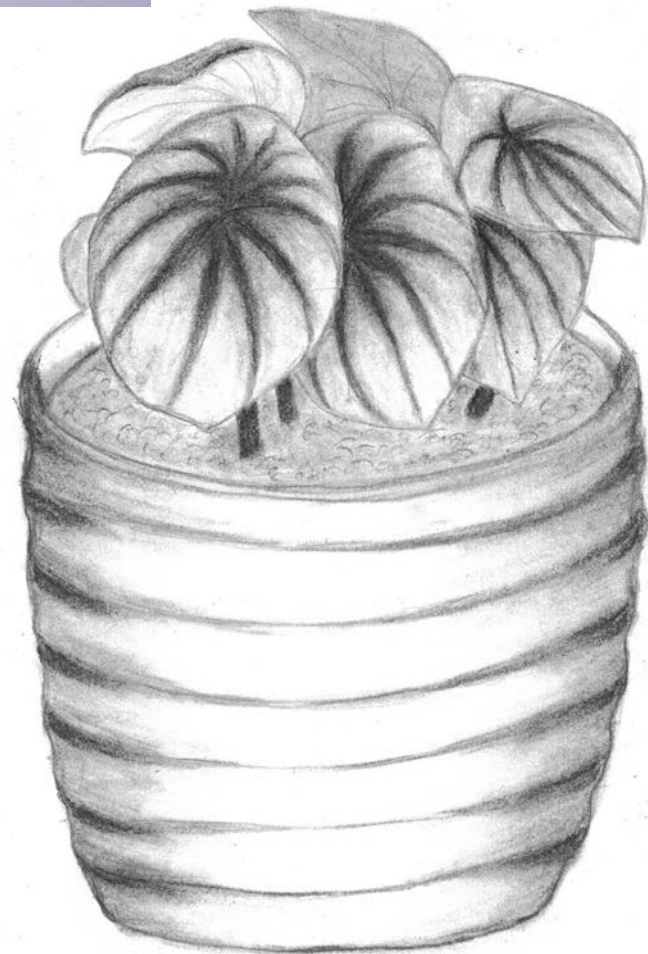
The Small Pleasure of Discovering the Oxford Comma
By Sylvia Smoller
Distinguished University Professor Emerita

I love its nuance
the subtle change in meaning
it's not like the large pleasure of
seeing the Sistine Chapel for the first time
or the complex pleasure of love.

When everyone is in their own lane of hell
and you wave at each other passing by,
when the body betrays and the losses mount,
the verbal figure-ground of
the Oxford comma delights the mind.



ABOVE
Amorphic Gastrula
 Elizabeth Pan
 PhD Student
 Drawing



RIGHT
Watermelon pepperomia
 Swetha Chamala
 Associate
 Pencil sketch



African Crowned Crane
 Prathima Pailoor
 Technical Writer/
 Einstein IT
 Soft Pastel Painting



It Behind the Door
by Stephen Liang
MS4

The world is cold today, as it is most days. The world is also dark, but this is not unusual in the middle of the night. The exception lies in the hallway where you stand, bathing in the artificial light from above. Before you walk through the door into the cold and dark world, you pull your scarf from the closet. You wrap it around your neck, tie a knot, and tighten, making sure to completely cover your exposed skin. Behind the door in front of you, you hear something. Reflexively, your heart quickens, and your ears fill with a rumble, drowning out the sound. In the moment, your concentration slips. A familiar tightness wraps around your throat. You gag. Too tight. You claw at the knot and manage to loosen the chokehold that it has on you. Your lungs suck in the air and shiver in thanks. This time with your full attention, you tighten the knot again.

Despite the scarf, you feel a chill pass. You wonder if you should put on a coat, but you decide against it. Today, as most days, you place your faith at the altar of chaos theory and weather patterns. Though the weather has not been so merciful as of late, it is one of the few entities in which you still choose to believe.

Outside, it is quiet. You are not sure what "it" is or where "it" is, but it is there, nonetheless. You know that it is there, behind the door, but how you know escapes you. What you do know, however, is that you will be late if you do not leave soon. You try to move your legs, but they remain still. You tell your legs to move, one foot in front of the other. They do not budge, content to merely support the weight of your body. Now impatient, you muster as much energy as you can and channel it through your nerves, down your spine, and into your legs. You feel the voltage sear the surrounding tissues, and you brace for the shattering pain of the

door against your face when you collide into it at maximum velocity. However, that sobering force never arrives. Your legs remain still, and you remain standing in place in the middle of the hallway. The rumble of blood still sounds in your ears, but behind it, you hear something else. You hear your legs respond with indifferent silence.

To the side, there is a switch. You reach and turn it off. The lights go out, and you hope that this inspires your legs to seek brighter climes. But it is dark. The hallway in which you stand is no longer brightly lit nor is it still a hallway. It has lost its defining feature in your narrative. Without the light from above, you cannot tell the difference between where you stand and the world behind the door. And so, you are now in the world, and there is no need for your legs to bring you to a place where you already are.

You feel your arms fall limp and your chest struggle to rise. The rumble in your ears continue, and the door is still there. Through the rumble, you begin to hear something else. It is what you heard behind the door, but the sound is now clearer. With it, a forgotten realization returns to you. Your heart accelerates, nearly suffocating itself in its attempt to deafen you, but it cannot deafen the thought. The thing behind the door is silence. It is a cold, dark silence that patiently waits underneath every creak, conversation, and murmur in the world beyond. You try to run away, to go back to bed and hide under the sheets, but your legs still do not respond, and it has already seeped through the door. It reaches for you, reaches you. In its grip, you feel your heart burst from the pressure. The rumble subsides, and silence floods into the vacancy.

Focus
Elisha Fogel
PhD Student
Scratchboard

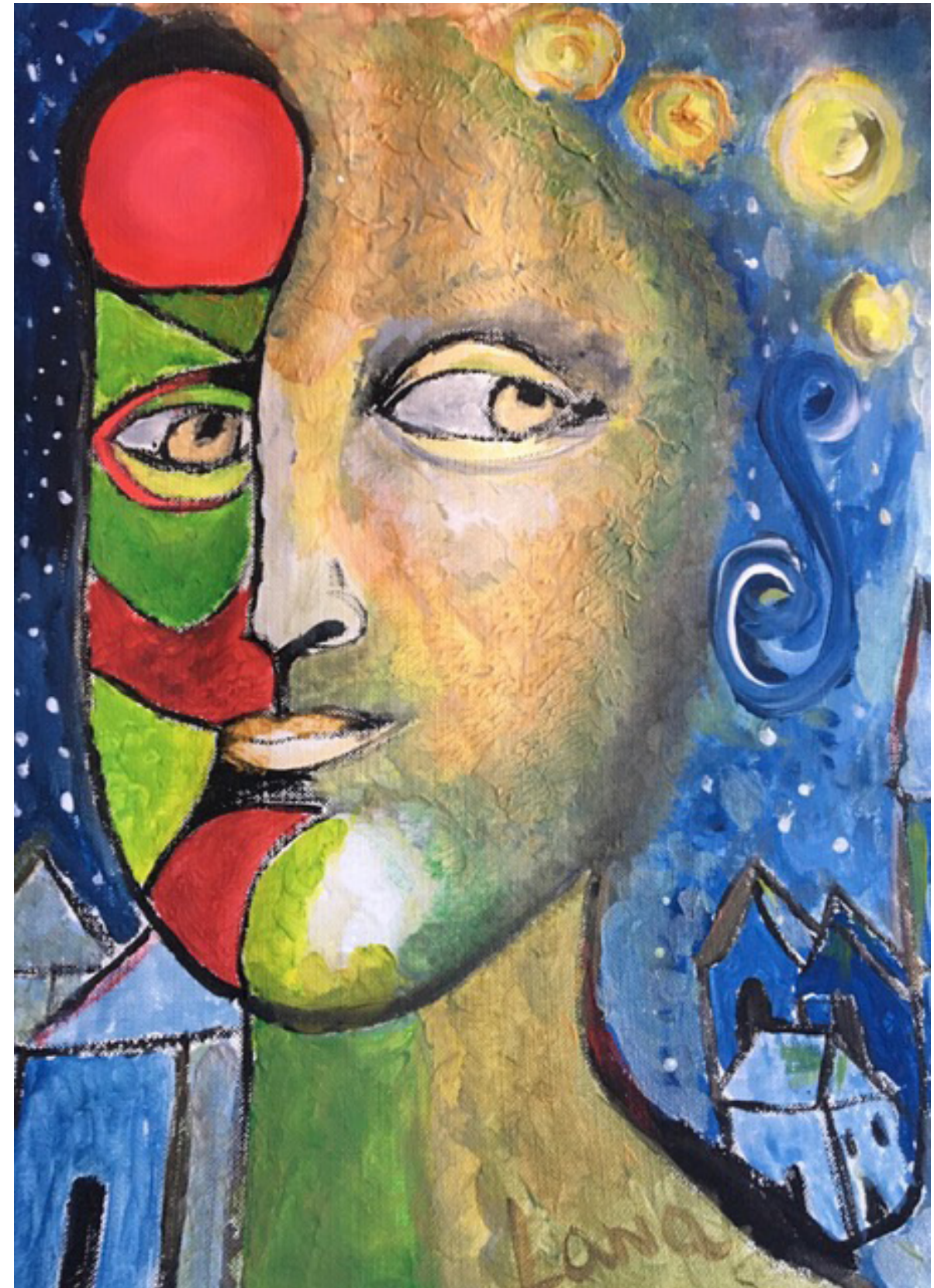
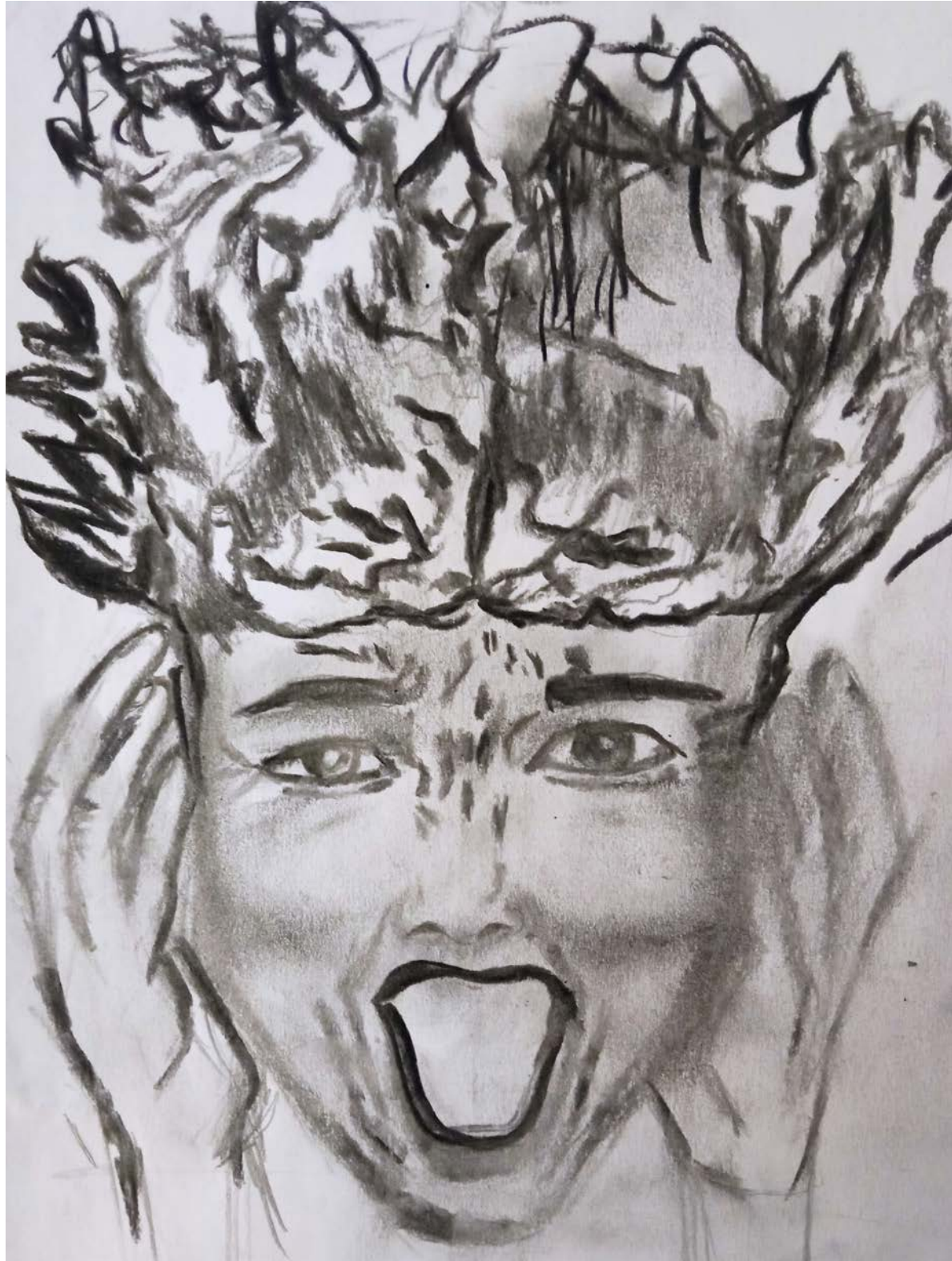


Trickle Transformation
Larry Leung
Research Assistant Professor
Photography



I am my own muse - Frida Kahlo
Phaneendra Duddempudi
Associate
Painting

anonymous
Anna Carboncino
Postdoctoral Fellow
Photography



Imagination
Svjetlana Raus
Research Fellow
Painting

Fur-Blings
Vikki Verdi
Lab Assistant
Photography



Grandma's Love

by Connieann DelVecchio
Administrative Assistant Medicine/Liver/Nephrology

She never sees a naughty child she sees a funny little rascal

She never sees a messy floor full of toys she sees a challenging obstacle course adventure

She never sees a spill she sees a quick moving body of water in the mountains

that has to be sopped up so they can cross to the other side safely Whew! That was close!

Paper towel rolls are always Microphones for singing as loud as you can

Empty tissue boxes are always big robot shoes

She always finds a way to sit on the floor and play even though it is questionable whether

she will be able to get up or not

There will always be a dance session before bedtime.....and a song.....and a story

Then the best part of the day is good night prayers together

Now speaking of my experience when my little blonde pixie who calls me Nonkie

looks up from her bed as she's falling asleep and says "Nonkie, you are my favorite friend"

My day is complete, my heart is full.



welcome back
Johanna Heid
Postdoctoral Fellow
Photography



Rock Formation, Maine Coast
Bill Burton
Director of Assessment, Evaluation & Quality
Improvement/Office of Medical Education
Photography

Burnout

by Karishma Smart
PhD Student

I used to think burnout was a flame –
a candle that ignited when my feet dragged a spark
that grew with each sigh as I pushed through the dark.

I used to think burnout was a beast –
with jaws that snap with hunger strong,
devouring all that comes along,
'til all of me is chewed and gone.

I used to think burnout was a firework –
a glorious explosion of colorful light
that sparkled with pride as it lit up the night
and a deafening crack that whispered, so smug:
look how hard she works,
how she cares so much.

I even thought burnout was being frozen in ice –
trapped in position
in an icy sheath
that melted around me
in suspended release
only to find
there was nothing underneath.

but when it finally found me, tripping as i reached for the ribbon
stretched taut across the finish line, it was a rainbow, a glimmering
arc of color that turned my head and slowed my steps, a trick of the
light that whispered in my ear
there's nothing on the other side of that line anyway



**Though the ocean roars like a serpent
And the dusk is surely descending,
Keep on flying, my birdie -
It's not yet time to shut thy wings!**

Jayanta Roy-Chowdhury
Professor of Medicine & Genetics
Painting: acrylic on canvas

**Bloom; A beautiful
process of
becoming.**

Humaira Ilyas
Research Fellow
Photography



Looking for a Waterthrush

by Avigail Soloveichik
MS I

Liza stood watching water wash over crevices,
floss the river's moss-covered teeth.

Where are you going?
"Where?"

Trees bent in answer, as though
to give her a leaf. Liza liked
the way the sun played with the grass,
leaping about, frolicking like summer's
train of hyacinths and horses.

But she wished it were colder;
she wished the gentle breeze were
a stronger wind, to run through her.

Liza spread her arms wide,
thinking in that moment
she might be something she was not.
But the air was still around her,
except for soft sounds of voices
drifting in water, laving rocks.

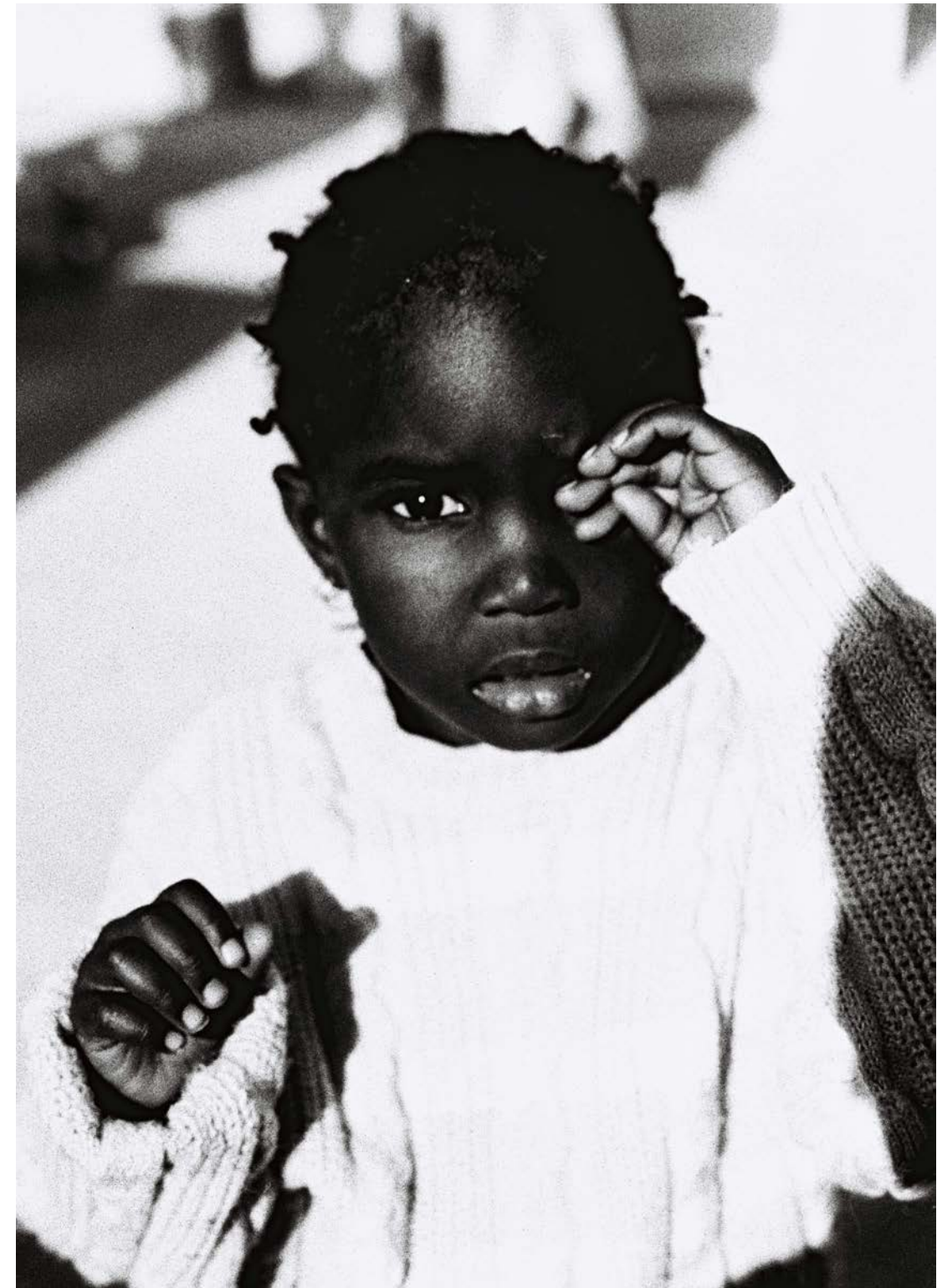
Even if she were to step out of her skin,
where would she be? With each new
layer removed, would she be a new Liza,
a waterthrush found? How could she be
this sated and bare at once, this full
of trill and cry and hushed warble?

Princess
By Aurelia Minuti

"I love you sooo much!"
she says
with slender little arms outstretched,
pink dress
aflutter in a spring of flowers
sparkly tiara
perched on golden hair
blue eyes
gazing at my adoring face
soft kiss
upon my withered cheek.
my heart
bursting with immeasurable love



Miri M.
Carl Schildkraut
Professor
Photography



Photography by
Charles Jarry
Colline Sanchez
Postdoctoral Fellow
Photography

Pear Study
Michael Prystowsky
Professor and Chair of
Pathology
Oil on Linen



Ágatha e Helena.
Aline Horta
Postdoctoral Fellow
Painting

**Scenic View From
AECOM**

Evelyn Correa
Nephrology Program
Manager
Photography



Summer Sunset

Yana Kost
MS IV
Photography

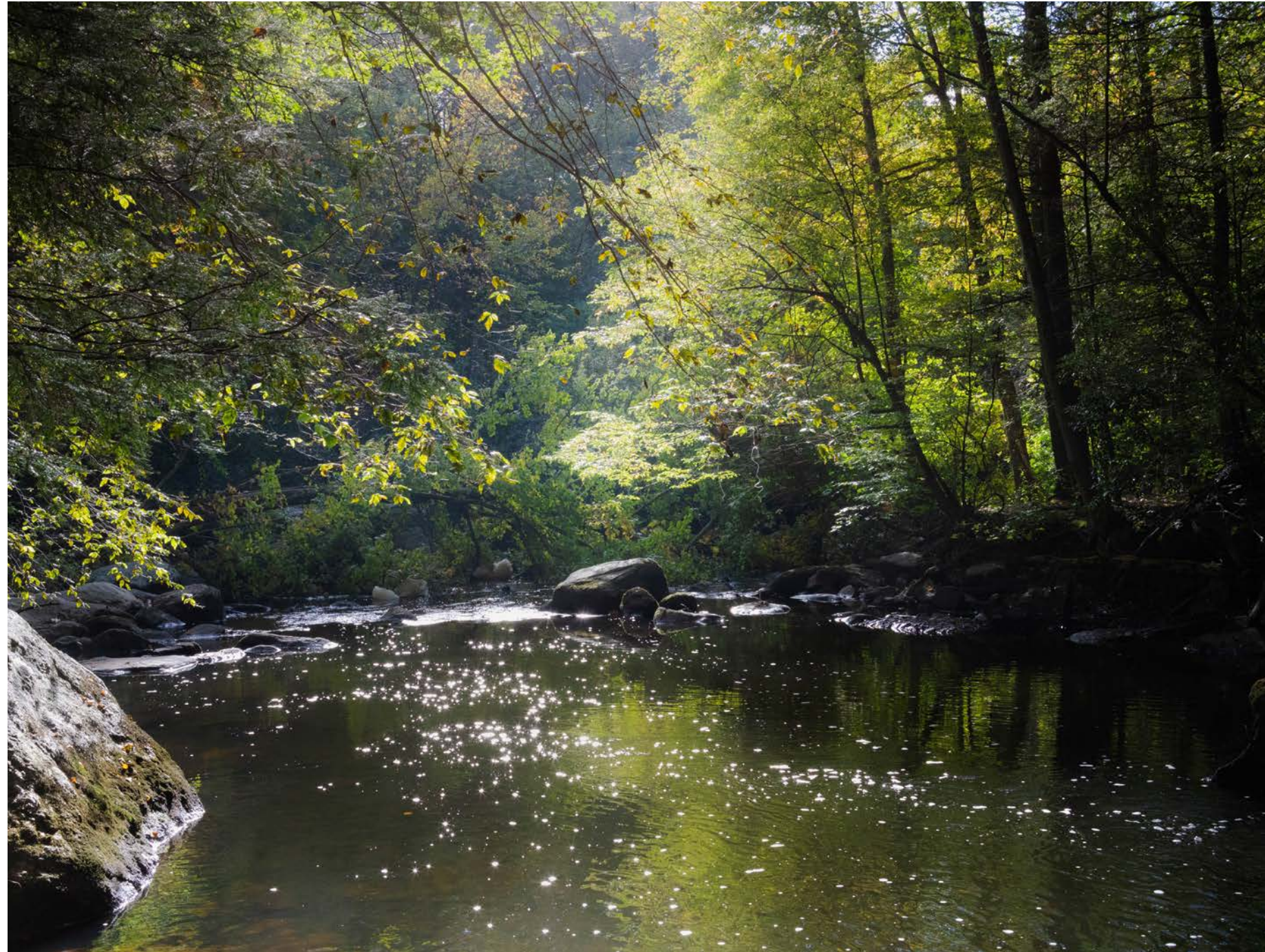
Cuixmala
Kevin Lau
Genomics
Photography



Dear Spruce Tree

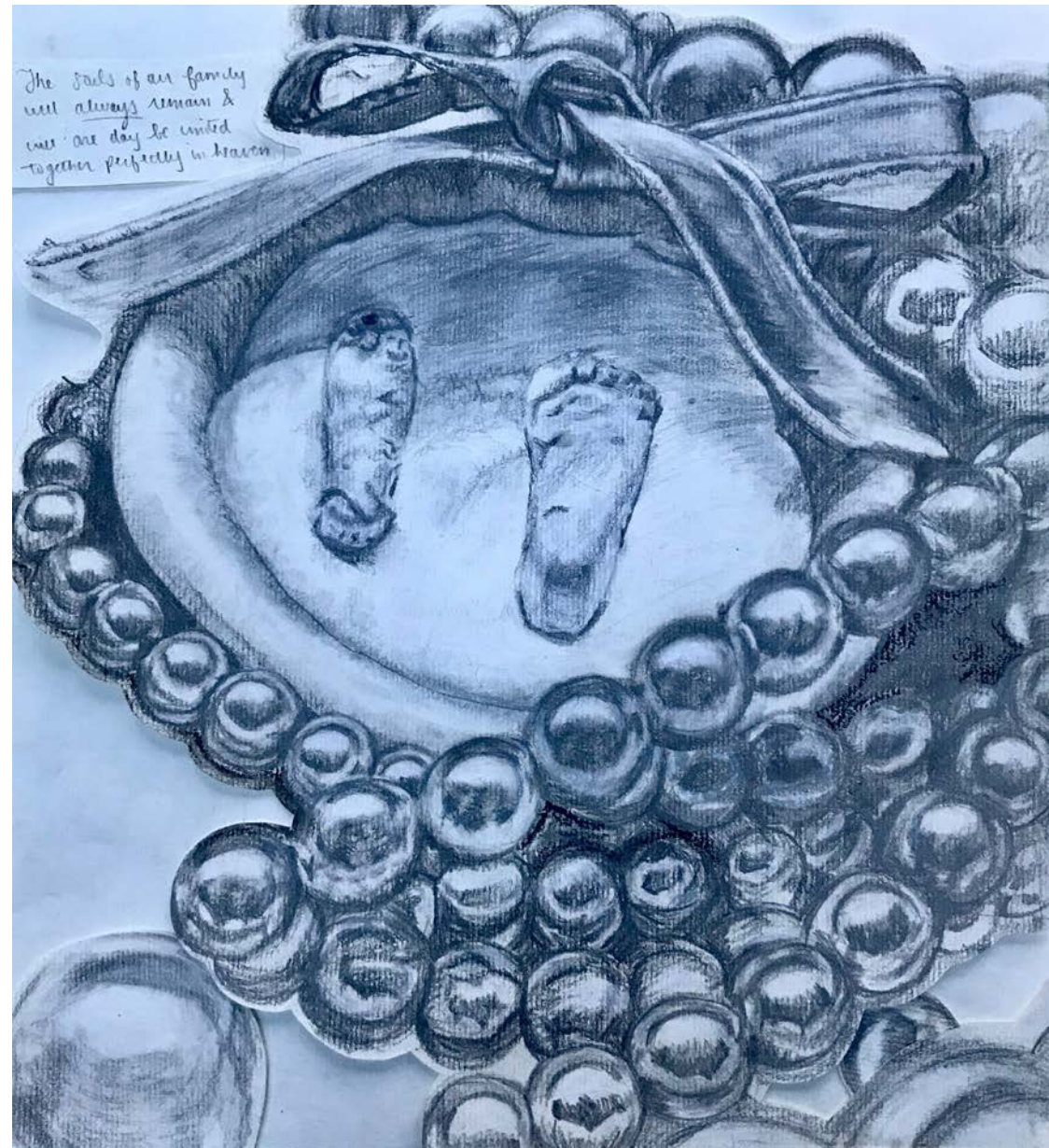
by Karen Gardner
Director, Internal and Web
Communications

Dear Spruce Tree,
from my window
you've stood tall,
guardian,
shade,
and beauty
all in one.
You've stood
sentry to
entry for
half-a-century.
Not even lightning
could fell you.
A scar bares
your fortitude
and strength
15 feet down
your length.
And yet we must
bid you adieu,
offering a
fond farewell to you
after all these years.
Thank you,
dear Spruce Tree,
for your presence—
with dreadlock fronds
of evergreen—
and the presents
you've provided
against sun, wind, and rain.
We will not
pine for you,
but we will
miss you.



**Mianus River -
September**

John Reinus
Physician, Department of
Hepatology
Photography



Nicholas
Marilyn Mostowy
MS IV
Charcoal

Reflection on Nicholas:
by Marilyn Mostowy
MS IV

One of my favorite parts about the NICU are looking at all the baby feet!

Not only are they mesmerizing, but they remind me of the foot imprints of my brother Nicholas, who passed away at 20 weeks old.

This fall I finally finished a charcoal drawing of the seashell our family has with his little foot imprints.

Nicholas' life was short but still carries so much meaning to me. I think about him when looking at the 23-week-old babies

in the NICU and find greater meaning thinking about the impact their little lives may make.

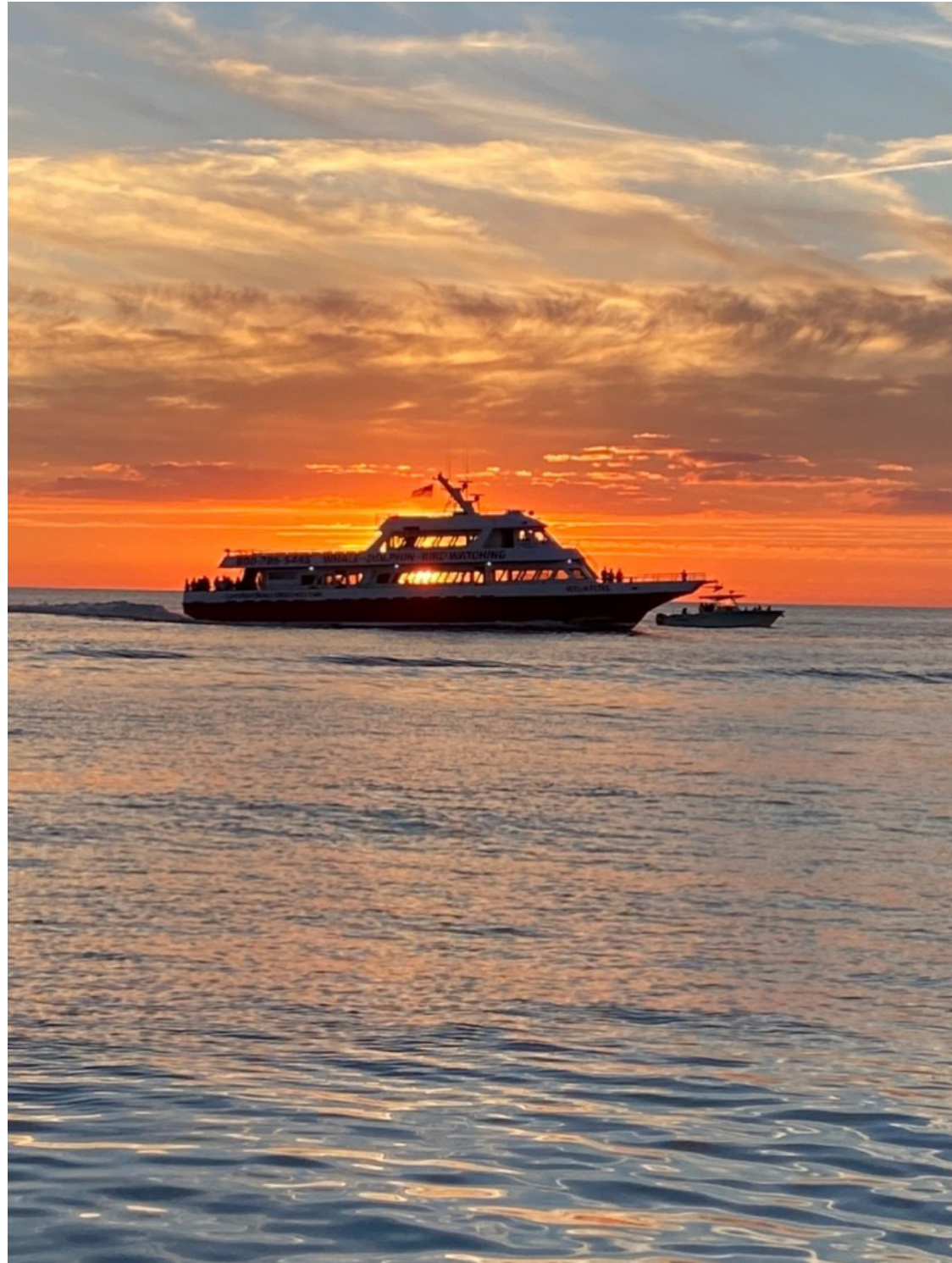
I hope this story is a reminder to all, that no matter how short a life is, the life's story can have a meaningful and lasting impact.

15 years later and Nicholas is still impacting mine! His little feet are one of the reasons I want to pursue neonatology.

I hope this story gives peace & meaning to mothers who have faced miscarriages.



Sand and Surf
Dina Nardi
Admissions
Administrator
Photography



**Sailing through the
Sunset**

Dina Nardi
Admissions
Administrator
Photography

Opposition

by Aliz Serrano
granddaughter of Janet Johnson

Some are quiet
And some are scared
Fearing the consequences behind it
Others not willing to share

In identity there is I not we
Still, people feel the need to share what they think of me
And even though they hear my pronouns
I fear that they will always see a
she

My skin is something I cannot control
Yet I am treated like I have harmed
Am I not allowed to have dreams and goals
When I always have to be on guard

Don't tell me what to do or what to believe in
You all fight against a hopeless cause
My beliefs are my own, and I stand by my religion
For killing millions who bleed as you do, would you like an applause?

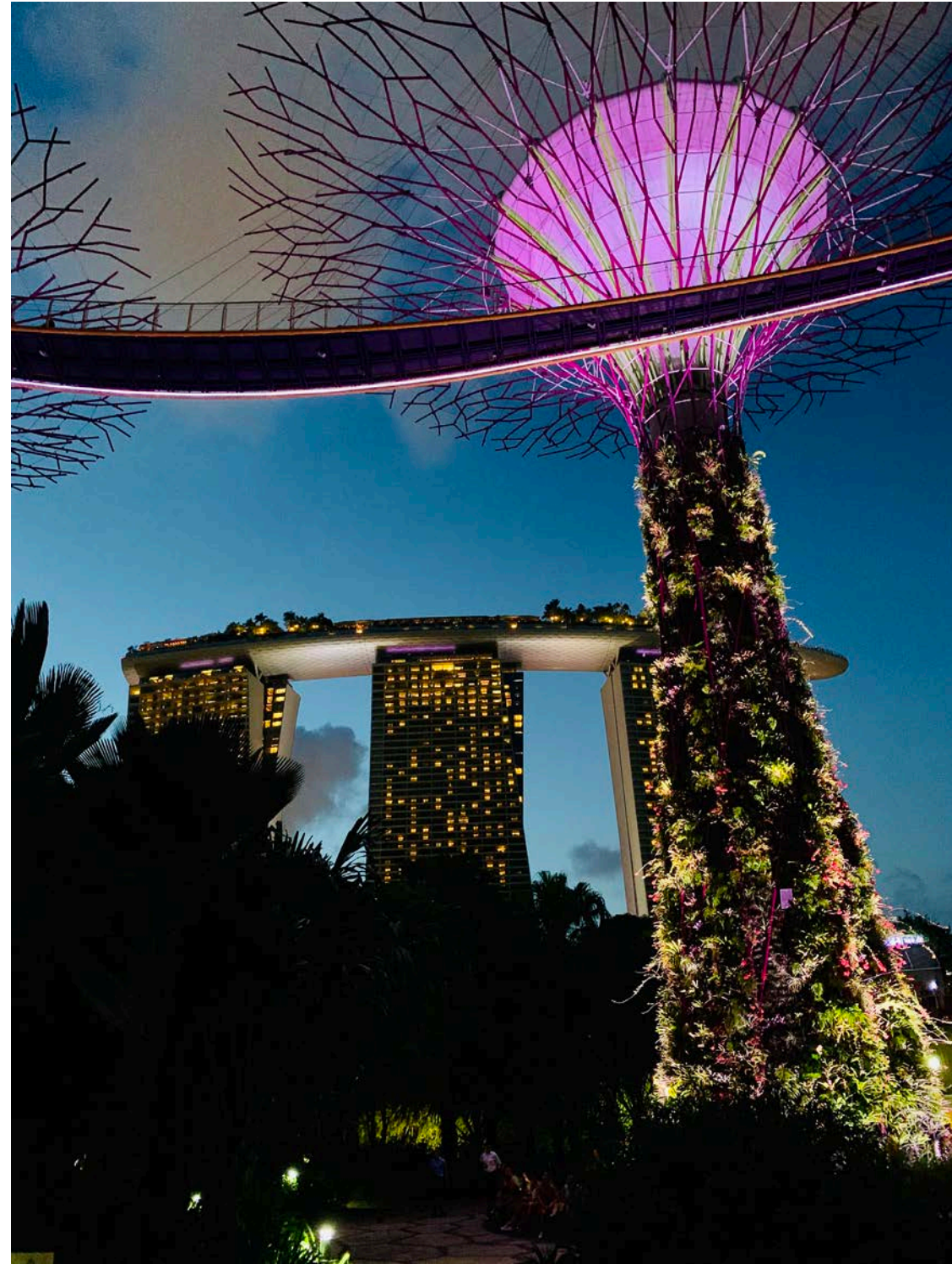
Difference is what gives us the ability to be unique
They, her, them, and him
Those with darker skin
Many with different beliefs, we all deserve to speak

The thing we call life is a monster, he'll let you think you've done enough,
and your safe, that you'll prosper
Until he stabs you in the back, a true imposter,
This is our reality, we suffer the same fate
But for the world to change, it's not too late

Opposition isn't a crime
But to hate those who do no wrong, do they deserve to die?
Here them out and give them a chance
Everyone seeks hope and a little bit more time

...Aliz Serrano

Trees of the Future
Anastasia Nizhnik
PhD Student
Photography



Social Distancing vs. Quarantine
Stephen Baum
Professor of Medicine
and Microbiology &
Immunology
Photography

Dying Alone

by Sameen Farooq

Attending, Internal Medicine Hospitalist (Moses Division)

One of my patients, an older Bengali gentleman was slowly withering away from COVID 19 during his already difficult health journey involving metastatic cancer. Now the cancer would have probably killed him given the extent of his disease but the COVID 19 viral infection hastened his death in profound ways. A prognosis of months became shortened to around two weeks. In retrospect, I took care of him during the last week of his life and the only time I saw him light up involved a simple ask- do you want to listen to the Quran? He said yes. This moment took me back to a year ago, roughly during the same time range when I faced a similar situation in May 2019. My patient at that time was a Nigerian woman, Ms. A, who was dying alone in a hospital bed at Bellevue hospital. She was so spirited but as the inevitable march towards death started, she began to decline. Her death really got to me because as she got closer to dying, what she wanted was a sense of community and the sounds of Quranic recitation can have that impact in an endearing way. In a weird happenstance, a year later in May 2020, amidst a global pandemic, here I was again, offering Quranic recitation as a form of therapy for another Muslim patient near end of life. As I jettisoned out of the room, slowly taking off my face shield, hair net, gloves, yellow gown, and finally the N95 mask, I felt myself compelled to just cry. I quickly turned towards the window, to see the outside world, take a deep breath and give myself a moment to just sit with this heaviness. As I walked into the social work office to talk about discharge plans for my patients, I quickly wiped my face and put on my surgical mask and attempted to carry on with my work.

Mr. A died the next day.

I still struggle to find out what prompted me to ask the question? Was it divine intervention? Could I sense his soul's yearning for faith or was it my own yearning juxtaposed around his death? It's often difficult to bring up faith in a medical setting. Especially given the COVID 19 pandemic, our hospital's imam was not able to meet patients at bedside, instead opting to speak with them on the phone, which while noble, is not accessible for patients who are more debilitated and weaker. In hindsight, had I been more upfront, the Quranic recitations should have started earlier as he clinically declined. He may have felt more at ease as he died in the hospital, alone, away from family. Mr. A will serve as a reminder for me to be proactive and seek out patient preferences when it comes to their faith...undoubtedly Mr. A's standing IV dilaudid was helping alleviate the physical suffering which accompanies cancer spread to various bones and organs and breathing getting labored because of a very severe respiratory infection from COVID...the soul yearns for something more...and as a doctor who claims to be an advocate for patients, all aspects of someone's personhood deserve the same advocacy...no?



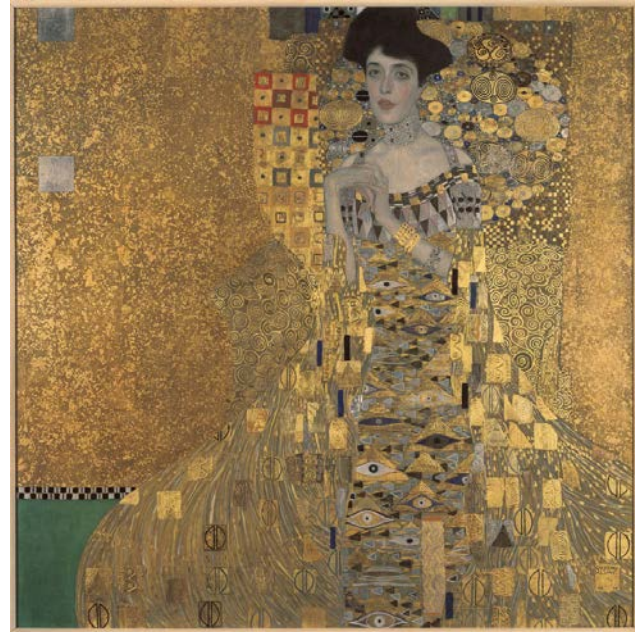
Rover sunset

Catherine Vilcheze
Research Assistant
Professor
Photography

Uncertainty Offers Humility to Learn

by Priti Mishall

Associate Professor, Departments of Pathology and Ophthalmology
& Visual Sciences



The Woman in Gold portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer by artist Gustav Klimt is indeed a masterpiece. Her portrait attracted me because gold has been an integral part of my upbringing. Gold jewellery is gifted and bought for many auspicious occasions in Indian culture. The woman in the portrait is laden with gold. She wore a long gown with print of human eye and numerous triangles of different sizes, all colored in shades of gold and brown. A broad strap of cloth was attached to the sleeve of her gown. The cloth exuberantly flaunted on the floor to occupy the majority of the portrait's frame. This broad piece of cloth had designs of squares and semicircles and was decorated with gold and gray colors. An adorable diamond necklace was wrapped around her neck. The white diamonds in the necklace contrasted the gold bangles dangling in her forearm. The background wall was colored in shades of gold. The look on her face was serious and thoughtful. On a holiday retreat with my best friend I watched the movie -The Woman in Gold. In the movie the actress who portrayed Adele Bloch-Bauer revealed that her face was serious because she was uncertain of what the future holds.

The feeling of being "Uncertain" has been around since the existence of mankind. While the outcome of most of the situations in life is predictable based on knowledge, information, intuition, rules and data some unknowns in life cause a state of doubt. Uncertainty is defined as the state in which there is lack of control on the situations or the expected outcome. This situational dilemma can throw individuals into extreme negative emotions of anxiety, worry, fear, confusion, distrust and skepticism. Dealing with uncertainty is like hanging onto a rope, the more the individual learns to overcome fears and visualize a healthier outcome, the rope eventually pulls the individual up to the positive side of the scale. Eleanor Roosevelt beautifully quotes: "If life were predictable it would cease to be life, and be without flavor."

Narcissus

by Stephen Liang

MS IV

To my surprise, she reaches for my arm
And squeezes briefly, smiling as she leaves.
I turn as well to walk away and tend
To other tasks – Or think I do, because

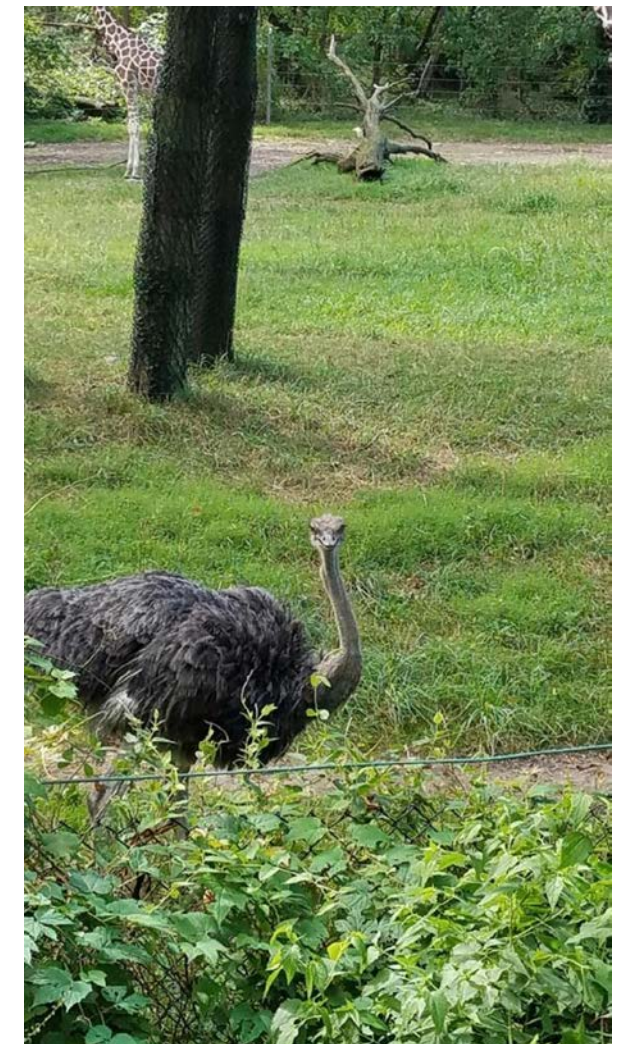
Instead, I stand there frozen still, perplexed
By why a gesture so benign should spread
A warmth throughout my veins, enveloping
The shivers nestled deep within my bones.

It beckons back my wandering mind, away
From thoughts of sickness, death, and covid caws
That cry and screech and haunt these frigid woods,
Unheard by those inured to tragic songs.

The forest calls, but still, I stay awhile
To warm myself with embers from that smile.

How You Doing?

Sandy Diaz
Lab Helper, M&I
Photography



We Are Struggling

Destiney Kirby
MS III
Graphite, Watercolor,
Acrylic



Working View

Janis Paradiso
Director, Office of
Biotechnology and
Business Development
Photography



60 seconds

by Kara Michels
Assistant Professor

So, it is a flash
of sunlight darting through oak;
breezes way-finding through tall grass at night;
faces walking through streets, past a restaurant window;
eyes meeting, retreating, working through a conversation.
Forgotten maybe tomorrow,
but not gone—I'm guessing, I'm hoping.
Will we remember the motions, the mood, or the matter?
Images taken in at our pleasure
along a measure, already cut.

If we begin this
on a day like any other,
we may not finish it.
But it's today,
so you should start by presuming
I'm great—
one of those bright things
with wits that quick your pulse now, slow it later.
I'm making something worth the memory
if you'll watch, help, collaborate, admire.
Leave the better than,
not quite good as,
back where someone dropped those thoughts off for you.
And I will try the same.

And what if
we both started off by picking our verbs
instead of expecting the nouns?
I think I would rather move through the
assume, inhale, pull, sit, smile, listen, laugh,
chew, blush, kiss, argue, exit, repeat
like choices
rather than look for the
assumptions, breath mint, dress, chair, smile, sounds, laugh,
spinach, compliment, kiss, argument, exit, repetition
as though these things constructed us
instead of moved us through time
to the next opportunity
to assign action
to memory.

Hark! Who goes there?

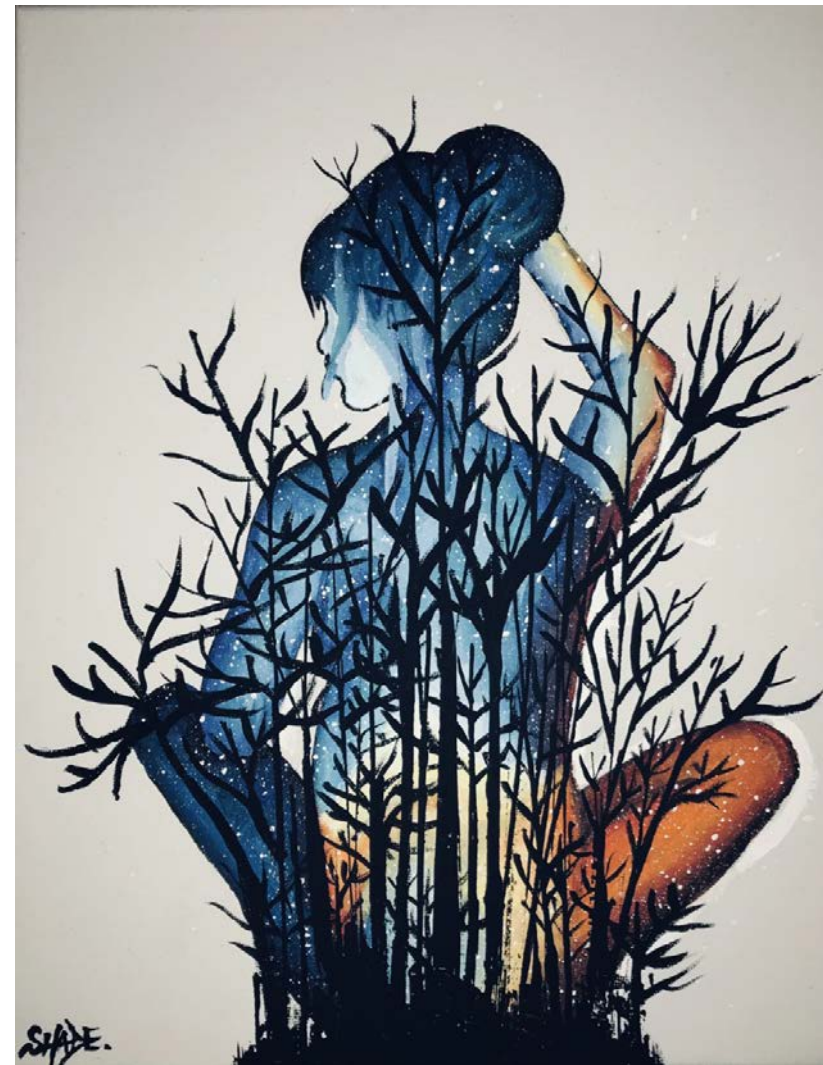
Tracy Ngo
MS IV
Photography



Tuxedo
Katherine Valles
MS IV
Drawing



Lonely Woman
Marjorie Spaeth
Spouse of Postdoctoral
Fellow
Painting



Artemis
April Mueller
MSTP Student
Digital Art



Einstein
Elana Friedman
MS II
Sketch + Computer Art



**Longing for a
Coffee Break**
Sonika Gupta
MS III
Painting



Einstein Excellence
by Sahir Chaudhry
Research Technician

Standing tall at the cutting edge
Albert Einstein made his mark
And it's in the wake of this great mind
That this school has now embarked

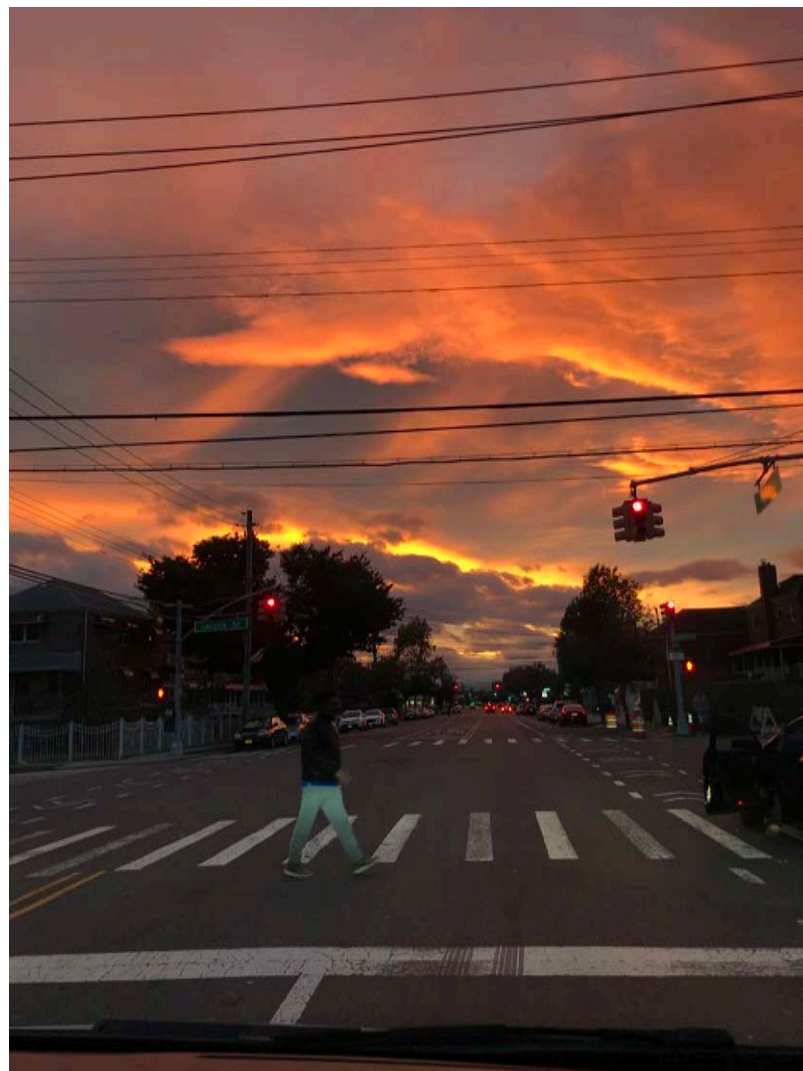
Since over 60 years ago
This college has worked hard
With researchers devoted to their craft
Here an education will go far

Medicine, an expansive field
Filled with mysteries of life
At Albert Einstein we're working hard
To find the cure to strife
Near the top of the nation's schools
We prepare our students to serve
With technology and knowledge galore
We make sure their degrees they deserve

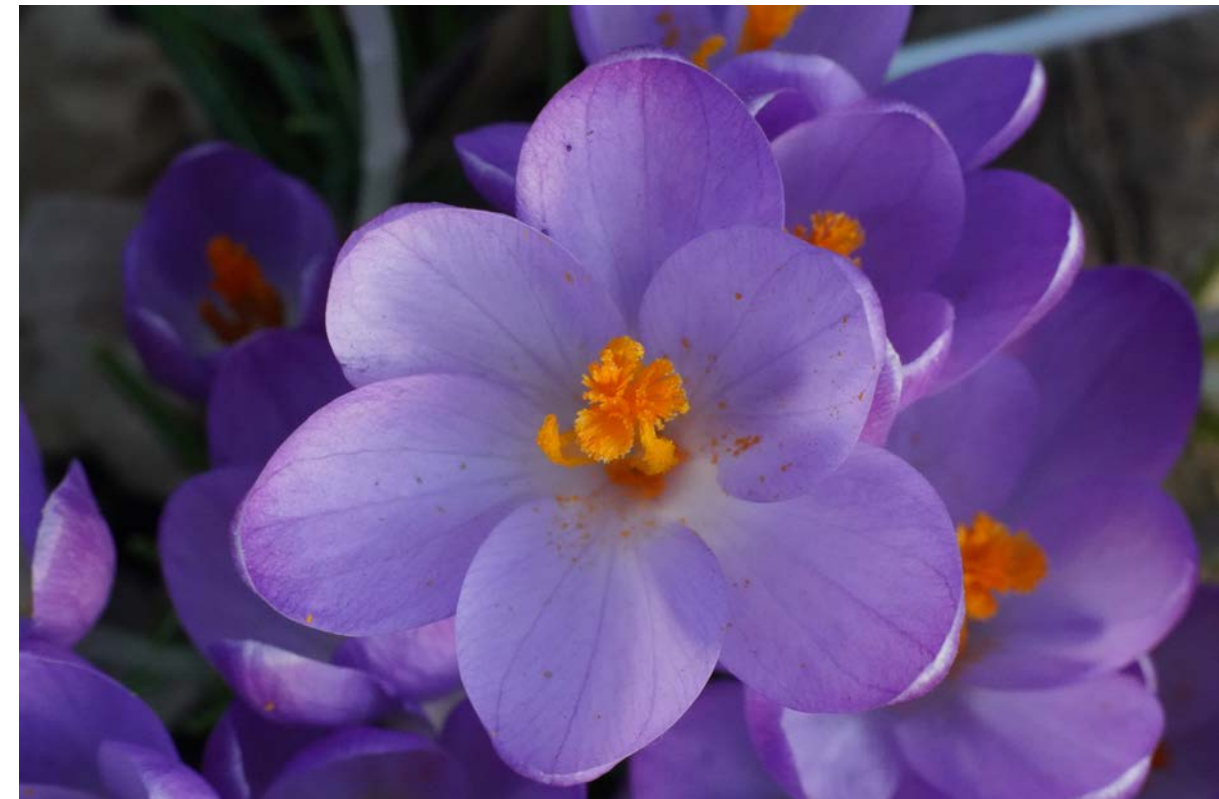
A leader in the ethical field
Einstein has always been at the lead
With kindness as our approach to care
Paving a path for all to receive

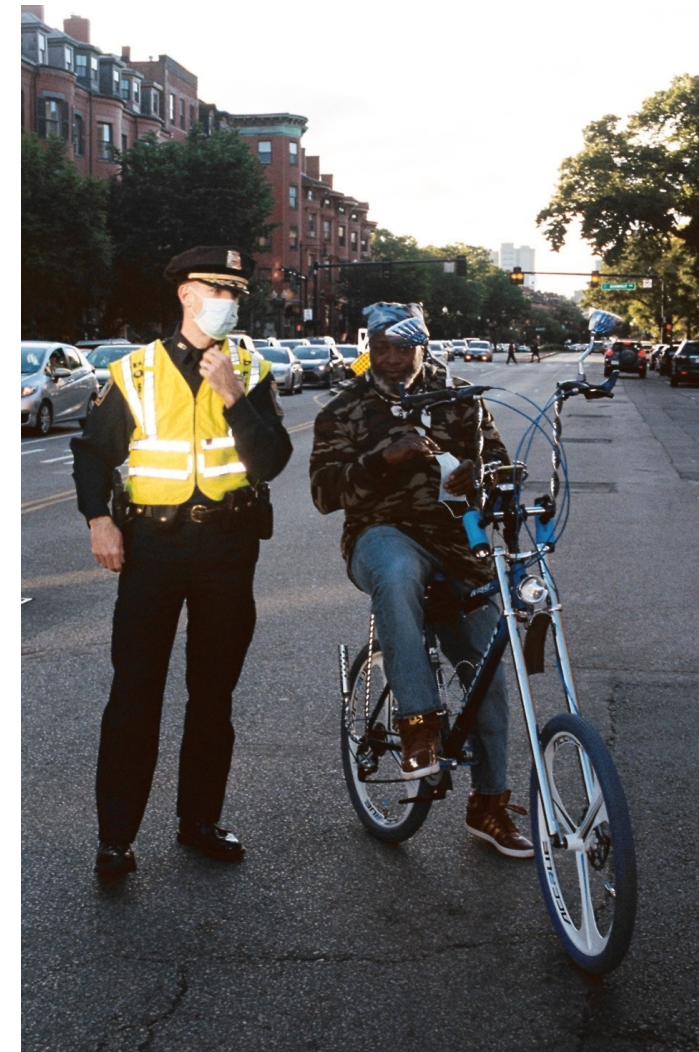
When looking for schools at which to learn
For excellence you need not go far
At Einstein your mind will flourish and grow
For excellence defines who we are

**Sunset on Allerton
Ave**
Rawan Aldasooky
Research Technician
Photography



Wild Crocus
Robert Burk
Professor, Pediatrics
Photography





**Black Lives [Still] Matter:
A Photojournal of 2020
Protest in Boston, MA**
Nikhil S. Chopra
Research Coordinator, DGIM
Photography





Dreams

by Karishma Smart
PhD Student

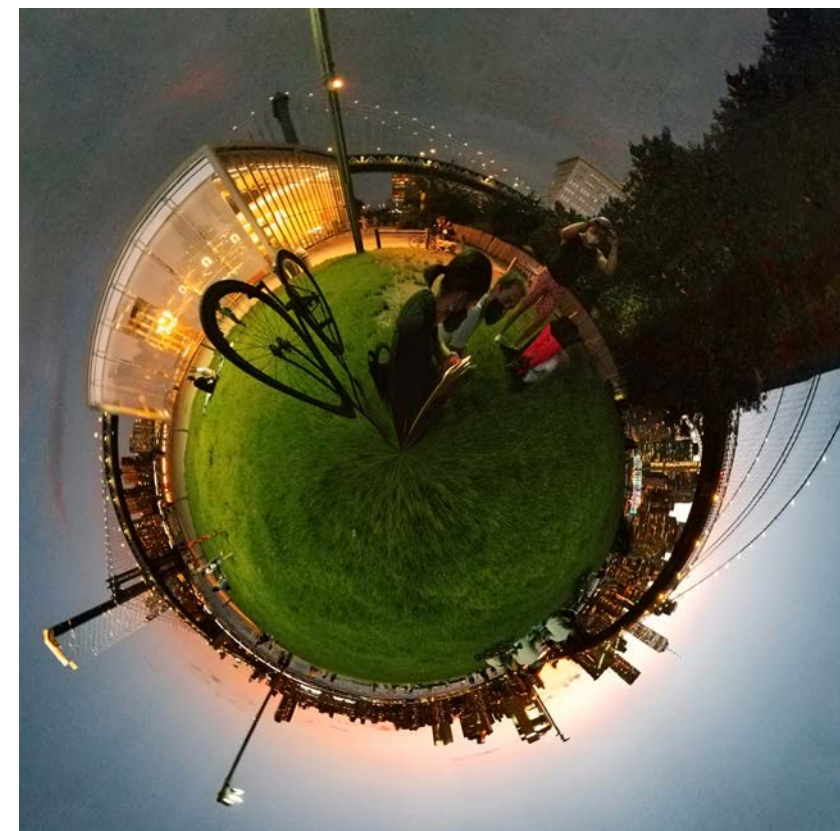
When tired sun begins to slip
'Neath muffled dusk's encroaching grip,
They rise up from the mist on silver wings.
On sparkling waves of azure sky,
They drift along to lullabies
A thousand wistful voices gently sing.

These stories float like clouds of gold
Through children's minds, as yet untold,
Before they flee to dance around the flowers.
Springing off of petals soft,
Their chiffon wings hold them aloft
To tumble sweetly through the velvet hours.

And when they've had their fill thereof
They leap into the sky above
In hopes to learn the wisdom of the moon.
While chasing planets past the stars,
Your heartbeat calls them from afar,
And on your cheek they delicately swoon.

But more than kisses on your cheek
And more than sprites that frolic sweet
They most of all are snowflakes in the wind
That fall to earth unwillingly
At probing dawn compelling sleep
To nestle in the dewdrops with chagrin.

OPPOSITE
not for your lab
Athena Konicki
MS IV
Painting



Night Picnic
Hillary Guzik
Research Technician,
AIF
Photography

Freezing Price Center
Mohd Nauman
Postdoctoral Fellow
Photography



Main Street
Hao Li
Associate
Digital Painting



Winter Sunrise
Linda Jelicks
Staff/Einstein IACUC
Photography



Summer
Elizabeth Pinzon
Executive Dean's
Office
Watercolor



**"Into the New Year
(Crosswalk)"**
Jenna Le
Assistant Professor of
Radiology
Ink and watercolor



Tranquility
Pardeep Guru
MS I
Photography

**Parks and
Recreations**
Malini Gupta
Research Fellow
Photography



Chance Encounter
by Daniel Viera
IT Solutions Coordinator

The entire planet,
Within the giant solar system,
Within the enormous galaxy,
Within the expanding universe,
Within the infinite cosmos.

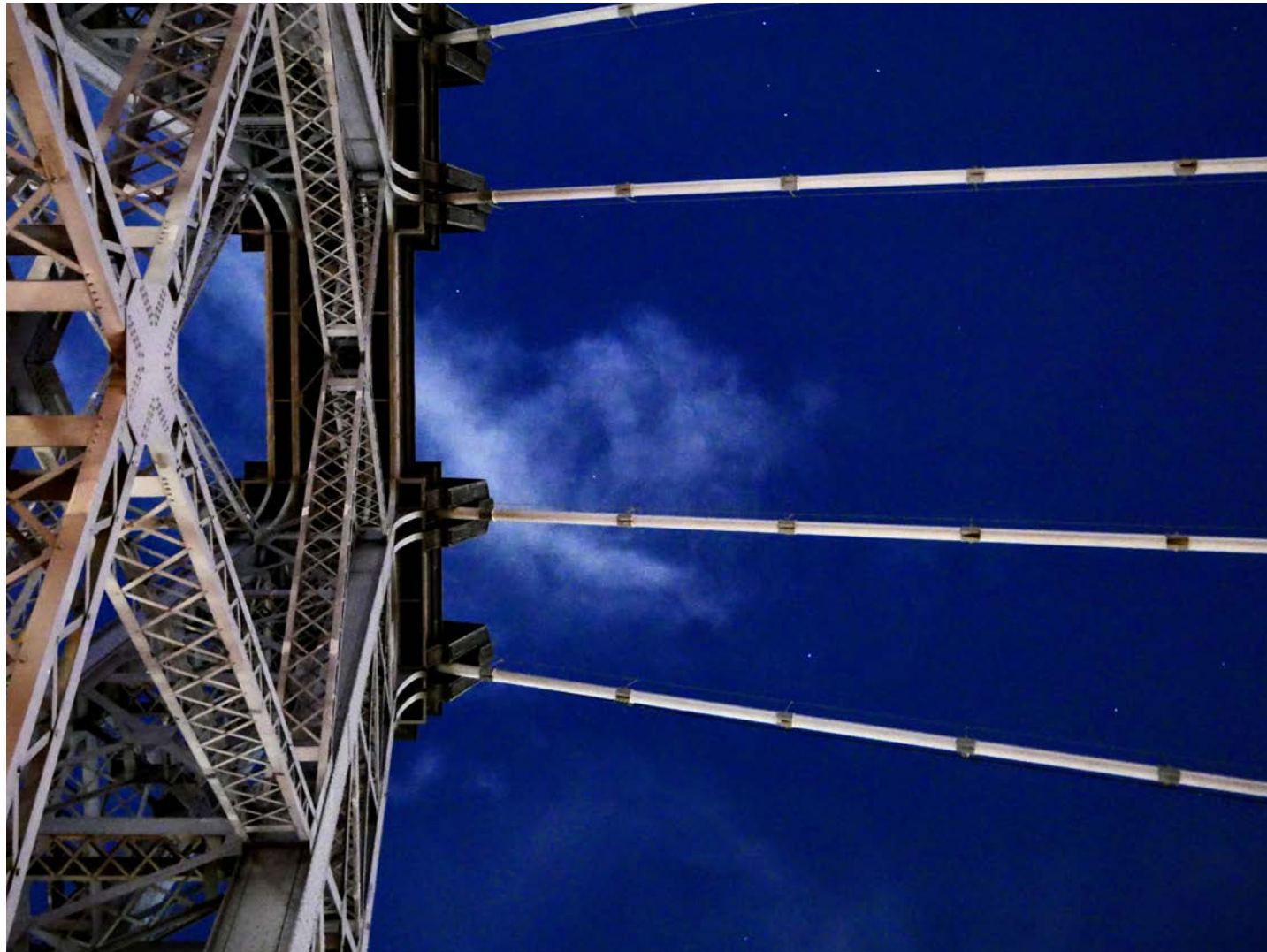
A lonely speck of dust.
Tumbling in the wind.

And within the chaos,
A chance encounter.

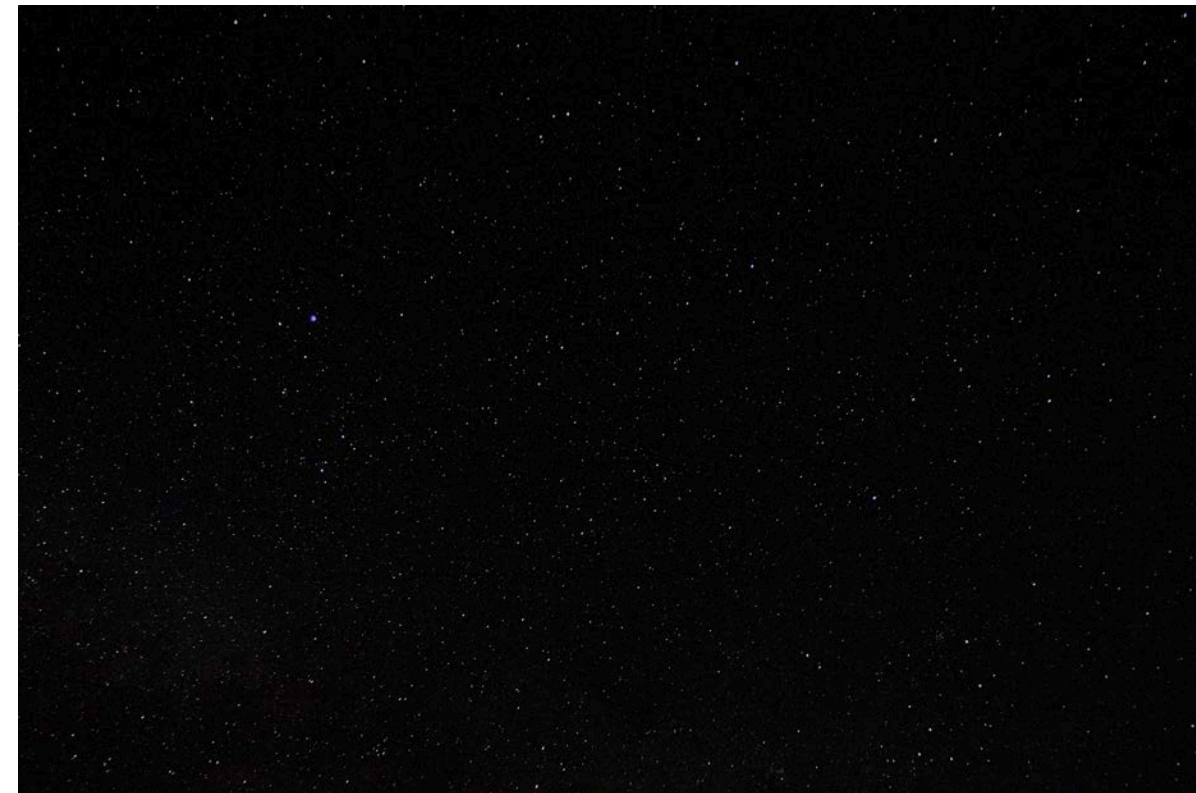
The world stops spinning at its power.

Lives our changed, made and lost by its
power.

Infinite specs of dust,
Infinite chance encounters,
Infinite power that changes the planet,
Changes the solar system,
Changes the galaxy,
Changes the universe,
And the infinite cosmos.



Moon
Lidiya Kukova
MS IV
Photography



Starlight
Lidiya Kukova
MS IV
Photography

OPPOSITE
Hi-strung
Julie Kim
Research Technician
Photography

Just keep swimming
Samantha Viera
Operations
Watercolor



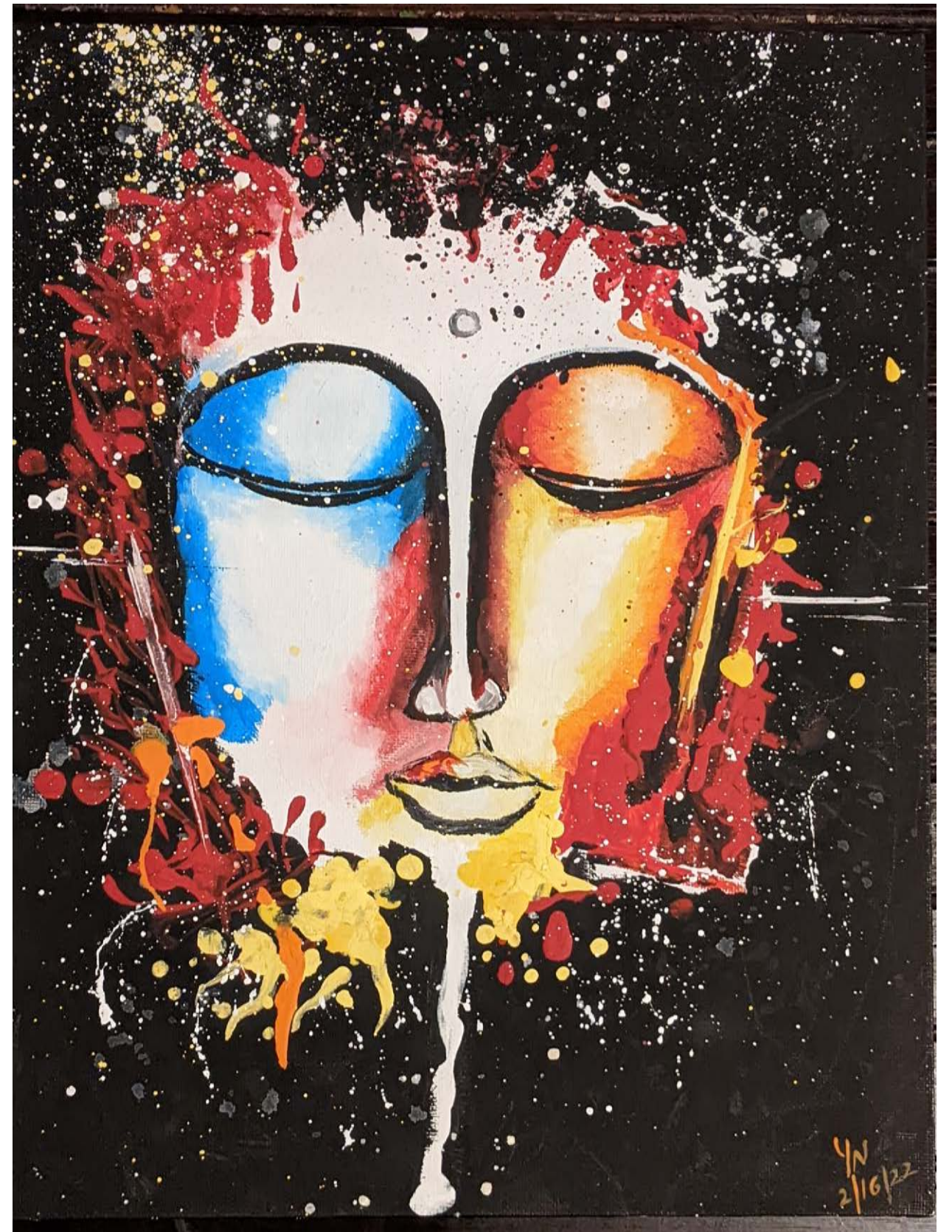
I-bubbles with red dot
Beata Malachowska
Postdoctoral Fellow
Acrylic paint



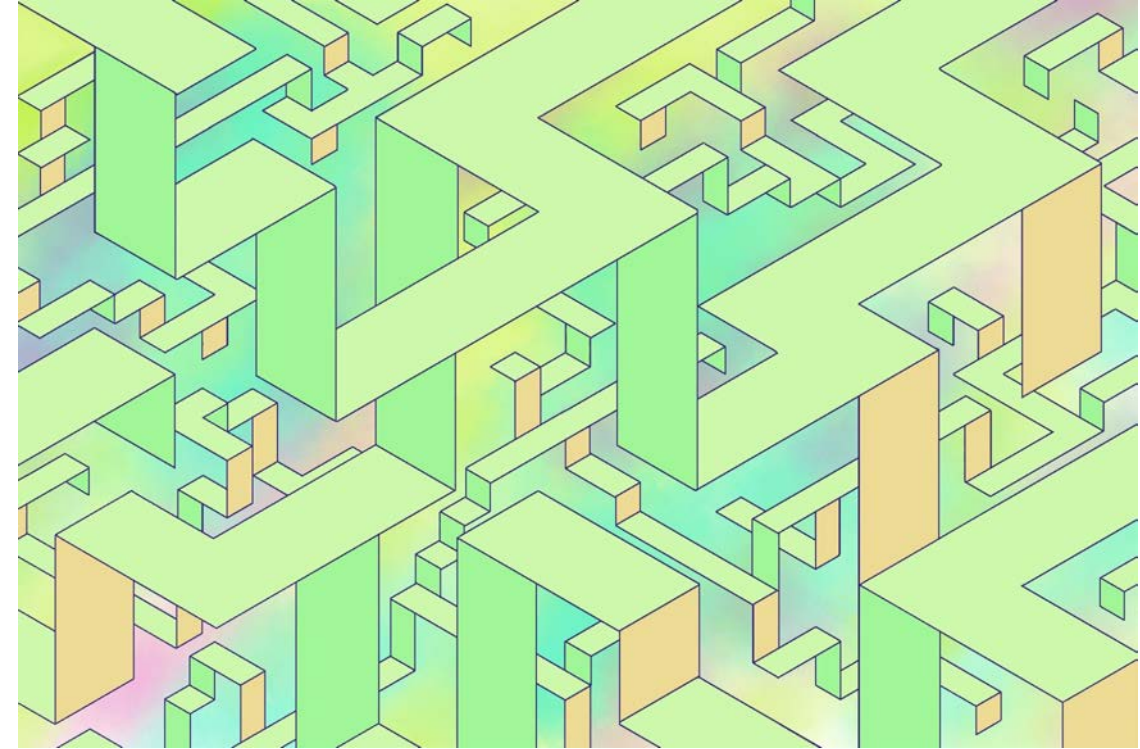
Morning Vitamin C
Melissa Peskin
Assistant Professor,
Department of OBGYN
Photography



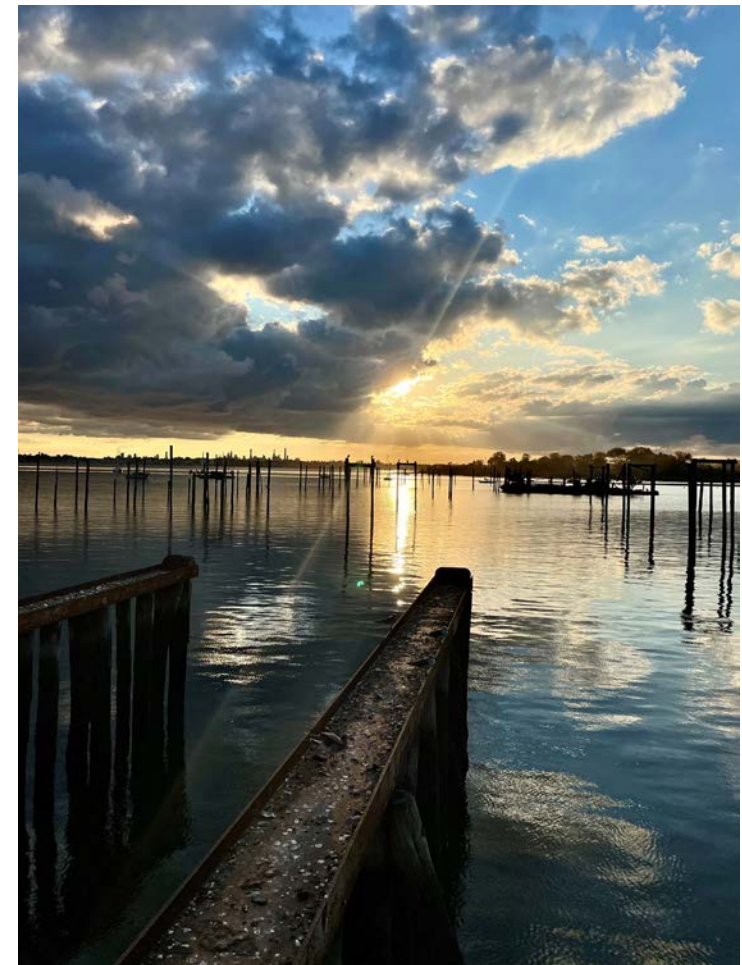
Snow Peaks
Manpreet Kaur
Postdoctoral Fellow
Painting



Peace
Lalitha Nanduri
Instructor
Painting



Forever Lost
James Harold
Radiation Safety Officer
Digital Art

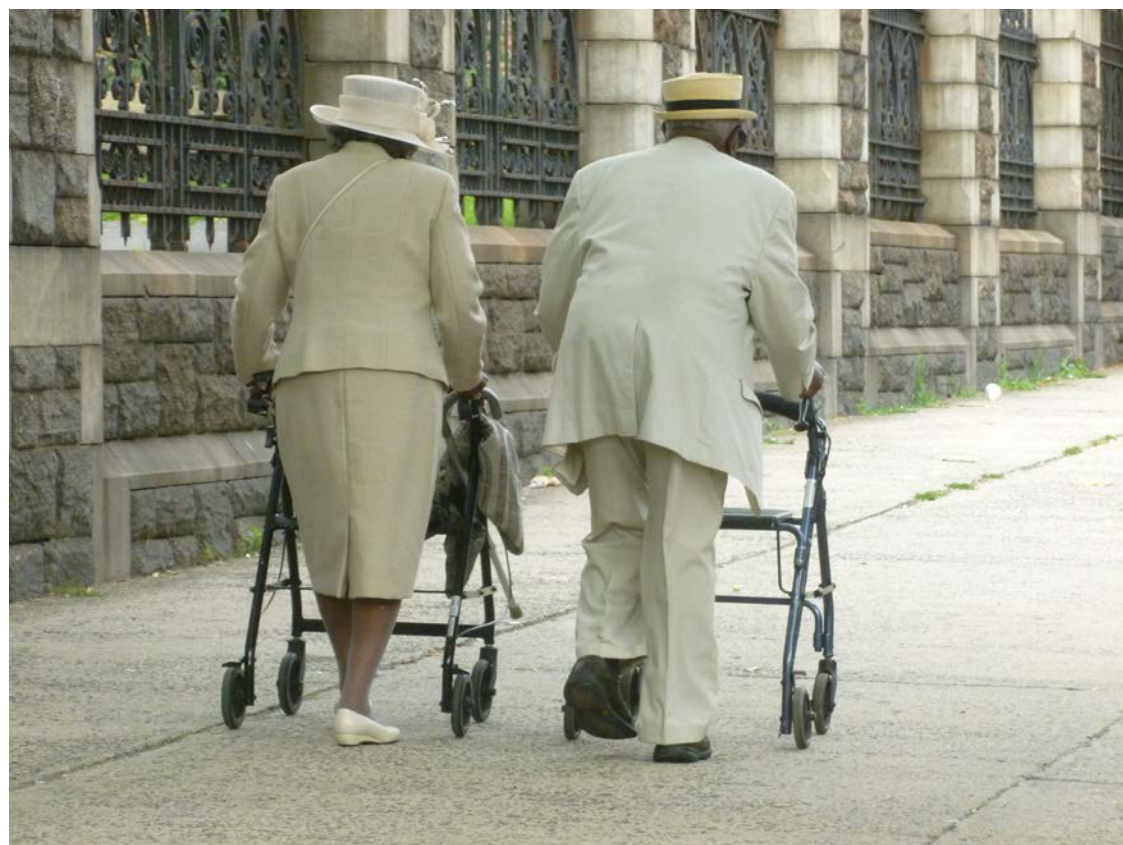


Skies the Limit
Joanna Vega
Administrative Assistant II
Photography

Mondays
Claire Launay
Postdoctoral Fellow
Photography



Morning
Susan Klugman MD
Professor, Obstetrics &
Gynecology and Women's
Health
Photography



Priceless Journey
Deborah Williams-Camps
Medical Records Coder,
Einstein Hospital Department
of Anesthesia
Photography



Kicks
Jennifer Garner
Senior Administrator
Medicine
Photography

Grass that Grows Everywhere

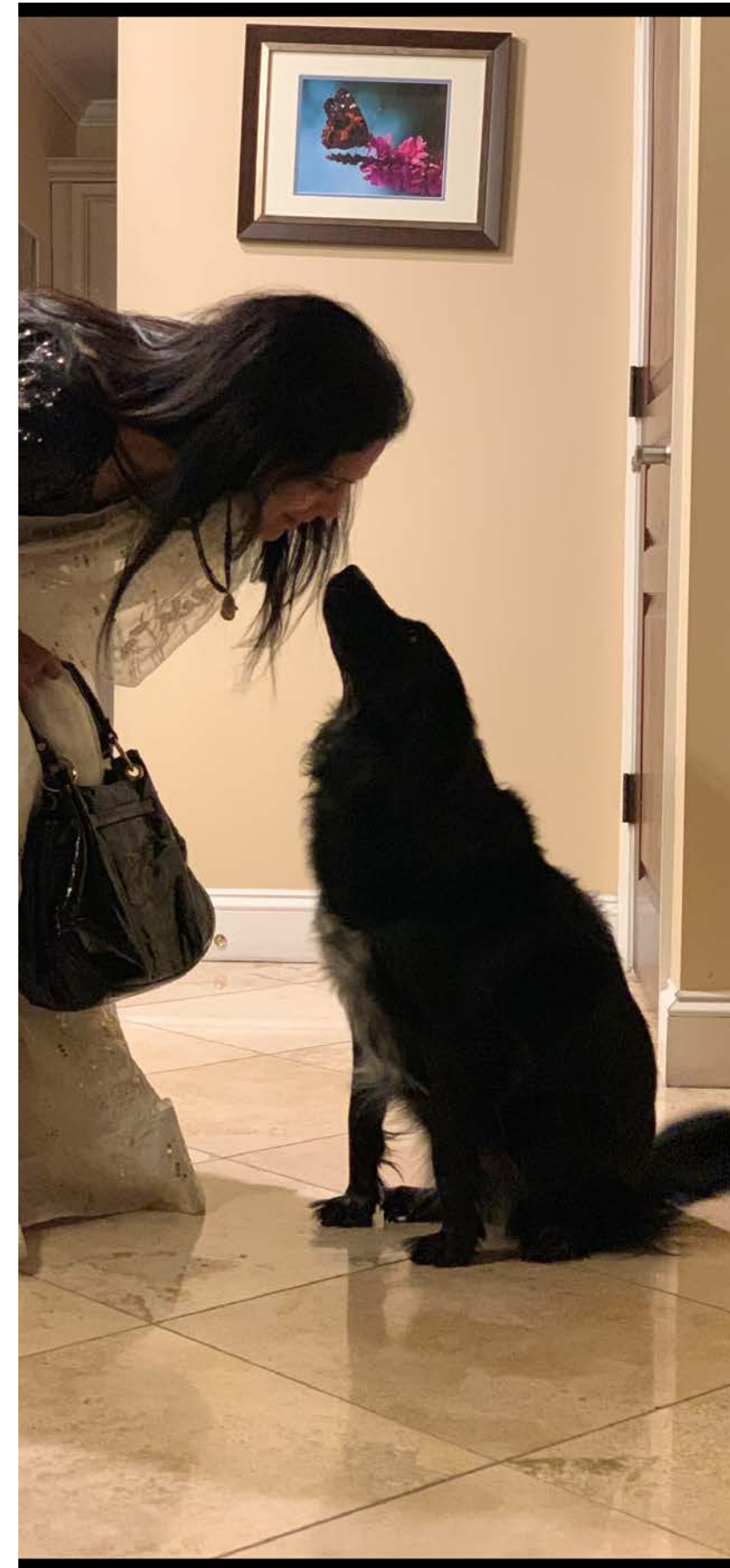
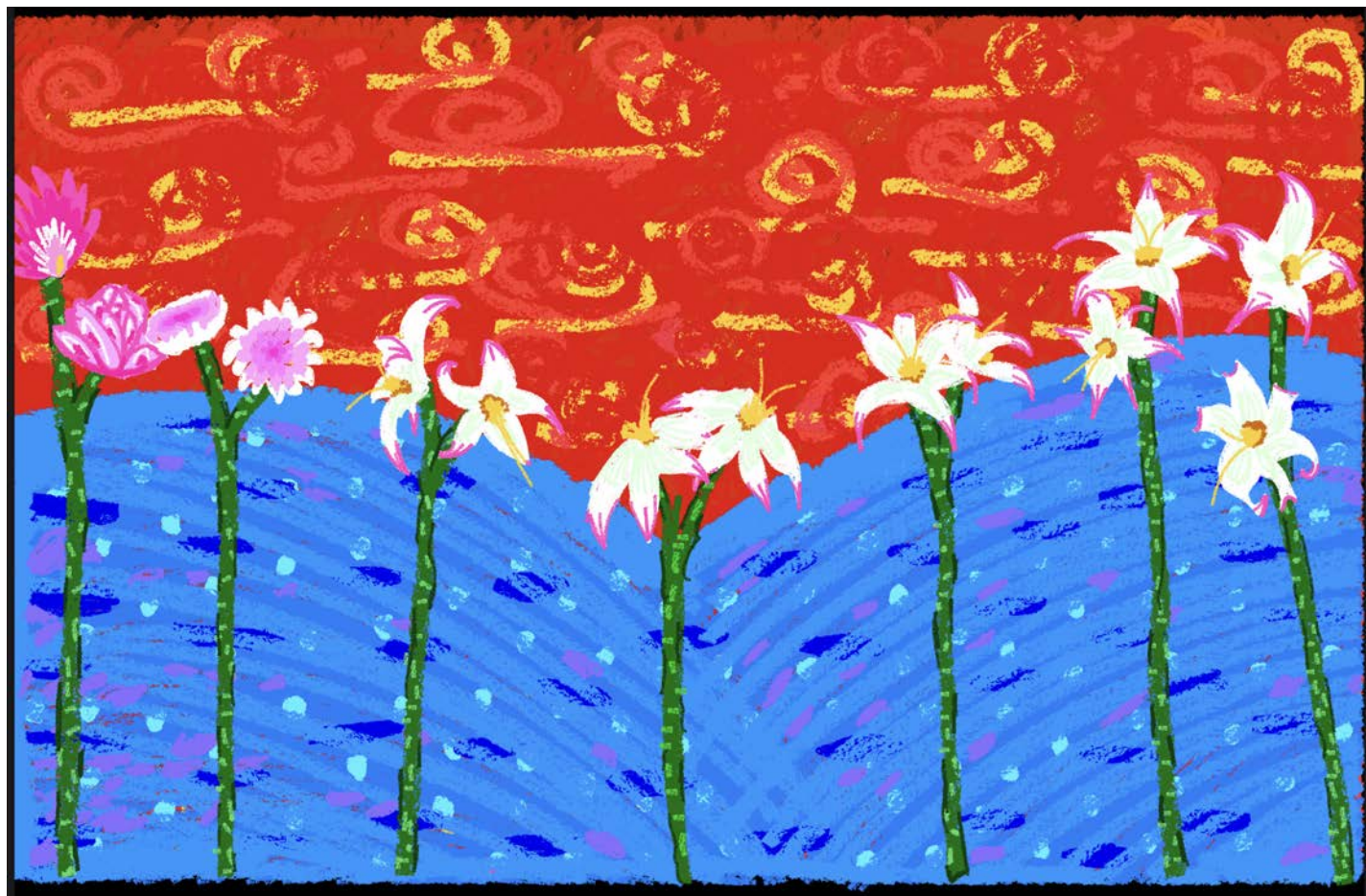
by Anastasia Nizhnik
PhD Student

If you ask me about grass, I wouldn't know anything about it
Other than it grows and it's everywhere
I couldn't tell you why
Or what put grass on the floor as opposed to the ceiling
I wouldn't know any of it

And that's what love is
It's grass that grows everywhere
For no reason at all

Fiery Nascent Blooms

Shreya Nandi
MSTP Student
Digital Crayon

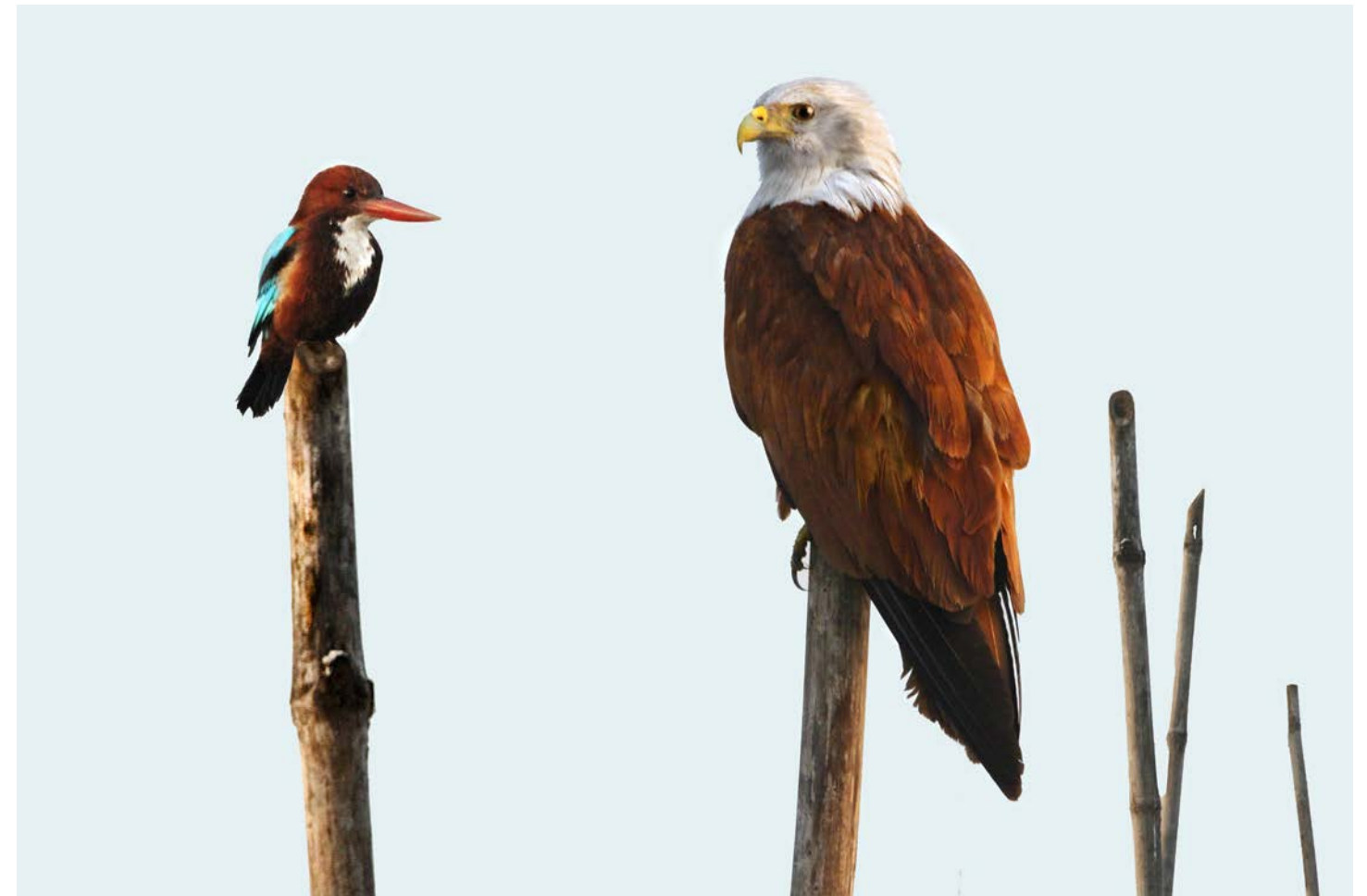


**Love has no
boundaries, race,
religion, color,
gender, species**

Karina Reddy
Shamantha Reddy, MD,
FASA: Chief, Division of
Obstetric Anesthesia
Photography



Wings
Nancy Glassman
D. Samuel Gottesman
Library
Photography



Competitors, not enemies:
White-throated kingfisher
(*Halcyon smyrnensis*) and
Brahminy kite (*Haliastur*
***indus*), Mangalajodi Bird**
Sanctuary, Odisha, India
Namita Roy-Chowdhury
Professor of Medicine & Genetics
Photography



"The Cadence of Chaos"
Madeleine Schachter
Faculty
Painting



Northern flicker (*Colaptes auratus*) eating berries, New Rochelle, New York
Namita Roy-Chowdhury
Professor of Medicine & Genetics
Photography



Coincidences

By Rose M. Sevillano, PhD
Adjunct Instructor

Traveling brings “wow” moments in travelers that you don’t sometimes feel anywhere else, at times “jump scares”. On two trips I felt these awestruck moments, Jerusalem, Israel (September 2015) and Marbella, Spain (August 2019) near the beach, in which the water is so cold that I noticed that not many people were in the water, just sun bathing. There have been other times that I’ve been thunderstruck, but these two are the ones I caught in pictures that I remember after all my hops around the world. I know I have plenty of pictures but going through them would take days. Due to technology these two shots are specifically on my phone and easy to access, move, crop and send.

The story with the picture of the initials RMS takes place during my first trip to Israel. I was leaving the hotel in Jerusalem for a stroll around the city before leaving that evening back to New York City, even though plane landed in Newark, New Jersey. Lo and behold spray painted on the sidewalk outside the hotel, there are three letters that are my initials. I’m thinking, wow it’s a good omen, which means I will return to Israel someday. It made me think of the Trevi Fountain in Rome, where you toss a coin over your shoulder, and as the saying goes, you will return to The Eternal City. I left wondering if RMS is someone’s initials, maybe it’s a political group, a ship, or anything else that the locals would know about, since it was written in large letters about eighteen inches (46 cm) long. What a coincidence!

The next picture that I have included, is the one where I was walking to the beach in Marbella, Spain, and after I cross the street, since the beach is two blocks from the hotel, I look up and see a street sign that says “Calle Sevillano”. Since my last name is Sevillano, I’m jumping up and down at a street using my name. Of course I take a picture of it, and send it immediately to my siblings and cousins. Coincidence? Seeing “Sevillano” on a street sign is a coincidence for me, but not basically for Spaniards.

In Spain, a street sign using “sevillano” really isn’t that odd for them, since there is a city in Andalucía, Southern Spain, called Sevilla., so “sevillano” is an adjective because a person from Sevilla is a “sevillano/a”. As an American seeing it, it’s a “wow” moment for me and I’m smiling from ear to ear. Reminded me of years ago when I was in Sevilla, I checked into a hotel and the concierge said, “That’s a very Spanish name” after he looked at my US passport. So yes, even though I think it’s a big deal it really isn’t. Another good omen for me, because I keep going back to Spain just to see my name posted in places where I least expect it to be.



**Jerusalem, Israel
(September 2015)**

Rose Sevillano
Adjunct Instructor
Photography

**Marbella, Spain
(August 2019)**

Rose Sevillano
Adjunct Instructor
Photography





ABOVE
Quick, Take a Pic!
Joseph Churaman
Research Technician
Photography



BELOW
Jora
Reza Jabal
Postdoctoral Fellow
Photography



Adaptability
Adriana Nieto
Administrative Secretary,
Family & Social Medicine
Drawing

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OPPOSITE
Goldfinch on BACK COVER
Sunflower **Dog Beach**
Prathima Pailoor Chloe Citron
Technical Writer/ MS III
Einstein IT Digital Media
Soft Pastel Painting

ABOUT THE COVER

For the 20th edition of Ad Libitum, the selected cover piece, photographed by Aaron Oh, a rising third year medical student, showcases the night sky of the White Desert National Park in Egypt. The photo, entitled "Desert Stars", was captured while Aaron was on vacation with his friends. Following a long day of driving through the desert, their group finally found a place to camp for the night. As his friends went to sleep, Aaron noticed how luminous the night sky was without the light pollution of nearby cities. With the help of another friend, he set up a tripod and aimed at the sky to try to capture a photo of the stars. He also decided to include their car in the shot as well, which he felt added to the scene. At the last minute, they were caught in a sandstorm which nearly ruined the photo. However, they were able to stabilize the camera and get the shot using an 11 second exposure time. Aaron was born and raised in Los Angeles, attended Hamilton college, and then came to Albert Einstein for his medical education. During college, Aaron found a Nikon F3 film camera. Despite not having much photography knowledge, he shot his first roll of film. Though the pictures were not the best, he really enjoyed the process and has been interested in photography ever since. As film shots became more expensive, Aaron expanded into digital photography, which is the medium for the Ad Libitum cover photo. As he progresses through his medical career, Aaron hopes to continue taking photos, moving from landscapes into portraits, as he feels portraits help viewers understand and connect to the subjects. The Ad Libitum Staff is thrilled to share this serendipitous photo and showcase Aaron's talents on this year's cover.

