



palette

Issue No. 2
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MEET OUR TEAM



Editors-in-Chief & Founders



Content Editor



Content Editor



Layout Editor



Promotional Director



From The Editors

Dear readers,

Welcome to the second issue of *Palette*, an arts and culture magazine launched in April 2019 as a student-led platform to celebrate creative authenticity and dialogue in medicine. We founded *Palette* last year as first year medical students, in awe of the diversity of talents amongst our peers and wanting to create a publication to capture and highlight our unique student experiences, in whatever form that may be.

As with all creative ideas, *Palette* continues to evolve and change. With the release of our first issue last year, we have been absolutely floored by the positive reception from the students, faculty and medical community beyond. We would like to take a moment to thank our community here at U of T Med for their unwavering support, to us, and to each other. In a career path that demands so much of our academic rigour and clinical acumen, a publication like *Palette* seeks to provide a much needed respite from academics in a manner that is facilitated by medical students for medical students. To be able to see the impact our creative work on the U of T medicine community has been one of the most rewarding experiences we have had in launching *Palette*.

With our second issue, we hope to be able to continue that legacy. We have similarly divided the second issue into four sections: visual arts, creative arts, performance arts, and lifestyle design. These four different sections are designed to amplify the student voice on a wide variety of different creative fronts. In visual arts, you will find awe inspiring photos of temples in the jungle, vibrant mixed media collages and thought-provoking ink drawings. The creative writing section highlights a powerful spoken word on the gift of death and a wide variety of poems alluding to heartbreak, purpose, and self-discovery. Under performance arts, you will discover a dance journey, a behind-the-scenes look into *Daffy*, U of T Med's own musical production, as well as Orbital Groove, our medical community's very own band. And last but not least, the lifestyle design section showcases a medical alumni interview, a book review of our community's book club, another workout plan, and crafted travel diaries.

As we move into 2020, a new year and a new decade, we will continue to collaborate creatively with our community, including both students and faculty. We have been tremendously fortunate to have received all the support we had and would like to take a moment to acknowledge them here. Thank you to the U of T Medical Society and Student Initiative Fund for your continued funding and support, without which, we would not be able to make *Palette* free and accessible to all stages of learners and trainers. We would like to extend a huge thank you to our new team this year: Jessica Trac, Anna Chen, Sheila Yu, and Jamie Stark. You have each brought your own flare, talent, and creativity to this team. This issue wouldn't be what it is without all of your hard work and dedication. And above all, thank you to our contributors, for trusting us and for sharing with us, perhaps some of the most vulnerable experiences and emotions you have felt.

As always, we hope every issue of *Palette* finds itself in welcoming hands.

Sincerely,

Sarah Ge & Annie Yu
Editors-in-Chief
University of Toronto | Class of 2T2

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VISUAL ARTS
VISUAL ARTS
VISUAL ARTS
VISUAL ARTS

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VISUAL ARTS
VISUAL ARTS
VISUAL ARTS

Temples in the Jungle

Bryan Wong
2T2 WB

This series of photographs were taken in Angkor, the ancient capital of the Khmer empire in modern-day Cambodia. I visited the UNESCO World Heritage Site last year and was awestruck by the grand architecture and intricate carvings of the temples. The Angkor complex is the biggest religious monument in the world, and home to hundreds of temples and shrines, with the earliest built over a thousand years ago. These were originally Hindu, but later converted into Buddhist temples.

Angkor Wat is the most famous temple in the complex, and while many people are familiar with what it looks like, I want to show how sophisticated some of the smaller, lesser known temples are in this series. Some of these temples have much fewer tourists than Angkor Wat, so made for ideal photo opportunities.

The feeling exploring this ancient city was surreal and every temple had a unique experience. Some are buried deep in the jungle with nature reclaiming them, some are surrounded by canals, and one is in the middle of a large swamp-like lake. With elaborate carvings on nearly every wall and doorway, each one had a different story to tell.

Angkor was once considered the largest city in the world, and why it was abandoned is still a mystery. As amazing as modern architecture is with today's technology, visiting this ancient kingdom makes you marvel at what humans were capable of even with technology from one millennium ago.



Welcome to the Jungle



S t a n d i n g
G u a r d

M e d i t a t i o n





Ancient Skyscrapers



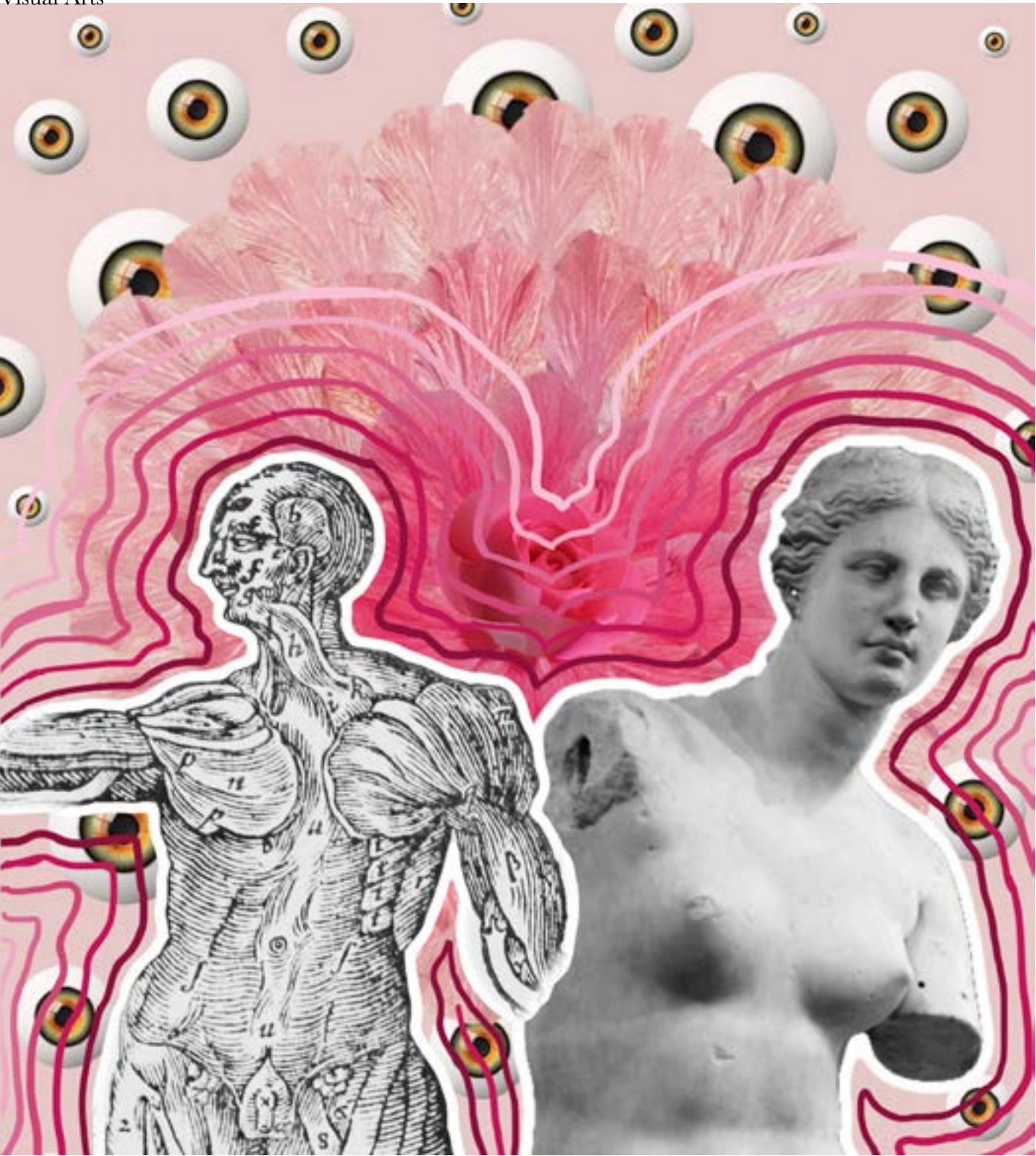
got
your
back

doorway
to the
gods



red
sand
stone





venus
de
milo



Maria Raveendran

2T2 WB

Maria Raveendran aka @CryingOverFrilledSilk is a multimedia visual artist dedicated to exploring the human form and function through painting, sculpture, design, and digital art. “Sculptural Reflections” is a digital collage diptych assessing the parallels between iconic sculptures of the human form and the historical study of anatomy, thus blurring the not-so-distinctive line between medicine and art.



michelangelo

Tharshika Thangarasa
PGY1, Psychiatry

These are select pieces that I created as part of the #Inktober2019 online challenge. For those who are unfamiliar, Inktober is an annual event whereby an official list of prompts are provided - 31 prompts for 31 days. The challenge is to use the prompt to create a drawing in ink. For more information: <https://inktober.com/>. I am including a select few of my end products.

freeze



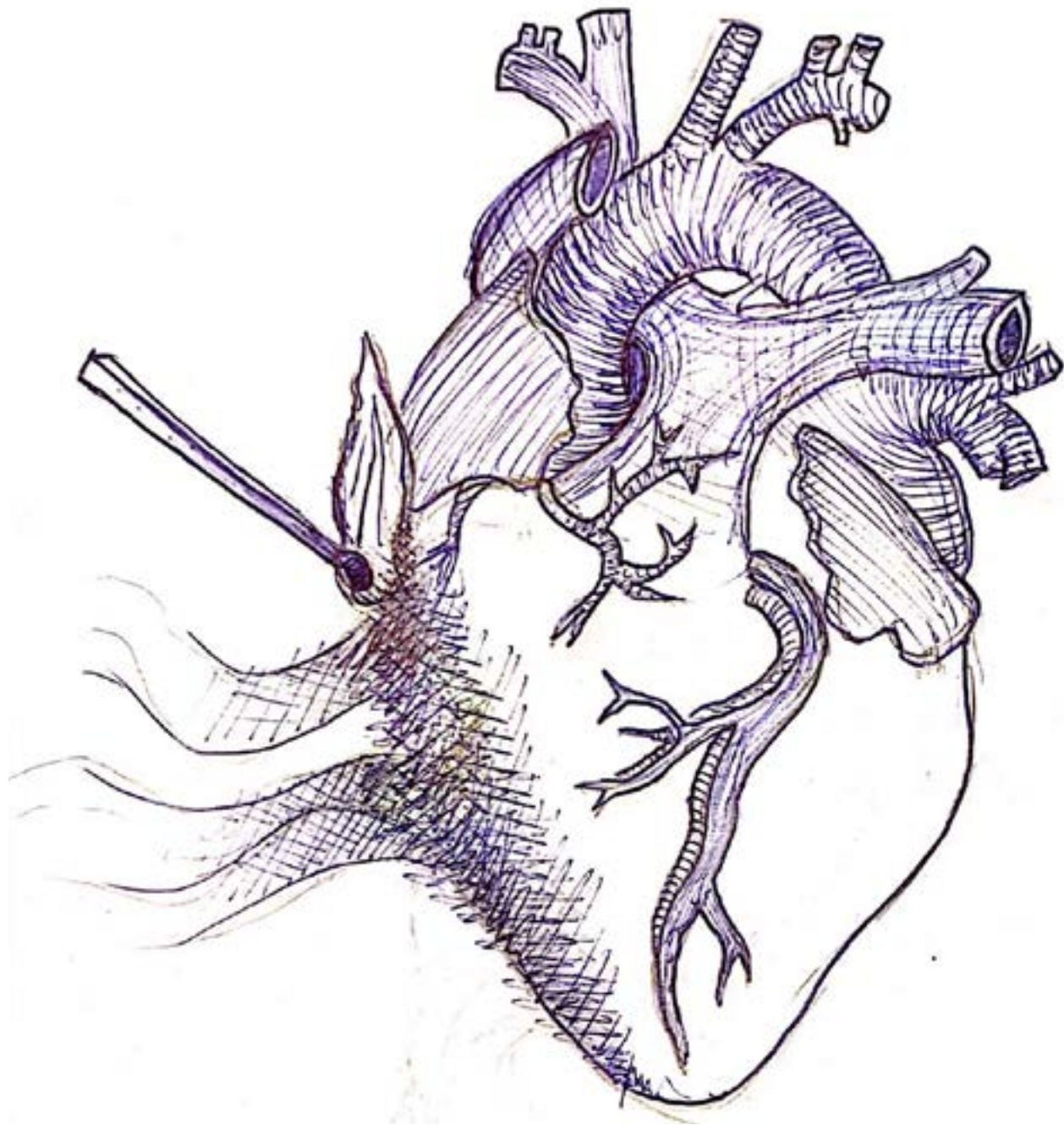
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ash



misfit

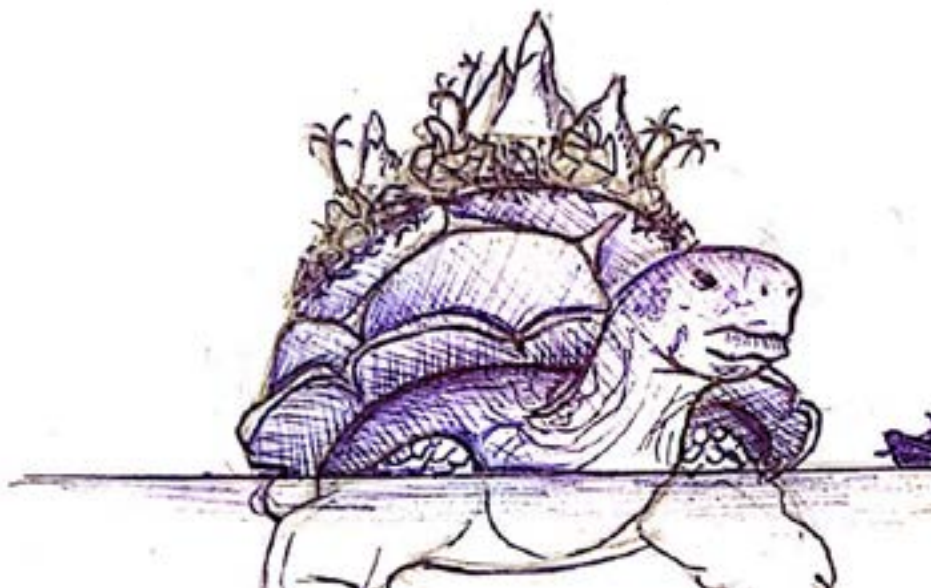


dark



injured

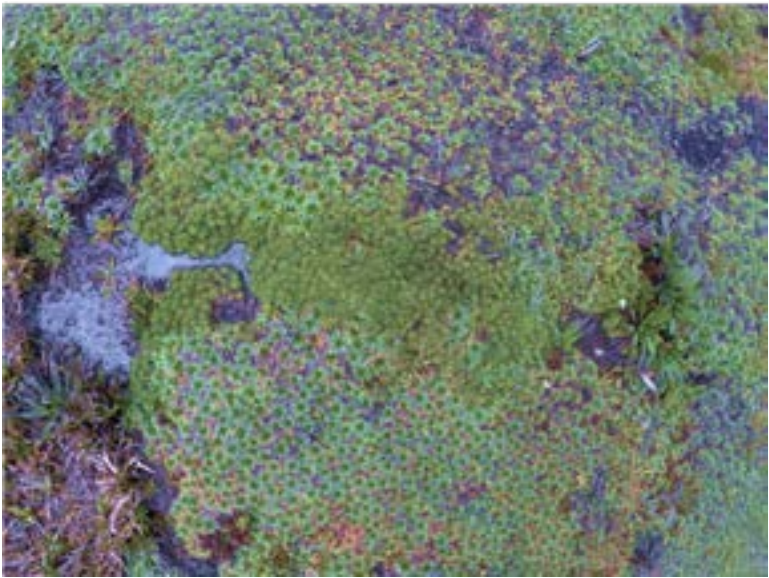
legend



Ruth Chau
2T2 MAM

Nikisha Khare
2T2 PB

Nikisha is a second year medical student and a community activist involved primarily in mining justice and migrant justice organizing. This past summer, Nikisha went to Ecuador to build partnerships towards transnational solidarity with water and land defenders protecting their communities and lands from Canadian mining companies. During her previous studies in public health, Nikisha explored Canadian mining in Latin America through a political-economy of health lens, and specifically examined community resistance to mining as a vehicle for upstream health protection and promotion by preventing the health-harming outcomes of mining.



01 Water squeezes out as I step gently on the moss composed of neatly arranged geometric shapes, a moss that is both delicate and resilient and holds water like a sponge.



02 I look up from the porch to see gently rolling hills circling the valley; I look down to see a stream trickling playfully through the vines, a stream carrying water that originates high up in the mountains rising behind the rolling hills.

La tierra no se vende,
se ama y defiende
(The earth is not for sale, it's to be loved and defended)



03 I walk along the slanted surface of the mountain, protected from the wind, through a forest of twisting and towering paper trees. I come to a clearing and look up to see pristine water crashing down the jagged mountainside from hundreds of feet above.



04 Water.
Water that is life.
Water that will dry up and disappear if a Canadian owned mine exploration site commences mining operations in the mountainous watersheds of Southern Ecuador.

Across Latin America, Canada and its state-supported mining companies are known for environmental and social destruction that create and perpetuate inequality and injustice at community, regional, national, and international levels. For the Indigenous, the women, and the poor, who bear the burden of this nefarious situation, Canadian mining companies represent the latest chapter in a long series of colonial and imperialist subjugation.

The way forward to protecting the health of people and planet? To resist in solidarity with the courageous land and water defenders on the frontlines of protecting some of the most beautiful, culturally-rich, and biodiverse places in the world.

Catherine
Meng

2T3 MAM

Inspiration



“Stop.

Breathe.

It doesn’t take much to submerge one-
self in work and stimulation. We often
forget to resurface and oxygenate our
lungs.

But it is only after breathing that we can
live our lives to the fullest.”



CREATIVE WRITING
CREATIVE WRITING
CREATIVE WRITING

CREATIVE WRITING

CREATIVE WRITING
CREATIVE WRITING
CREATIVE WRITING

I WISH I WISH I WISH I WISH

Maleeha Ahmad Qazi
2T3 PB

I wish I could tell you
When I needed you the
most
You were not there for me

I wish I could tell you
When you said no,
All my hopes and dreams
Shattered right in front of
me

I wish I could tell you
I feel like a lost soul
Not knowing which way
My destiny now awaits me

I wish I could tell you
People are right to say
“Do not hold any
expectations”
Because in the end it only
hurt me

I wish I could tell you
You are my heart, my soul,
my life
And I wish you thought the
same of me

But I truly wish I did not
have to tell you at all
And that you had just felt it
Pouring out of me

DEFINING

Benjamin Keating
2T2 Fitz

A leaf
Is not a Leaf.

Until

it

falls.



“That my black is a blessing.

And this black power was miraculously made perfect in systemic, historical weakness.”

Chantal Phillips cannot imagine herself pursuing a life or fulfilling a purpose lacking emphasis on equity and inclusion. From her academic endeavours to her spirituality, social justice acts as a cornerstone. However, that foundation was difficult to establish in the midst of questions about the colonial nature of Christianity and her relationship with blackness. As a biracial child, many of the toxic messages received about blackness made her melanin feel like a burden. These debilitating ideas challenged her developing identity and at times became a tug-of-war. While self-exploration and exposure to several Black literary geniuses provided liberation, she also came to terms with the intersections of liberation and justice to be found in the Gospel. This poem was written as a reflection on her past and current relationships with both God and her blackness.

As I read second Corinthians 12 in the dim light of lamp and midnight, I delve into a passage that is a source of both power and parasite. The Apostle Paul confessed of a struggle he endured, a figurative thorn in his flesh. A torment he thrice pleaded with God to remove in his distress. In response to this request, the Lord stated His power is made perfect in weakness. Paul boasted. I buckled.

Paul boasted in the midst of persecution, I buckled in light of it. Reminded of the times I would cry out to God, age four or five, Bedside, knees bent, seeing black as my weakness. The thorn was my flesh. The generational curse I wanted Jesus to reverse was melanin and curls.

A curriculum taught by society referred to as Self-hatred 101, One by one, Black children all over the diaspora become honour roll students, And some, rejecting the lessons of respectability, face looming threats of expulsion.

Diversity was ironically a great strength and a problematic ally, Told to proudly rock race and ethnicity in a society founded upon principles that strip me of it... I had to learn to perform this way.

To re-write the script encrypted by a malevolent playwright; To re-wire the circuitry leading to the non-consensual puppetry that produced my colourist words and crippling self-image; To re-work the box of stereotypes and hair-touching violations so that I could thrive outside of it. That's a miracle. Now I boast That my black is a blessing. And this black power was miraculously made perfect in systemic, historical weakness.

THORN IN MY FLESH

Chantal Phillips
2T2 PB

WHERE

Isabella Fan
2T2 MAM

One foot forward
meets a leftward breeze; swift, crisp,
telling me to breathe as I read my compass
it tells me I'm headed north.

One foot forward
halted mid air for those passing to my right
those passing to the east
but a glimpse of their compass
tells me they instead bound north –
so I question who has been misaligned
because isn't north only one way?

One foot forward
another query of north as a direction or north a
destination

sits heavily on my shoulders this bearing
of my confusion pulls me 45° in between –
and so I pivot against my fear of spinning great
distances
while stuck on the same coordinate.
This in between path is no friendly territory
and currents push against each other's way
but even through these days as a stiff axis
around which these currents spin –
I can lift my head high enough to spot the leftward
peaks
breathe deep enough to smell the rightward seas
during which it is clear where I want to go.

Another foot forward
with a glance at the currents behind me
someone has just stumbled out of that maze
requesting to borrow a compass
and I realize that the best exchange I can give them
is to return their question with this one: where is your
north?



control

Dilshan Pieris
2T3 WB

i stand at the edge
of the precipice
beholding
the ground beneath me
erode erod ero er e...

what you say or do or think or feel
can't help me save face
– or maybe i can't face being saved

...

I tease the edge
of the precipice
to get the last laugh

to be the one
that chooses to
w a l k a w a y



BITTERSWEET SYMPHONY

Dilshan Pieris
2T3 WB

Dilshan is a 2T3 medical student who enjoys coffee, writing poetry, and playing music. You can find more of his poetry [@my.writers.notebook](#) on Instagram.

he makes a joke

that laugh
is a symphony

brass

strings

a cornucopia of sounds
blended perfectly
by the hands
of the conductor

yet
if only his hands
can create
such a perfect balance
of sounds

then i will
gladly sit back and
enjoy the music

you laugh

woodwinds

percussion

by *his* hands

IS LIFE FAIR?

Michael Gritti
PGY1 Pediatrics

“How would I go about setting shadowing up?”
The predictability ends with this statement.
Neurosurgery. **Surgeon.** Not my usual choice.
I’m not one of those “affinity for the brain” types.

Show up. 7pm. The resident isn’t what I thought.
Smiling?
Okay.
PGY-2 Neurosurg...smiling?

Surgeon walks in. Smiling too.
The patient has something growing.
In her mind. In her head. In her frontal cortex.
Holes. Bored out. Staff not even scrubbed in.

I’ve asked people to “open up” their minds before.
Never looked like this.
Interestingly, just as fragile.
Surgeon is now scrubbed in. He goes in.
They pull something out. What is it?
I don’t know. Do they?
They don’t. Surgeon looks at me.
Breaks it down.

See, her past medical history is relevant.
“She is a breast cancer survivor.
1 month ago they found something in her lung.
Uncharacterized carcinoma of the lung.”

“I want you to go to path.
Let’s pray it’s the breast cancer.”
Turning to the smiling resident,
We got it all out...

“Is Life Fair?” was first included for publication in our last issue. Due a formatting error, only a portion of the piece was published in the print version. We sincerely apologize for this mistake, and the full version is now presented here.

Now, I’m in pathology.
Dark room.
The genesis of a lot of bad news.
The room matches that fact, deeply.

We all turn to the lens.
The lens into her hallucinating mind, deceiving.
The lens into the surgicalized skull, not true.
The lens over this slide, holds her truth.

Not. Breast. Cancer.
Nothing else
needed
to be said.

Surgeon enlightens the OR
with the dark news.
I look over at the PGY-2
He’s not smiling anymore.

He closes up and surgeon leaves.
Tells me to follow.
I listen.
We are going to tell the family.

Husband and son,
Pressed plaid shirt, Metallica shirt.
A handful of an embrace.
We have some news...an hour earlier than expected.

“We were able to get all the tumour out.”
Tears.
“Thank you, thank you sir.”
Hugs.

“We have yet to diagnose the tumour,”
Not listening.
“But it doesn’t look like the breast cancer.”
Okay...

“We will get back with the diagnosis once we get it.”
Ignored.
“When can we see her?”
“Soon.”
Relief.

*Why? What is good news?
Was it bad news?
How could they understand?
Did I even understand?*

*How does one break this?
How does one navigate these waters?
How much pain can a family stand?
How will I give care?*

How is life fair?

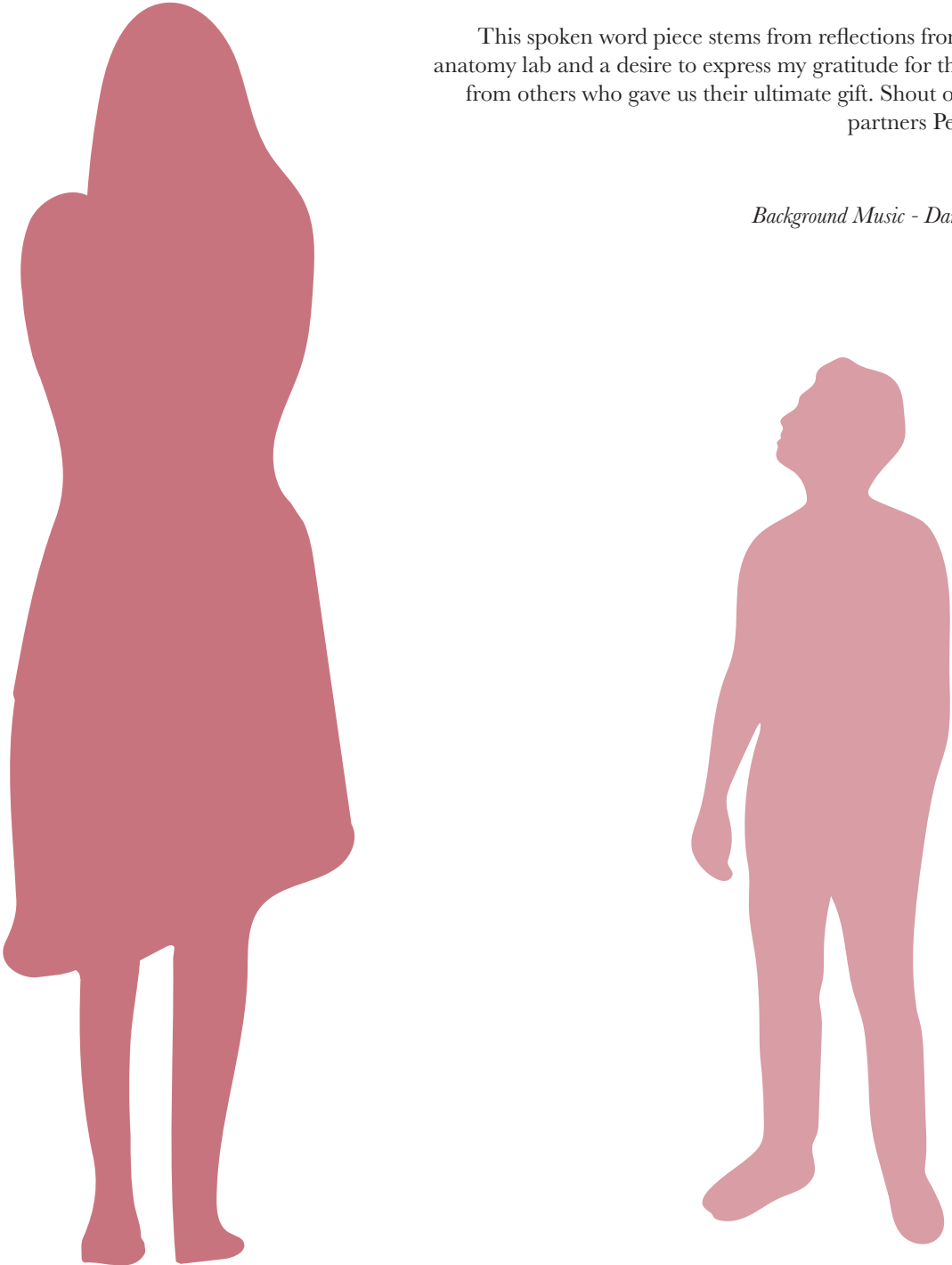
The Santa Maria della Concezione dei Cappuccini, or Our Lady of the Conception of the Capuchins, is a church in Rome, Italy. It was commissioned in 1626 by Pope Urban VIII, whose brother, Antonio Barberini, was a Capuchin friar. It is located at Via Veneto, close to Piazza Barberini.

A plaque in one of the chapels reads, in three languages,

***“What you are now, we once were;
what we are now, you shall be.”***

This spoken word piece stems from reflections from my experiences with anatomy lab and a desire to express my gratitude for the opportunity to learn from others who gave us their ultimate gift. Shout outs to my anatomy lab partners Peter S. and Muskaan S.

Background Music - Danny Rael – I Miss You



THE GIFT OF DEATH

Andy Edem Afenu
2T2 PB

We welcome a new guest
Open Heaven’s gate
We welcome a passed life
Placed upon a cold surface.

And like angels shining bright
students clothed in white
A scalpel becomes key,
to the depths of life
For us to see.

And like another vivid message
carved between layers of fascia
your canvas speaks to me.

“We were once like you, and
you will soon be like us”

Interlocked veins and arteries
Like the branches on a family tree
Confirms our origin story.
A deep scar from hockey,
Blinded by a tattoo of her name
Metallic rods guarding once
broken bones
Keeping upright a bent frame
Perfect – Imperfections exposed.

Another stare, another angle
Another organ, Observed vessels,
that Form the stream.
The flow of knowledge, The
opportunity.
The wisdom to save others
In silence, I listen and receive
As your canvas tells your story.

In return, I give you my time
books read; pages opened,
your atlas, I’ll look at.
Lessons learned; facts
remembered
ignorance and deaths, we’ll
combat.

And like works of art
that have stood the test of time
You gift will never be forgotten.
For you were once like me
And I will soon be like you.

PERFORMANCE ARTS

PERFORMANCE ARTS

PERFORMANCE ARTS

PERFORMANCE ARTS

PERFORMANCE ARTS

PERFORMANCE ARTS

PERFORMANCE ARTS

Playing Our Tunes

Interview with Orbital Groove Members
Melinda Caputo (2T2 Fitz) and Samantha Rossi (2T2 PB)

Can you tell us more about your involvement with Orbital Groove?

Melinda Caputo: I joined Orbital Groove last year to play the bass guitar. I’ve been playing the bass since middle school and did several musicals in the past, but the O-week talent show actually convinced me to join Orbital Groove over Daffy. I’ve stuck around this year as a singer and I take part in its organizing and planning.

Samantha Rossi: I joined Orbital Groove last year as a singer, and I’m still singing this year. I heard about the band even before medical school started and knew it was something I’d want to be apart of. I guess I would sum up my involvement with Orbital Groove as “so far so good.”

How has Orbital Groove evolved in the past two years?

SR: We played more rock music last year, but this year we’ve added in more R&B and funk. We’ve been part of the same events—O-week, MoStock, Shave for A Cure, and some smaller acoustic shows. O-week was so fun - the audience gave us so much energy! We had a really good repertoire of fun yet ambitious songs.

MC: For us, given that it’s our second time doing

this, we’ve found ourselves more comfortable and less stressed. There’s also sort of a mentorship part for our new members, and it’s great meeting the 2T3 students.

What is your favourite thing about the band?

SR: The people! It’s always a good vibe with us, and fun to work on something as a group instead of doing school all the time. Choosing songs is really exciting too! We played “Wannabe” by Spice Girls, which we probably wouldn’t do in any other context!

MC: The team effort that’s involved—everyone brings a different flavour. It’s cool to meet people who are also passionate about music and on the same wavelength as you.

What are some of your musical involvements or goals outside of Orbital Groove?

MC: I’d love to do more music. Right now I’m working on a Holiday Fundraiser show, open mics, and writing a bit of music. I’d love to properly record something that I write—an EP would be really cool. Writing my own music has been a great outlet for me.

SR: I’ve been doing music on the side since I was around 14 or 15. My music has evolved over time,



but initially I was doing cover band for weddings and street festivals. And now I’ve transitioned to doing more solo gigs. I agree that having an EP would be awesome. My music teacher got me into recording in high school, but nothing compares to the experience of a live performance. I see myself in maybe 20 years from now just playing in a little cover band once a week at a bar. I think having that alongside my career would be really fulfilling for me.

Who are your musical inspirations?

SR: This is going to sound pretty hilarious, but growing up my biggest inspiration was Shania Twain! She was just everything - the rich quality of her voice, her edgy but sincere character. My dad also exposed me to a lot of music growing up during long road trips, including bands like The Rolling Stones and The Beatles, which helped me to develop my own musical taste. My long-time inspiration has been Alicia Keys.

MC: My mom used to play the piano, and her singing and performance got me really excited about music.



My dad loved the Backstreet Boys, but I personally love female fronted indie bands, such as The Beaches.

With so much talent and experience, have either of you considered doing music professionally?

MC: When I played the classical guitar, teaching and performing was becoming a pretty big part of my life. It’s nice to zone into something that’s not stressful in life. But while music has always been my passion since forever, I don’t think I would want to make it a professional career.

SR: I think having music as a passion and outlet is really important, but it’s also nice to not have it as a day job. To allow music to calm myself down and see how it moves people is such a beautiful thing. Music has always been something that I naturally gravitate towards. But I don’t like the politics in the industry and the expectations of the female musician, so I don’t think it’ll ever be a full-time career for me.

“To allow music to calm myself down and see how it moves people is such a beautiful thing.”



How do you integrate music into the rest of your life?

MC: I definitely worry that music is something that I might not always have time for. But I think it’s important to decide what your priorities are. If it’s something that’s important to you, you’ll find ways to keep pursuing it. In my case, I take my guitar out of the case and put it on a stand so that it’s always accessible. I also make sure that I go see concerts and performances.

SR: I think it really does take a conscious effort to make time. I also think that different seasons of life will bring different challenges, and one day I hope to integrate my passion for music with my medical career. Here’s a little plug for Noteworthy Music Program at Mount Sinai Hospital - it’s a volunteer program where we go around and play music for patients one-on-one. You can tell that it brings so much joy to people’s lives, so I think music can play an important role in medicine.

Performing requires a lot of confidence. What are your thoughts on building the self-esteem that’s needed to perform?

SR: I definitely used to freak out a lot! It took me a long time to get comfortable with going up on stage. But I think performing a lot and hearing words

of affirmation from other people helps to build confidence. With regards to original compositions, I’m still very self-conscious. It’s a very vulnerable part of yourself to share with others.

MC: Vulnerability is a good word to describe performing because you’re putting yourself out there in a way that you don’t like. Academically, you’re not worried about sharing an essay. But with music, it’s a whole other experience and criticism can become a reflection of who you are. And it’s another beast with original music. I commend people who can share that regularly. So I guess you just keep trying and taking that risk. I remember playing a little show last February and it was such a rewarding experience to let people into something that I spent a lot of time working on. You let them see something different that you don’t normally share. It’s still terrifying, and I don’t think that part ever goes away.

What are some of your favourite music that you’d like to share with our readers?

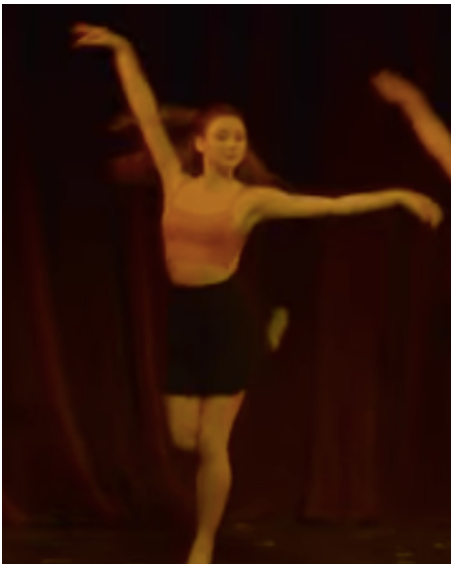
MC: Daniel Caesar (always) and right now I’m listening to Michale Buble’s Christmas album.

SR: Such a hard question since I love so many different things, but I’d recommend Norah Jones’ “Come Away with Me” album.

“It’s cool to meet people who are also passionate about music and on the same wavelength as you.”

The Dance Journey

Interview with Nathalie Loeb (2T2 WB)



Can you tell us a bit about yourself and your dance journey?

Nathalie Loeb: For sure. My name is Nathalie, and I’ve danced all my life. I joined a professional school in grade 5 and continued to dance throughout middle school and high school. I found dance to be a perfect complement to academics. You go to school until 2 pm and then go to the studio for four hours. I think it’s just something about being able to move to music that I think is really, really beneficial for the brain/psyche.

I know that you mentioned that it’s a great complement, but to an outsider, balancing school and dance seems really challenging. What do you think kept you going?

NL: I think it was just how much I loved dancing. I started when I was nine and I’ve just been so used to it ever since. You have to build up your technique over a number of years, but getting into the studio after a long day of school, and letting all your energy and concentration become focused on the movement and the technique and the music is amazing. It was a complete escape. You forget about everything else and you focus on that.

Have you ever considered doing dance professionally?

NL: I have always been interested in science and wanted to be a doctor since grade 5. But it was something I did consider in the summer between grade 11 and 12, when I went to a summer intensive at Boston Ballet. Dancing with Canadian touring company was also something I considered doing for a year after high

school—I’m not sure if I’d even make it into the company, but that was something that I thought I would enjoy doing. Other than that, I’ve never seriously pursued dance professionally because it’s so difficult.

What was challenging about the dance profession?

NL: Body image struggles was one thing. The ideal ballet body is long limbs, long neckline, small head, and really pointy arched feet. You can’t fix those things, so you focus on your weight. But nowadays, the ballet teachers and the dance community focus more on health. Dancers need to be strong and have enough energy, and it’s especially important to have that foundation for younger dancers. Acceptance of different body types is becoming a big thing now.

Did you find the environment challenging as well? For instance, was there a lot of competition?

NL: There definitely was a competition and that was difficult for mental health. If you less than others around you, you’re going to feel bad about yourself. But like anything, including academics, it’s about focusing on your journey and on how you yourself can improve. You look at yourself and what you can do. And work on things that matter for you personally. It’s an intrinsic motivation that you need, rather than thinking about comparing to other people. I didn’t do competitive dance, so there wasn’t any obvious competition. But obviously even in ballet class the teacher is going to have favourites and there’s all that drama associated with getting roles.

In spite of these challenges, what’s something that you have learned from dance?

NL: Work ethic - just putting your head down and work. I had to do that at a young age - even if you don’t feel like it, if you feel sick, you still have to go in and do your thing. But it also helped me to focus on myself rather than comparing myself to others. Like in undergrad, I stayed away from other people and focused on what I can do better instead of what others were doing.

Aside from avoiding comparisons, how else do you think dance has changed your relationship with other people?

NL: Obviously, improving yourself is really important, so I guess dance can seem like a really lonely art. But there’s also performances, with several dancers working together and moving around together. You have to make sure you’re all doing the same thing and be in the same line. There’s actually a lot of interaction and teamwork with other people, so I think it’s definitely helped me in the teamwork aspect, too.

How do you see your dance journey evolve through your medical career?

NL: I definitely won’t be able to dance as much. Right now, there’s a studio that I sometimes go to in downtown Toronto and it’s incredible. It gives me the same exact same feeling that I did when I

would come home from high school and go to dance and warm up with the barre exercises - it’s really meditative. It’s a great mental break. I do it for mental health and exercise. I also met Kieran [Sharma] and we became the dance club leads. It was the first time I’ve choreographed anything, and now if I find a song I really like, I just go in my room and choreograph something. So now dance isn’t something about techniques or goals anymore, it’s purely a mental health slash enjoyment thing. Another creative outlet. It’s an art.

And do you think that your passion and involvement in the arts influences what you’re doing in medicine?

NL: I think it’s made the science side of me more creative. I think the arts helps you ask more interesting questions. Research is also something that I’ve been interested in, and in undergrad I helped teach ballet class to people with Parkinson’s disease, and there was a group doing research on how ballet can help patients. It’s cool seeing how dance influences or impacts people’s lives for the better and how it improves health outcomes.

Any words of advice for our readers?

NL: Pursue your creative hobbies. Don’t give it up, ever. If you like doing something and it’s giving you a lot of enjoyment, try your hardest to stick at it, because it won’t do anything but make you happier.

“...letting all your energy and concentration become focused on the movement and the technique and the music is amazing. It was a complete escape. You forget about everything else and you focus on that.”

On Writing Daffy

Interview with *Daffydil* Writers
Emily Snook (2T2 Fitz) and Joseph
Kates Rose (2T2 Fitz)



“The overall theme boils down to ‘be yourself.’ It’s about coming into medicine and into a process where you don’t know anything in the beginning...and it becomes natural to imitate others.”

Can you tell us more about your roles in *Daffy*?

Emily Snook: We’re the co-writers for *Daffy* this year, so the two of us wrote the script and lyrics of the songs (not the actual music though). We collaborate with the producers and directors to organize the plot and specific scenes, then we write out all the dialogue.
Joseph Kates Rose: Yeah, we made a “storyboard” of the plot (without any images) and worked on it with the rest of the *Daffy* directors.

Can you walk us through the writing process?

ES: We knew since last year that we’d be interested in writing *Daffy*. Joey and I kind of thought about a plot beforehand when we applied for the position. I had a specific idea or two, but didn’t know if we were going to end up doing it. The actual process of writing was pretty simple—when we talk we feed off each other and add bits of dialogue to each scene. Even just one bit can be a big part of the plot.
JKR: We definitely bounce ideas off of each other, and the team works well together, so it’s been a great time.

How large is each bit?

ES: Some are just one-liners or one subjectively funny word-play by us—things that would seem funny to say just for this one time.
JKR: Others are plot devices that become recurrent throughout the musical.
ES: There were a lot of bits that we couldn’t work into the play because it would take too much to set up, so we’re going to put those into the trailer/teaser for the show.
JKR: *Daffy* is always top secret, so we want a trailer that doesn’t reveal anything about the play but still theatrical. I guess this year it’s going to be a collection of very short bits that aren’t in the actual script.

How do you go about writing the dialogue?

ES: We wrote the first draft of the play in about a week. I think it’s straightforward once you have characters and their specific traits in mind then you just let the characters drive the scene. The dialogue flows in a decent way and the bits we use help flesh out the characters. The traits are inspired by people we have seen throughout our lives.
JKR: The plot was worked and reworked. But by the time we had the final plot outline the scenes were really detailed and the dialogue sort of just flowed out of it. It came out naturally when we knew what was supposed to happen for each character.
ES: There was also a lot of saying things out loud to myself. In different voices.
JKR: Yeah, a lot of talking to myself, which I would recommend to do at home instead of in public.

Do you guys bounce ideas off different people?

ES: For the plot, the producers and directors were heavily involved. It was tricky to present a plot in a 5-10 min summary when it’s not being acted out, but our producers and directors were great at helping us simplifying things. They asked us to clarify parts and talked about how the audience wouldn’t pick up certain things if we only mention it once.
JKR: And for most of the dialogue, Emily and I bounced bits off each other, and the directors and producers would give us their opinions. Some things they would love and others they would not, and we would keep working on those.

We know that you can’t share any details of the plot, but how would you characterize the overall vibe of what you wrote?

ES: The overall theme boils down to “be yourself.” It’s about coming into medicine and into a process where you don’t know anything in the beginning.

And you know you don’t know anything, so you keep looking at other people and it becomes so natural to imitate others. As you’re learning and imitating from others, it can feel like you’re losing yourself a bit. So there’s a tendency to not be yourself because you’re trying to be professional and all the different things at



“For me, it’s been nice because I haven’t done creative writing in a long time. Since then, with applying to medical school and being in medical school, you don’t get that much time to engage in creative pursuits, especially ones that you have no commitment to.”

once, which doesn’t always allow your true personality to shine through. Even when you think about the med school application process, you’re broken down into your 30 or so best achievements and you’re trying to check off certain boxes and fit into certain categories. It breaks you down in a way that’s a bit artificial.

JKR: I would say the vibe is kind of silly, kind of serious.

ES: Silly with a dash of seriousness—the plot has several dimensions to it but it’s definitely intended to induce chuckling.

Do you find inspiration from our classmates?

ES: To be honest, not anyone in particular. I think our scenes and characters could work in completely different settings, too. Like dental school.

JKR: There are personality types you see around you and we inflated them or altered them, but it’s not based on any specific person.

Have you guys been involved with writing scripts in the past?

JKR: I co-wrote the plays in my high school, and I worked at a summer camp where I was the head of programming and was in charge of writing scripts. At camp, we pick a TV series and make a 4-6 episode parody to make a whole season out of it. But I probably haven’t written anything creative in a few years.

ES: No prior writing experience. It’s a good thing Joey was here.

Was there a challenge that you had when writing for *Daffy*?

ES: Some little things, including as we mentioned changing bits that might not make sense or could be misinterpreted in a way we didn’t intend.

JKR: Another challenge is keeping the length down, especially in student-led production. The people in our class are much more talented than Emily and I, but at the end of the day, the show can’t be 5 hours long. Also, I guess it’s harder to develop characters in a play or musical as opposed to a TV show or movie, because you can’t cut scene to scene and the scene transitions have to be coherent.

How do you deal with the external factors of the writing process, such as any stress and negative feedback?

ES: It’s been helpful but also difficult to have a lot of excess material. We know that we’ll have to cut things out, but we don’t want to fight for little bits—we save that argument for something that we really care about. We knew going into it that we have to just let some things go.

JKR: The whole *Daffy* team is also very kind and there hasn’t been much negative feedback at all.

ES: Yeah, they would say things like “We’re going to actually be very critical this time” and then say, “I loved this part but could you maybe possibly please take this one word out.” And then after we say, “yeah sure no problem,” they’ll tell us “wow you take feedback so well!” Truly a bunch of top-notch sweethearts.

JKR: It’s sort of like the “harsh” feedback from Standardized Patients. Anyway, early in the process, we had to come up with ideas to bridge gaps that we hadn’t noticed at first, which was tough. But at least there wasn’t a huge time crunch and we had a hugely supportive team.

What do you think being part of *Daffy* has brought to your medical education?

JKR: For me, it’s been nice because I haven’t done creative writing in a long time. Since then, with applying to medical school and being in medical school, you don’t get that much time to engage in creative pursuits, especially ones that you have no commitment to. Writing again was very relaxing. It’s really nice to find a new and relaxing hobby that you can spend time on outside of medicine.

ES: The way we wrote the plot also wasn’t super focused on medicine. It made me appreciate how many different types of people there are in our class. Our characters are very different from each other, and one of our themes is that everyone ends up being important despite having different ways of approaching the same situation.

Outside of *Daffy*, how do you feel creative pursuits can be integrated in your education?

ES: If I had to quote it in 2 words, I would say *Palette Magazine*. [The room erupts into rapturous applause.] In all seriousness, I think an initiative like your magazine is really helpful. Even last year, seeing all the artistic things that people in our class do for fun was super eye-opening. There are not many other platforms that I know or frequent that will share that kind of collection—a collection of stuff with a “come as you are” attitude. Also, just any opportunity to see people show off their talent, like in coffee houses or talent shows.

JKR: I agree, it’s always great to make time for non-studying pursuits and be inspired by people in our class who do creative things. I really like all of the creative opportunities that are around us in medical school. There’s *Daffy* which has all of the theatre and writing elements, *Palette* features a lot of visual art submissions, and POCUS for medical student magicians.

Her Voice

Interview with *Daffydil* Co-Director Julia Dmytryshyn (2T2 WB)

What’s your role on *Daffy* and what has it been like?

Julia Dmytryshyn: My name is Julia and I’m co-directing *Daffy* with Brendan Kelly (2T2). There’s a lot of people involved, including an assistant director, Andreea Damian (2T3), who works closely with Brendan and I. There are also two 2T3 dance leads who have been teaching all the choreography, which has been really helpful. Lauren Beck (2T2), who is a super talented vocalist, is the vocal lead and teaches all the vocals.

In terms of rehearsal, we meet every Tuesday and Thursday. My main role is to coordinate the whole team, ensure everything is running smoothly, give stage directions during scene blocking and to provide artistic input. The dance leads choreograph the more dance-intense numbers while Brendan and I will choreograph the less dance-heavy numbers. Rehearsals are going really well, and the cast is so strong this year. During the first rehearsal, everyone sang so loudly and confidently. In musicals I’ve done outside of school, callbacks are usually conducted to check for the blend of the singers. We didn’t get the chance to do that with *Daffy* auditions, but when we got everyone to sing together, we realized that the blend is perfect. Everyone’s voices fit so well!

What would you be able to tell us about the show?

JD: It is top secret, so I can’t tell you about the plot. I can say that the show was written by Emily Snook and Joey Kates-Rose, so it’s hilarious. I can hear Emily Snook’s voice saying half the lines. When they were running director auditions, they asked us what type of show we would like to see, and we were both envisioning a light-hearted show with a strong message behind it. Without giving away the story, I can say that the main message is to just be yourself. That’s the



message we want people to remember after watching the show.

You were in *Daffy* last year and again this year, what would be different for you between the two shows?

JD: Last year, I had a big acting role. I’ve always loved doing musical theatre, and I’ve been in a total of 15 in my life, both inside and outside of school. Last year I also took some time and was cast in my first semi-professional show that performed near Ottawa and that was an amazing opportunity. I was worried that I would miss being on stage when I was applying for director, but I love it a lot and am really glad I applied to direct. One of the things that pushed me to apply was knowing that this is probably my last opportunity to direct a show. In my future involvement in musical theatre outside of medical school, I can always audi-

tion for a role but the same opportunities don’t usually exist to be able to direct a show.

It’s different directing a show than to act in it. And it can be challenging. It’s a big leadership role and sometimes you have to address difficult issues or problems or to be assertive, make decisions, and just be able to stand by them. And the cast members are my future colleagues so it’s a bit different than a normal director-cast relationship and situation. Sometimes, I wish I could be in the show when I’m watching the cast and dancers do a dance number because it seems so fun. However, I’ve enjoyed my leadership role - I consider the cast members to be like my little babies. I’m mama and they’re my babies. It’s nice to have something you care so much about and to be able to make it your own. I want to be the most motivational director I can be. People are working hard and I can tell they are excited about it too. I love theatre and I love seeing other people enjoy it as well.

I feel like all my years of theatre experience has accumulated into *Daffy* and what I’m putting on stage. It’s so cool and exciting to be able to present the musical in my own way on stage. I have a lot of ideas based on shows I’ve been in and what has worked well in the past. I draw from shows I’ve seen and things that I’ve always wanted to see on stage. To describe my style of directing, I am a firm believer that every chance you get, you should go completely over the top. I want an absolute spectacle. Every time I pose an idea to Brendan, I’m like, “Okay just bear with me for this…” And they will be like, “But Julia, we can’t.” And I’m like, “ I need everyone’s jaw to be on the floor for 2 straight hours.” I’ve gathered from previous musicals that sometimes people think the smaller numbers are not that big a deal but I’m like, “No-no-no, every number is an opportunity.” It’s just been really nice to have that creative input and see my vision come to life on stage.

You mentioned you did a lot of musical theatre and singing. What got you involved in music?

JD: I practically came out of my mother’s womb singing a tune; I just loved singing from day 1. When I started watching the Disney princess movies, it was

game over. I was singing every song and performing full-out dance numbers and concerts for my parents every day (god bless them). I just always loved singing. I took singing lessons with several different teachers for a couple years and performing in the Western University musicals alongside music majors really taught me a lot and helped me make great strides vocally.

In grade 5, my mom signed me up for a program called Kids on Broadway. It’s pretty much what *Daffy* is, but for younger kids. In my first musical with this program, I played Annie in *Annie Warbucks* and just fell in love with it so much. After that, I’ve done a musical every year from grade 5 until now, except for one year in university. I formed a band in 4th year with a couple friends (we were called The House Coats for obvious reasons if you know anything about my usual attire) and performing gigs with them was one of my fondest memories in university. Performing on stage for people is like my happy place.

Musical theatre is something that is a necessary part of my life and has shaped who I’ve become. I’ve auditioned for countless shows and I think going through that process many times has made me more confident and strong (it’s come with lots of rejections!). Additionally, I learned a lot from the different directors I worked with in the past and I’ve drawn inspiration from all of them as I work through my first directing experience with *Daffy*.

And what about other aspects of musical theatre, for example dancing or acting?

JD: Mostly singing. I like to dance and actually took ballet lessons for 11 years and jazz lessons for a couple years as well. But I wouldn’t say I’m an amazing dancer—it’s definitely my weakest point compared to singing and acting. And of course, acting is super fun. Sometimes people think anyone can act and that it’s not difficult, but it’s a huge skill. It really makes a difference when someone really gets into their role and it takes a lot of work. I tend to go all out; but even last year, the little things that people don’t notice upfront are those that make a difference. One of the first things I think about when I take on a role is the character’s posture or how they sit. Not a lot of

Performance Arts
people think about that, but it’s important. That’s what I tell the cast this year. Think about every little thing your character would do—how would they react or sigh or walk. Because they might not walk the way you walk.

I really enjoy acting and getting fully into the role. Definitely the acting and singing has kept me in it all these years.

We heard that you also do a bit of your own songwriting—what has song-writing been like for you?

JD: I started [songwriting] really young. I remember writing my first song in grade 7. I have this song book packed full of songs, I must have written about 40 songs. My first one was about this boy I had a crush on—it’s so funny looking back on it. I’ve written songs for several DJs as well who have reached out to me after seeing me perform or seeing one of my singing videos online. I once wrote and recorded a song for an EDM artist who plays in Miami, which was super exciting.

I think songwriting for me is like therapy. Whenever I’m upset or really happy, I need to write a song. It makes me feel better and allows me to put my emotions on paper. I find that strong emotions write the best lyrics. It’s been a really good outlet for me. Because my writing style is so literal and personal sometimes it’s difficult to release my music publicly. But recently I’ve been writing a lot and I’ve been trying to write about more abstract things and just about different life experiences I’ve had so that’s been nice.

What would you say is your biggest musical inspiration?

JD: I never really had one idol, but I love Idina Menzel. Who doesn’t love *Wicked* (Idina Menzel played Elphaba in the original Broadway cast)? It was one of the musicals that I saw in Toronto and it took my love for musical theatre to a new level. I bought the soundtrack CD and listened to it for actual months on repeat. She is just so talented. I have always loved her voice; her voice is super distinct and you can always tell it’s her. She was also in *Rent* and that’s another really beautiful show. She’s probably my biggest musical theatre inspiration.

Was there a specific inspiration for the show?

JD: It’s hard to say, because I don’t want to give anything away. The writers might be able to shed more light, but what I can say is that we wanted to put humor on the stage but at the same time convey a message to the medical community. And the storyline does follow a med school class.

We had to get together a lot this summer because the plot is complex and was difficult to write in a way that will make sense on stage. I’m impressed with the complexity of the storyline, it’s not just a start-to-finish story. There are a lot of intertwined storylines.

What would you say is a big challenge with *Daffy*?

JD: TIME—I think I knew how much of a time commitment it would be, especially

“I practically came out of my mother’s womb singing a tune; I just loved singing from day 1.”



Spotify & Facebook page: Julia Demson

Performance Arts

after having been in *Daffy* last year. This is one of the reasons why I asked Brendan to apply as co-director with me, as I didn't think I could do it alone. Because he was assistant director last year, he has a better idea about certain directing strategies. If I did it alone, I'd be way in over my head and I am so extremely grateful to have him by my side.

But yes, definitely time is our biggest challenge. Our rehearsals are 2 hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays but we are often there early and late so it adds up. Even yesterday, I spent two hours choreographing dance numbers. My Facebook is completely full of different group chats for producers, band, dancers, and vocalists. It's a lot. I feel like I spend at least one hour per day on *Daffy*. It's a big challenge, but I don't mind it. I probably spend more time on it than I need to, but it's because I really like it.

What do you think is the role of Daffy in U of T Med?

JD: I think *Daffy* is really important within U of T Med. This question is actually very emotionally important to me. I've always been in school for science. I considered doing my degree in musical theatre after high school but I didn't end up going that route. At Western, I did Med Sci and music was always the other thing that kind of kept me sane.

Theatre is great, because people who do theatre aren't afraid of being themselves, and that's what I love. It's always a room full of people who are kind of eccentric, a little bit different, and love the arts. That's totally where I fit in and thrive.

Being around different groups of people who are like-minded is a similar experience in medical school. *Daffy* gives you that opportunity to express yourself creatively. I think that is so important.

Musical theatre actually teaches you a lot. For instance, balancing *Daffy* and medical school is a lesson in time management. I also read something where acting and drama can actually make you a better doctor, because you are trying to get in touch with human emotions and what makes you innately human. I think it makes you better at putting yourself in someone else's shoes, which is what medicine is about: being able to put yourself in a patient's shoes and see from someone else's perspective, even if it is not your own. I think the arts help make you a well-rounded doctor, gives you a break from school, and provides a chance to get out of your comfort zone. Some people in *Daffy* have never performed for this many people and of course it's very nerve-wracking. *Daffy* gives you that great opportunity to overcome your fears and do something outside of your comfort zone. It's a big accomplishment for people and it's exciting to provide that opportunity and help people grow to achieve their goals.

As director, I try very consciously to make *Daffy* kind of like other theatre experiences I've had and to ensure it's a bit of a separate world from med. I want it to be a safe space where everyone can be creative and have fun.

How can you incorporate music into medical education and career because they are very different things?

JD: Everyone talks about how busy clerkship and residency are. At first it was sad for me to hear that, because music has always been something I've been involved with so consistently. Of course there will be times in my life when I will have to focus on my career but I'm a strong believer that you prioritize your time and that you can make time for the different things that you enjoy.

I've always been involved in musical theatre, which may not happen so much in clerkship or residency but I can always make time to go see shows. And there's everything from small local band shows to bigger concerts in Toronto. I just like being surrounded by other people who are passionate about music.

Do you ever see medical career and musical career intersecting?

JD: My friend was telling me about voice doctors for your vocal cords. You can get nodes on your vocal cords and there are specialists that treat this. After all, some people's careers rest on the health of their vocal cords.

I've considered this, but I don't think I could do it. I would be too emotionally attached, and if I couldn't save someone's voice, I would be devastated. It's hard to marry the two. It's nice to have an appreciation for the arts in a science world, I think it makes you more open and relatable, but I just don't know if I'd use them together. And sometimes it's better if they don't overlap...to keep work and play separate.

We talked about making your own EP is on your own bucket list. Any recommendations or anything else on your bucket list that you want to share?

JD: I definitely want to release an EP. I've been collaborating with lots of different musicians and been working on recording a lot of my music lately. Other than that, I just want to keep performing. Of course, it would be amazing to open for a popular band. When I get to a point in my life when my career has stabilized, then I'd love to devote some time to getting those connections and putting my music out there. I'm going to keep putting my music on Spotify. If I got discovered, performing at bigger venues would be a cool possibility.

Recommendations for other people: Don't be afraid. As long as you're confident in yourself, people will listen to you. And get out there. Toronto is so cool. The music scene is so lit and you just have to find it. On Facebook, there are always events advertised, and I actually click on them and go to them and a lot of the times, things are good. Don't be afraid to put yourself out there.

And of course everyone please come see *Daffy*!!! Endless hours of work have been put in and it will definitely be the highest caliber and most absolutely fabulous *Daffy* ever!

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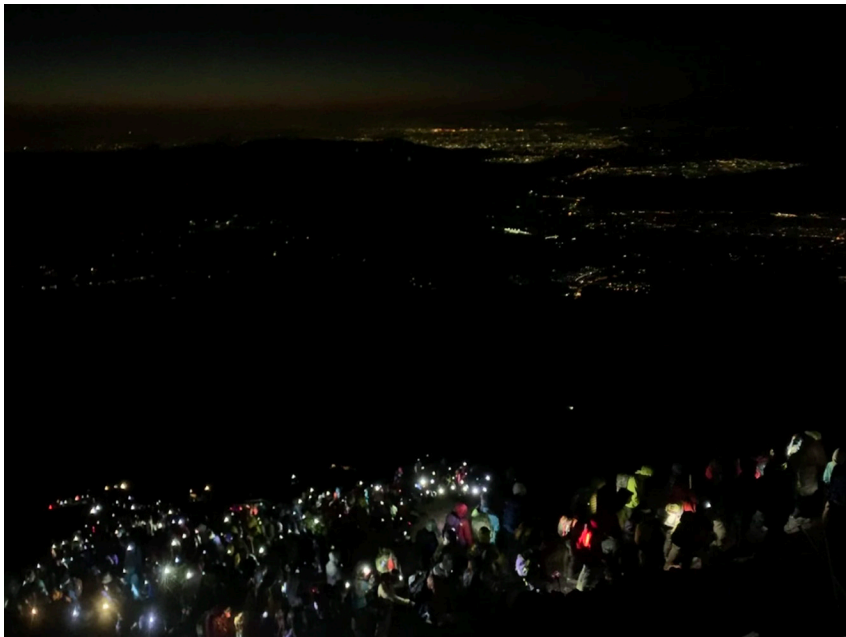
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LIFESTYLE DESIGN

The Sunrise Climb on Mount Fuji.

(1)
3:00 a.m. Ascent in darkness.
Looking down,
the headlamps of other
climbers
help light the way.
Countless alert minds
pushing upwards
while the rest of the country
sleeps.



Isabella Fan, 2T2 MAM

(3)
4:55 a.m.
Sunrise.
We hold the
changing
landscape
in our gaze.



(2)
4:40 a.m.
Awaiting
at the
summit.



(4)
11:00 a.m.
Descent
through
the rolling clouds.

know
my
name

chanel
miller

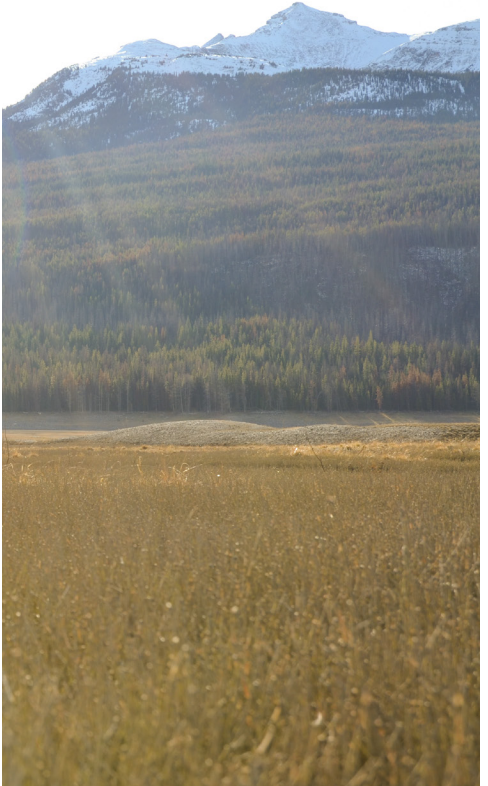
U of T Medicine’s Book Club
Anders Erickson & Diana Cagliero, 2T2 Fitz

The U of T Med Book Club chose *Know My Name* by Chanel Miller as the November/December pick. This novel is the memoir of Chanel Miller, who until recently was known as the “Emily Doe” in the highly publicized 2015 Stanford Sexual Assault case. Chanel’s Victim Impact Statement went viral on Buzzfeed in 2016, but she remained unnamed until the release of this book.

- Some of the themes we explored in book club:
- The pressure Chanel felt to be the “perfect victim,” with regards to what she wore to court, how much emotion to show before the jury, and how she moved through life during and after this experience.
 - Catcalling: Chanel moves to Rhode Island for a few months and on her walk home each day, she experiences numerous incidents of catcalling, which are especially triggering after her assault. We discussed how widespread catcalling remains in our society, citing a famous video that showed a woman being catcalled 108 times over 10 hours while walking through New York City —that’s over 10 times per hour...
 - One question we also asked ourselves throughout the discussion was “Do you think Brock or his family has read the book?” We decided that Chanel discussed him in as neutral a way as possible, considering the circumstances. We also discussed the difficulty and complexity for people to have someone they love be accused and convicted of sexual assault, and the denial or grief that must follow for loved ones. One excellent example of this is encapsulated by Meryl Streep’s performance in Season 2 of the TV show *Big Little Lies*.
 - Social norms: we discussed how it is so challenging for women to change the norms surrounding sexual harassment. Little things, like men touching women’s backs at a party, are frustrating but aren’t always recognized as sexual harassment. When will these norms change? Chanel and her friends have a moment in Rhode Island where they stand up against the harassment they face. When will moments like these become more common for women and allies in society?

Also, we want to recommend you follow Chanel on Instagram [@chanelmillerknowmyname](#) to see some of her adorable illustrations!

Altitudes: A Trip Through the Rockies



10:15 AM – Lake O’Hara Fire Road, Km 1 (1623 m)
1:27 PM – Lake O’Hara Fire Road, Km 10 (1980 m)
2:37 PM – Elizabeth Parker Hut (2040 m)
3:54 PM – Valley of the Five Lakes (1501 m)
4:46 PM – Medicine Lake (1670 m)
5:36 PM – Columbia Icefields (3000 m)
9:02 PM – Rented 6-seater van (1383 m)

Doing (a pull-up) Right

Your guide to proper pull-up form & exercises to help you get your first one

Sondra Chen, 2T2 MAM

Hey UofT Med! I’m a second year student at MAM who is passionate about health and fitness. Since becoming introduced to personal fitness in 2014, I have been actively experimenting with different types of physical activity, including pilates, running, weightlifting, dragon boating, and most recently, climbing. Getting my first pull-up was huge milestone, which is why I wanted to share with you some tips and exercises that I actually used to reach this goal. In 2020, you’ll probably find me at the Athletic Centre, the RAWC at UTM, and/or paddling for New Dragons down at Sunnyside Beach. Feel free to come by and say hi!

Pull-ups are one of the best bodyweight exercises, but also one of the hardest to do properly (or even do at all).

Why are pull-ups great?

- 1. Compound move = working out multiple muscles simultaneously = 10/10 efficiency
- 2. Improved grip strength
- 3. Improved posture
- 4. Low likelihood of injury
- 5. Easy to see progress, as long as you practice
- 6. (Almost) no equipment needed
- 7. Strength gains!

Why are they hard? Because you’re using your back and biceps to lift your entire bodyweight, that’s why.

Whether you’re new to fitness or a seasoned gym veteran, we can all benefit from a refresher on proper form. Keep reading as this guide will teach you how to do a pull-up properly (doing [it] right...get it?!). If you can’t do a pull-up yet, don’t fret! You’ll learn how to strengthen similar muscles to get your first life-changing and confidence-boosting pull-up.

Step-by-Step

Step 1. Grab a stool or bench to stand on, if needed. To start, you want to reach the bar without having to jump.

- Step 2. Grab the bar. Your grip should be slightly wider than shoulder-width, and double-overhand (palms facing away from you).
- Thumbs can be over or under the bar. Thumbs over will give you a better “push” on the bar, but thumbs under is better for improving strength.



Step 3. Hang. DEAD HANG. This means straight arms and protracted shoulders (up towards the ears). Bend your knees or kick the stool back so you’re no longer standing.



Step 4. Pull. There are two parts to this:
A. Retract your shoulders (pull them back and down).
B. Pull yourself up. You can think of it as either pulling your elbows to the floor or pushing down on the bar with your hands.



Step 5. Chin over the bar. No half-reps here - if your chin doesn’t pass the bar, the rep will not count!

Step 6. Lower yourself back down into a dead hang - aka until your arms are straight again.

Step 7. Rinse and repeat. Do Steps 4-6 as many times as you like – until you finish your set, or failure, or something like that.

Breathing tip: n general, you’ll want to exhale when the move is more difficult and inhale when the move is easier. This means exhale when you pull up and inhale on your way down!

Common Mistakes:

- 1. Incomplete reps. Having your elbows bent at the bottom and/or ending your rep before your chin clears the bar will decrease your range of motion and cheat you out of otherwise well-deserved muscle strengthening.
- 2. Gripping super wide. This will work your back (lats and teres major) more compared to a narrower grip, but it will also decrease your range of motion while putting more strain on shoulders and elbow joints. Use at your own discretion.
- 3. Kipping. This is when you swing your hips and legs to get more momentum – it makes the pull-ups easier, but don’t do it if you’re a beginner. It is not proper form and you are more likely to get injured.
- 4. Not engaging shoulders at the start. This will put more strain on the shoulder joints, tendons, and muscles than necessary. Retract your shoulders at the start (see Step 4A) to fix this.

But...I can’t do any pull-ups.
Not to worry, there are many other “pull” exercises to strengthen similar muscles.

Doing (a pull-up) Right – cont’d

Dumbbell Bent-over Rows

Can be done standing (for both arms at once) or with one knee and hand on a bench (one arm at a time). Hold onto dumbbells and hinge forward until torso is close to parallel with the floor. Keeping your elbows tucked in, pull the dumbbell(s) towards your body until elbow(s) are at or slightly past your body. Lower and repeat.

Bodyweight Rows

Hold onto a lower bar (chest-level or below) and lean back, keeping your feet on the ground and body straight. Pull your chest towards the bar. Lower and repeat.

Lat Pull-downs

Using the lat pull-down machine, grip the bar as if you were doing a pull-up, but instead stay seated and pull down the weight until the bar has passed your chin. Slowly raise the bar until your arms are fully extended, then repeat.

Tip: For these first three exercises, try doing a set of 10 reps, adjust the weight/bar height as needed, then repeat the set three more times!

Assisted Pull-ups (Machine or Band)

A. Machine-Assisted

- Rest your knees against the machine platform to take away some weight. The heavier the weight, the more “assist” you are receiving. Follow Steps 2-6 of how to do a pull-up.

B. Band-Assisted

- Wrap a large resistance band around the pull-up bar (thicker band = more “assist”). Place one knee or foot into the resistance band loop. Follow Steps 1-6 of how to do a pull-up.

Tip: For assisted pull-ups, try and go until failure – meaning stop once you cannot do another rep.

Negative Pull-ups

Grab onto the pull-up bar and jump so your chest is at the bar. Gradually lower yourself in a controlled motion until your arms are straight. These can also be done with a band-assist.

Tip: For negative pull-ups (“negatives”), try and lower yourself as slowly as possible. Do four “negatives”, taking a one-minute rest between each one.





Alumni Feature: Dr. Susan Friedman

Susan graduated from the Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto in 1981. After interning in Halifax and working at a cottage hospital in Grand Band Newfoundland, she returned to Toronto where she pursued family practice for over 35 years. Recently retired, she now devotes herself to her other love: art. Painting since 2006, Susan’s art education includes course work at hte Toronto School of Art, Haliburton School of the Arts, and many workshops with a number of wonderful instructors. Multi-layered, her textured work incorporates acrylic, oil, and mixed media.

Susan’s work is displayed in a number of private collections throughout Canada and the UK.

Artist’s Statement

Art making is a meditative space, quieting the noise of the world while allowing expression of my wonder in the every day:

a gesture
a moment of calm
a weathered wall
or simply the late afternoon light

Whether landscape, figurative abstraction, or nonobjective work, I find joy in the exploration of them all.
I love the dance between intention and spontaneity that allows each painting to come into its own.

Can you tell us about your journey as an artist and physician?

Susan Friedman: I started painting in 2006, well before my retirement at the end of June 2018, but well into my medical career. However, it has always been important to me to have creative outlets. I danced for a number of years (modern and tap). I was part of Daffydil back in the day, which was a great outlet for the pressures of medical school. My friend Marc and I, who was also in my class (Class of 8T1), taught other students how to tap dance for the show which was a lot of fun. My first job after internship was in Grand Bank, Newfoundland, where I took up photography with a colleague. I have always had an interest in the arts.

I didn’t start painting until one of my friends encouraged me to take an art course. I went with my sister to Haliburton and took a landscape painting course.I was totally hooked from day one.



After that I took more courses at the Toronto School of Art, and met a wonderful group of women who I still paint with today. We currently meet up once a month to paint together. We did a group show in 2013, which was groundbreaking, in terms of taking my art to the next level by sharing my work with people outside my intimate circle. I continue to do art workshops and enjoy expanding my art communities. Art is still a very personal endeavor but I do enjoy showing, sharing, and especially discussing art with others. Art making is also something that helps me notice the beauty in the everyday while also acting as a balm for daily pressures, including work. Being a family doctor is something I loved, but after a day of talking with and caring for patients, it was quite wonderful to go into the studio to create in silence. I considered this to be basic self care.

Thank you for summing up your journey throughout all these artforms. In medicine, a lot is focused on science and treatment and diagnosis. What are your inspirations for getting into the creative side?

SF: Although creativity is essential in being a physician, I think part of medicine is being very specific and analytical, and feeling like you have to be right all of the time. Although they happen, there is not a lot of room for mistakes. With art, you have room for mistakes; in fact, mistakes are a necessary part of the creative process.

For me, art is about finding a place of balance. What I like about art is that I can just let go. Although learning and getting tools for creating through classes is important, I now explore, and paint a lot on my own, working with a variety of mixed media. In painting, it is the process, not the outcome, that is important. This is very different from medicine, where the outcome is emphasized. For the same reason, I wasn’t drawn (in art) to realism, because it had to be very precise. Painting, for me, is about allowing my brain to take time off. It also allows me to connect with other things in my life, like yoga, which I started early in my career.

My inspiration for art comes largely from my travels and the meditative nature of yoga. In this way, my art has connected different aspects of my life. Exploring art has allowed me to look at the world differently. Now, I’m wanting to hone my skills on figure drawing, something that I was not drawn to while I was practicing medicine.

What is it like being a physician in creative spheres?

SF: When I was younger, I often wouldn’t reveal myself as a physician in art communities as I didn’t want to be seen as a doctor who “dabbles” in painting, or now, just as an older woman who paints as a hobby. The word “hobby” seems to minimize my work. I take art seriously, although it has taken me a while to acknowledge myself as an artist. As I become more comfortable with being an artist, I am also more at home sharing my full self with others, and no longer feel that my being a physician minimizes how people view my art.



Do you think your interest in arts and liberal arts impacted which specialties you chose?

SF: Probably yes. I took a number of liberal arts courses in undergrad including English and Philosophy. I was very interested in cell biology and was academically inclined. I thought that was to be my route, but then I worked in a lab as my summer job which turned out to be a very negative experience. After an unfortunate radioactive spill in the lab, there seemed to be too little attention paid to the impact on the environment and too much concern for the effect on experiments. I decided that if I wanted to go into research, I would focus on clinical research, where I wouldn't lose sight of the world around me.

Once I started medical school though, I realized that what I liked most was engaging with people, and although not what I expected, primary care suited me better. I'm not sure that answers your question, but in the end, I had the need to go a less academic route.

How do you feel about the idea of doing art full-time as a career?

SF: There are times when I have to push myself to create art, especially if there are deadlines for shows. If I had to do art to support myself, I imagine it could become exhausting. That kind of pressure to produce would be enormous. I've done a number of commissions which I have enjoyed, while also finding it somewhat stressful. I've been very fortunate to have a good support system and have the privilege of making art without having to depend on it to make a living.

How would you describe your current artistic style and where you see your art going in the future?

SF: It's funny because people look at my art and see my handprint in it. I still feel like I'm exploring a lot with different styles, but I'm trying to do more abstract landscape and figures. I might do oil painting or go back to collaging, which is what I started with, but I don't think I have one style even though other people seem to think I do. Perhaps "abstract impressionism" is the closest I could get to summing it up.

I'm excited to explore [my art] more and see what comes up. I love the process of starting with an idea and then allowing the painting to come into its own. I believe it is something close to what fiction writers must experience in that the characters take on their own personalities. Painting is like that. The painting takes over—it decides. What does it need? What is it asking for? It is not "what do I want it to look like" or "what do I want it to be."

I am also trying to put myself out into the art world in various ways by submitting work to different types of exhibitions, including fundraising events.



In medical school, it is hard to carve out the time for art. How did you find a balance?

SF: Do it in smaller amounts regularly, not just during the holidays. Even if it's ten minutes a day to jot down some ideas. Journalling is always helpful.



For any incoming medical students and current students in medical school, do you have any advice related to pursuit of the arts?

SF: Don't let go of other interests even if it's challenging to maintain them. (For example, when I was in medical school and took dance classes, I wouldn't necessarily sign up for a whole session, but would participate in drop-in classes). Stay connected to some of the other parts of your life even if it's not exactly the way you envisioned doing it.

Medicine is exciting and can be all-consuming, but it's good to keep your options open. Stay connected to other like-minded people and explore together. It's crucial to have some fun. One of the most important ways of coping with the pressures of medical school is to not forget your friendships, and, of course the potential for creativity that is in us all.

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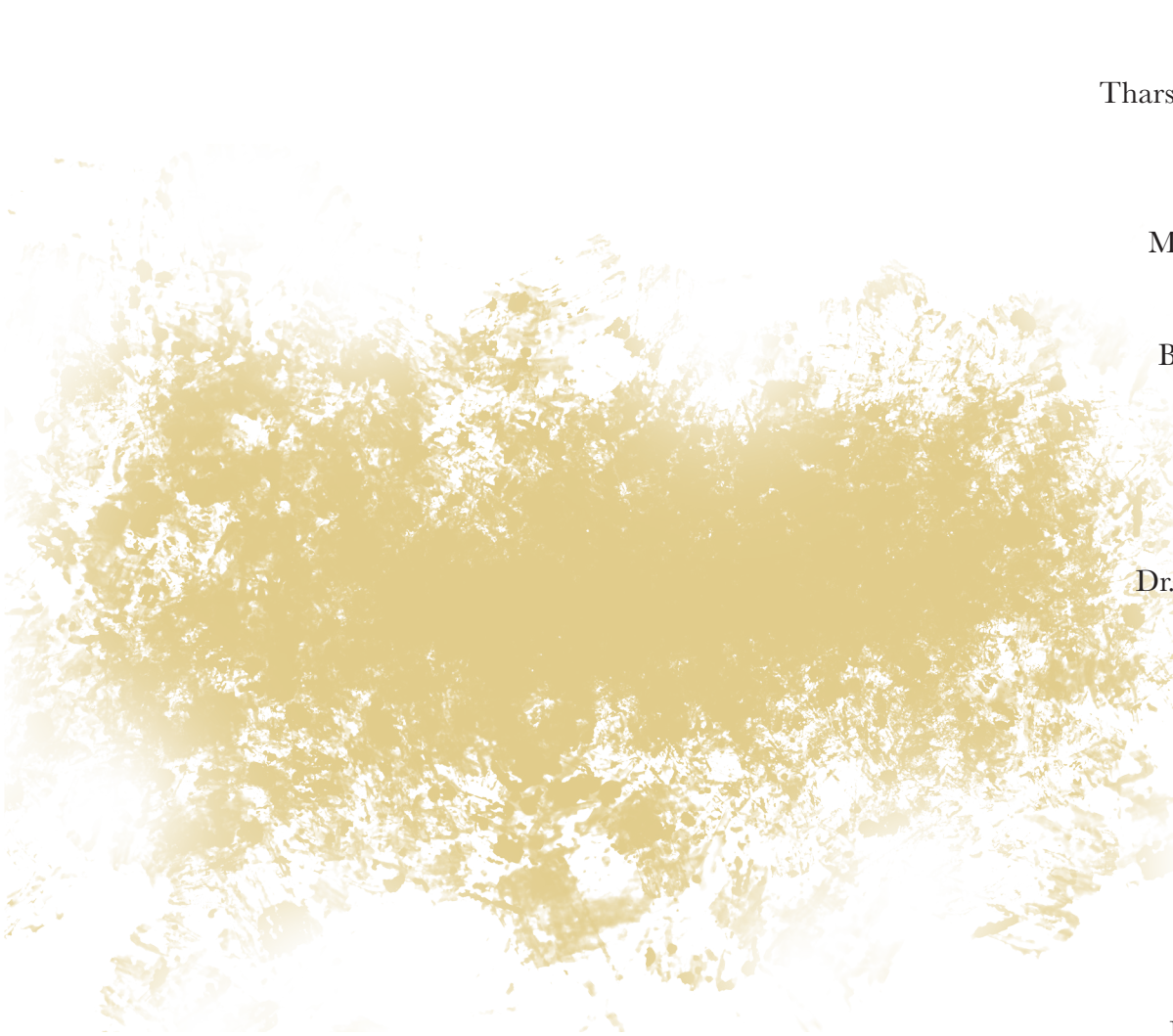
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- Samantha Rossi
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- Nathalie Loeb
- Emily Snook
- Joey Kate Rose
- Julia Dmytryshyn

One foot forward
meets a leftward breeze; swift, crisp,
telling me to breathe as I read my compass
it tells me I'm headed north.

One foot forward
halted mid air for those passing to my right
those passing to the east
but a glimpse of their compass
tells me they instead bound north –
so I question who has been misaligned
because isn't north only one way?