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## Plexus

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### Authors

McMichael, Brian  
Frank, Jennifer  
Armstrong, Caren  
et al.

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University of California, Irvine  
School of Medicine

2006 Edition



# PLEXUS

Journal of Arts and Humanities



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***Oda al Durazno***  
***\*Ode to the Peach***

You are called by your color  
yet by summer  
you become sun-tinted  
taking on to yourself  
the prerogative of the redhead  
and on the inside too –  
the deeper you go the redder you get  
intensifying to the color of blood

My soft, fuzzy love  
you fill my hand  
with your yielding  
rounded density  
you invite me with  
your voluptuous curves  
your feminine little cleft

Your succulent sweetness  
evokes in me the desire to  
delve into you  
to eat you  
to eat you until your juice  
runs down my chin  
I will not want to stop  
once I start

Even when I sink my teeth  
into your luscious flesh  
you make only the sound  
of a heart between two beats  
tasting nearly like nothing  
delicate, fragrant, with a hint of sharpness

In the late summer  
You become most indiscreet  
your overripenesses  
fall to the ground  
becoming oozy, squishy masses  
like dung –  
stinking and attracting flies  
then I can't stand you

Even into the autumn  
You are inescapable  
your slices unexpectedly  
peek at me  
from my bowl of milk  
you cruelly snuggle  
into my ice cream  
and usurp every dessert –  
shamelessly splayed  
atop the tarts, the cobblers  
the pies for all to see

Fruit of the Deep South  
alone in the dark winter  
I break down  
tormented by  
your one solid defect  
that when I had finally  
arrived at your core  
I found your hard, little brain  
where your heart should have been

- Brian McMichael, Class of 2007

*Bulgarian Countryside*, ink on paper  
Sarah Mourra, Class of 2008





*Motherhood*, photo  
Akta Patel, Class of 2007 & Sulabh Upadhyaya

### ***Stories to Tell my Daughter***

Some people can weave  
stories out of dry  
willow branches –  
creating wicker fiction,  
thrones with velvet pillows

Some chisel tales from  
rugged sensualism  
chipping granite into  
wine  
squeezing stories from  
grapes  
sucking the marrow  
out of oak trees

Feathers fall from birds  
becoming pens  
taking flight  
across pages to retell myths  
about an apprentice  
who tripped  
splattering paint  
across the sky

**- Jennifer Frank, Beckman Laser Institute**



*Inspiration*, charcoal on paper  
Grace Sun, Class of 2008

### **Past**

Fingers outstretched to her face  
Suddenly, she  
Like an animal approached too quickly  
Pulls away  
as though she has been slapped  
He, surprised,  
Waits for a reason  
In vain. Again.  
He tries a line he's heard before  
*Everyone believes themselves  
To be doing good.  
Even the most depraved  
Have the best intentions.*

### **A pause**

Thick through a blanket of fog  
*Not so*, says she,  
Face turned away now  
There will be no reaching her.  
Eyes cast down  
Staring at her hands  
Remembering how,  
Wrought with anger  
They had pulled  
punched,  
twisted and torn.  
In these,  
she thinks,  
In these very hands  
I have found the rebuttal.

**- Caren Armstrong, Class of 2009**

*Lost in Hawaii*, oil on canvas  
Sheila Chan, Class of 2008



*Light*, ink on paper  
Shanda Gomes, Class of 2008

### ***El Anciano***

El hombre sentía  
Mirando a las manos  
Las lágrimas en los ojos  
Los pensamientos oscuros  
En el dolor de una vida perdida

Soy cubano él dijo  
No puedo ver mi país otra vez  
Existe sólo en mi mente  
Memorias de mi familia  
Memorias de mi vida útil

Ahora soy un hombre anciano  
Sufría por mi país, mi familia  
Pero soy viejo, nadie me ve  
Soy inútil como su mira a mi vida  
Pensando del pasado, preguntando ¿porqué?

- Patricia Lenahan, LCSW. LMFT,  
Family Medicine



## Dermatographism

I never was an artist,  
Until just six months ago.  
What the inspiration was?  
I am not quite sure I know.

Perhaps it was the lobster I saw,  
Resting on my plate.  
Or the shrimp I savored,  
Working magic as I ate.

Whatever the muse,  
This much is true.  
When the urge commands,  
There's not much else I can do.

But wield my brush  
And watch the red streaks grow.  
I had to come see you  
And my artistry show.

Please take the time  
And observe as I begin.  
My brushes, my fingers,  
My canvas, my skin.

- Grace Sun, Class of 2008

*\*Dermatographism: condition in which the skin becomes red and raised when the skin is scratched lightly or irritated.*

*Struggle*, oil pastel on canvas  
Tracy Slone, Class of 2007

## Sequential Teds

Sequential teds are not a row of  
inconsequential little men  
known to their everlasting humiliation  
by a trivializing diminutive –  
No, they are uncomfortable, scratchy  
calf-length “boots”  
unstylish white cotton Velcro design  
But as Nancy Sinatra might say  
Should she ever need to wear a pair,  
“These boots are made for walking!”  
or more accurately put,  
these boots are made to do  
the walking for you  
if you find yourself in the unfortunate position  
of being a patient  
in a hospital bed  
supine, confined,  
unable to do your own walking



Sequential teds are another  
great American invention  
fueled by that other great American discovery  
(I was about to say 'invention' but even  
we Americans leave a few things to God) electricity.  
As my nurse explained  
(she herself was Filipina)  
"When Americans find a problem  
(she didn't say death, suffering, anguish, despair,  
but I know these were included in the list –  
we Americans have these in our sights as well)  
they just fix it."

Once in the grip of  
the sequential teds –  
and this grip can convince you that given half a chance  
at least one of these teds could have been  
a real man –  
you walk without walking  
It's the abdominal exerciser  
lose weight while you sleep!  
come true at last!

Thanks to good old Yankee ingenuity –  
I knew we could do it –  
(death, pain, suffering finally erased)  
just a matter of time!  
And those sequential teds  
in their own inarticulate, heavy-handed way,  
do yeoman work  
Because who wants to go through  
the indignities  
not to mention the expert time and precious  
resources expended!  
of abdominal surgery for a  
complex endometrial sarcoma,  
make it out of the OR,  
past the morphine induced glow,  
past the headaches, nausea, clear liquid diet,  
pain, pain, pain,  
plastic-tasting food,  
determined cheerfulness of nurses,  
awkward conversations with the visiting well,  
constipation,  
resigned recognition in the eyes  
of your fellow travelers,  
existential despair –  
to be recovering for God's sake  
Doing your patriotic red white and blue best  
to get better  
overcome the odds, get back to being  
a productive member of society –  
only to be carried off unexpectedly one night by  
a random blood clot.

How un-American.

And that's why the teds are there  
While you sleep they walk, keeping you safe  
from yet one more vicious assault  
from that random, unpredictable universe that  
must have been invented in Europe  
(probably France)  
just one more un-American phenomenon we will  
surely soon put to rest alongside weapons of mass  
destruction, suicide bombers, Bin Laden, and  
lack of appreciation for the freedoms  
we've bestowed  
on yet another undeserving country  
After all, what is cancer really but a mass of  
unruly, violent, terrorist cells?

Hospitals are full of nifty devices  
like my good friends the sequential teds  
IV lines, monitors, bed rails,  
open-back hospital gowns  
They keep you safe  
and they keep you tame  
and any redblooded American is grateful for  
their vigilant presence  
guarding the destabilized perimeter

Still, lying in hospital  
at unguarded moments  
waiting for the pathology report  
to give a definitive ruling on  
the complex mass of unknown origin  
that will decide my life or death  
I sometimes dream  
of rising from my bed  
gently extricating from the determined  
embrace of the teds  
leaving gracefully behind the functional and  
humiliating hospital gown,  
the tethered cord of the IV drip  
the bleep of the monitor  
to roam the silent corridors  
of pain and suffering and death  
naked, unencumbered, free

- Johanna Shapiro, PhD  
Family Medicine



*Ollantaytambo*, photo  
Shari Atilano, Ophthalmology Research



*Untitled*, photo  
Daniel Gromis, Class of 2009



*Summer*, stained glass  
Lucero Zamudio, Medical Education

*Youthful Innocence*, acrylic on canvas  
Sarah Lopez, Class of 2008



*Machu Pichu, Peru*, photo  
Lisa Ehrensberger, Class of 2007





***Peds Onc Consult***

*Another Day in Paradise*, photo  
Hamidreza Torshizy, Class of 2007

It's late, on-call-tired  
we dash into a third floor room  
for a cross-cover page  
as always both ceiling-mounted TVs are on  
tuned to separate channels

we whisk past a preoccupied mother  
the boy standing there with those foreboding  
sparse wisps of hair  
infused with too many lines  
running from as many IV bags  
hanging starkly on a wheeled pole

we round a curtain to find  
a squad of posed action-figures  
resolutely standing guard  
strategically placed by their leader  
to ward off evil spirits

slumped rag-doll sideways  
a pale, pale, thin boy  
with dark-crusts, cracked lips  
blood slowly seeping from purple little bumps  
here and there

The shiner he sports  
you wish  
was from getting punched  
but it's not, it's

from the rock-bottom platelet count  
from the cancer  
from the treatment  
from the chromosome  
from the mutation  
from the virus  
that wriggled and jiggled and wiggled inside him

the mom calmly consents to the platelet transfusion  
which along with everything else tried through the night  
will not save him from bleeding out  
even till morning

**- Brian McMichael, Class of 2007**

## Poem for Joseph

You used to swim  
gliding deep to the smooth pool floor  
elegant,  
holding your breath,  
watching your boy shadow

the strange steel limb gone  
left behind for the moment  
in an empty locker room

Every morning your mother  
puts a sock over that cold metal

A drawing of a red car  
In crayon and marker  
(you drew one wheel different  
From the other)

Superheroes don't exist, you declare  
Matter of factly  
They're so fake  
When they fall, they get up right away  
You hate the sound of your body falling  
Steel hitting asphalt  
You wish for streets and sidewalks of  
soft silent carpet  
like here, you say.

The only person in the world  
That you've ever seen  
Who looks like you  
(other than your cat who died)  
Was a man in line at Mc Donald's

He said  
It's tough to take care of,  
Ain't it  
Boy?

*Dreaming*, charcoal on paper  
Sarah Lopez, Class of 2008

- Sarah Mourra, Class of 2008



*Continuum*, charcoal & pencil  
Jimmy Johannes, Class of 2009



***Awakened by Love***  
by Daniel Chun, Class of 2007

Head balding, face scruffy with two weeks of growth, the man sits motionless in his wheelchair, looking off into the distance. His arms are crossed on his lap. Head fixed, his eyes sometimes drift, following the occasional passerby. Pale and gaunt, his face emits an unusual grayness, making him stand out amidst the colorful background that lies behind him. Even the flowers appear to gleefully dance around him, mocking his immobility. Everything around him celebrates life as he deteriorates, decays and turns into ashes. The light blue gown brightens his face to a certain degree, but it too, appears to be losing its brilliance.

Suddenly his eyebrows rise. His face brightens and his eyes sparkle as he becomes fixed on something across the courtyard. A woman approaches him. Slowly she bends down and kisses him upon the forehead, gingerly stroking his face with the palm of her hand, cupping his cheek for a moment as he leans into it. She sits next to him and whispers something into his ear. A smile appears and the man is no longer gray but has become colored with emotion.

She strokes his head again, running her fingers through his scant hair.

Slightly lifting his hand, IV line moving with him, he rests it comfortably on her thigh.

Lost in each other's gaze, there exists an undeniable desire, a desire for each other beyond that of lust or attraction, but simply stemming from pure love. A tear is shed and another. Each reaches over and wipes the other's tear. Happiness and sadness shared, they enjoy each other's presence for the time that remains.

She cups his face again. And he kisses her hand. Straining and moving himself into a precarious position, the man leans over, risking stability for the one thing he desires most at the moment... a kiss from his love.

Smiling, with tears in her eyes, she rewards him for his efforts.

## ***Patient History***

You come to help from a country so far away  
So far away I only see it on TV  
You see a quiet boy sitting on an exam table in a free clínica  
I see wild eyes and a machete  
I see my hand on the pavement  
My shoes gone and my 3 pesos for food  
Gone  
Have you ever picked up  
one of your hands with the other?  
Trembling  
Do my quiet eyes tell the story of my clean, healed stump?  
Will I be with you years from now?  
Will I be with you in your doctor world so far away?  
Will my quiet eyes look at you  
Again  
from someone else?

- Dan Hoopes, Class of 2008

*Untitled*, photo  
Alissa Detz, Class of 2008







### ***Pine Cove***

Ladybug nurseries  
inside mounds of meadow grass  
sunbaked and humid  
spew hundreds of red specks into the  
thin, crisp, swollen sky.

After capture in popsicle cups  
baby lizards escape  
between bars of the homemade cage  
too wide to contain them.

Water striders skirt  
atop snow-melt waters  
of the quiet creek  
filled with promises  
of dams to be built  
and geodes to be found.

Smooth manzanita bark peels  
into paper-thin spirals  
hanging,  
not falling  
from the tree.

**- Sarah Blaschko, Class of 2007**

***Irreconcilable Differences***, acrylic & oil on canvas  
Tracy Stone, Class of 2007



***Untitled***, oil on canvas  
Mariam Naqvi, Class of 2009

## *To Carlie, Who Cried*

There are so many things I have not understood.  
She used to cry out, in the middle of the night  
with real tears, and reach for me  
when she was only three months old. I was so worried  
I took her to the doctor  
but the doctor sent me home.  
He said not to worry, you are still new at this.  
All the children cry.

Now, it is the grandmotherly pastor's wife who tells me  
To let it all out. It's okay  
to cry. Perhaps someday  
some good will come of all this.  
like that young man who wrote "Peace Like a River."  
After his whole family died in a tragic shipwreck,  
he sat down with his faith and a pen.  
His grief comforts so many.

But nineteen years later I am still new at this.  
My desperation does not come  
in iambic pentameter.  
It is not beautiful,  
it leaks out the corners of my mouth  
it thickens on the valves of my heart. I cry  
because I saw her come out of me in my own blood,  
which I gave her to eat and breathe

My own blood rots while I stand above her.  
There are so many things I have not understood.

- Meghann Kaiser, Class of 2006



*Mother and Child*, oil on canvas  
C. Gail Ryan, Class of 2006



*Evolution*, aluminum sculpture  
Gina Gajdos, Class of 2006



*Plaza de Espana, Sevilla, photo Janet Tsang, Class of 2007*

***The End of the Heartbird (A Bit of Nonsense)***

Hero waved his wizzletone  
and pulled back on the trigger stone,  
and thereby did the wizzle fly  
and catch the heartbird in the sky.

Astonished town folk ate and sang,  
and scraps were fed to dogs named Fang.  
Yet no one seemed to have their fill,  
and all were anxious for the kill.

Said Hero "sign the bottom line  
and wizzletones will soon be thine",  
and Hero, he grew fat and rich  
while wizzles flew from every ditch.

And so the heartbird met its end,  
though wizzlers at their meets pretend  
they may have caught a sight of one  
at close of day, at set of sun.

- Stanley Calderwood MD, Pediatrics

## Ideations

Some days  
I want to lie quiet on the pavement,  
crush my head into the concrete with the heel of my hand,  
pick the eggshell pieces of skull from my blistered brain,  
s h u d d e r,  
and cease to be.

- Meghann Kaiser, Class of 2006



*Serenity & Solitude (series),*  
oil pastel on paper  
Steve Samawi, Class of 2008



*Berries à la Carte,* photo  
Vicky Millay, Class of 2009

*Sky Through Canyon*, photo  
Emily Stein, Class of 2006



***Run On***

Oxygen deprived sinew,  
vies for my attention  
with God's tree,  
stretching 100 feet  
and 100 years  
to touch untouchable sky  
and leave at heaven's gate  
gift of precious emerald green.

I want to stop,  
but I touch the tree  
and run on

- Stanley Calderwood, MD  
Pediatrics

*Burning Acacia*, photo  
Michael Habicht Class of 2008



*Face of the Masai*, photo  
Michael Habicht, Class of 2008

*Untitled*, photo  
Daniel Gromis, Class of 2009







### ***Pantoum for Autumn***

*De Côté*, oil on canvas  
C. Gail Ryan, Class of 2006

Autumn is upon us and already the trees are turning  
Red and yellow sparks ignite among the green  
The badge of another summertime adjourning  
a warm ushering toward the dark winter foreseen.

Red and yellow sparks ignite among the green  
and the bright summer sun smolders burnished gold  
a warm ushering toward the dark winter foreseen  
with a frenzied gust of wind we watch the year unfold.

The bright summer sun smolders burnished gold  
and windows glow warmly beneath the darkened eaves  
with a frenzied gust of wind we watch the year unfold  
and flutter away with the last of the fallen leaves.

Windows glow warmly beneath the darkened eaves  
As the daylight diminishes the shadows grow long  
and flutter by with the last of the fallen leaves  
Singing in perfect harmony Autumn's bittersweet song.

The daylight diminishes and the shadows grow long  
the badge of another summertime adjourning  
We sing in perfect harmony Autumn's bittersweet song  
The season is upon us and already the trees are turning.



*Preconceived Anatomy*, charcoal & pencil  
Pooya Javidan, Class of 2009







## **Seventy**

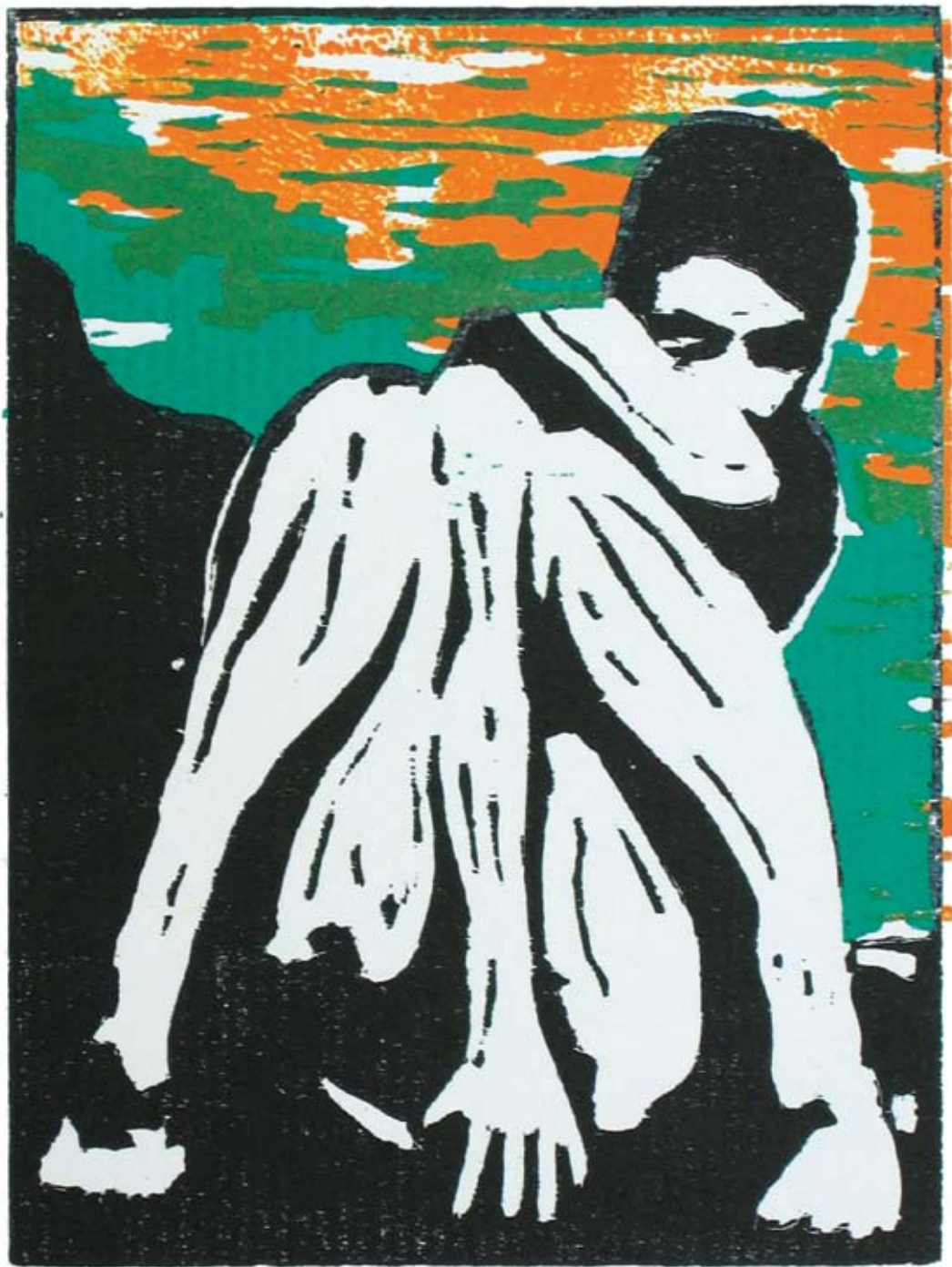
*Hot Monk, Chiang-Mai, Thailand, photo  
Akiva Kahn, Class of 2009*

Though my vision is blurred  
I needn't see to remember you  
dark and fresh  
like an avocado,  
nature's mayonnaise.

Young with promises of love and  
overflowing with desire  
I wanted to be with you  
a lifetime,  
later now,  
with sparse grey hair and cane  
articulate in spite of trembling lips,  
more distinguished perhaps  
at last, the older man.

And a kiss on the cheek was just the beginning then.

- Henri Colt, MD, Internal Medicine



*Influence Awakening*, woodcut print  
Lauren Cheung, Class of 2009

## ***Power***

I crave the sense.  
I dress the part.  
I am. I fake.  
I lie. I act.

I walk my head  
held high my breasts  
exposed under a black bra  
and white unbuttoned shirt.

You ate it up.  
I controlled your lust  
And then, in your  
dark cold black room

You stripped my clothes  
You stripped my power  
You ate me up.  
My act is flawed.

My heart is racing  
As I push my  
breasts back into the white  
bra which shows

through under the thin  
pale blue sweater  
I use to hide the marks  
you left on me.

- Akiva Kahn, Class of 2009

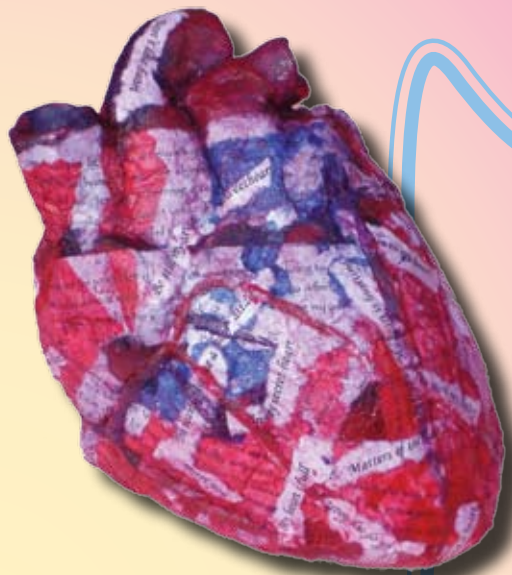
*The Sun's Gravity*, photo  
Ryan Roza, Class of 2008



## **Your Body**

Your body  
So small and frail  
Effortlessly splits under my pushing hand  
As I cut and saw and move  
Waiting to find something I will recognize  
But you leave me more confused than satisfied  
Because everything seems to be missing  
Or else, everything has joined into one  
One soaked layer of human  
Glued together by that noxious substance  
And I feel so guilty  
Not knowing if I appreciate you.  
But I keep trying  
And so I cut  
And all I find are the chambers of the heart  
Because the space inside is made of nothing.  
I need to find supportive, understanding eyes  
I look around the cold white cell  
And for a second  
All I can see is how handsome he is in those scrubs  
But as I'm walking through the cold bright whiteness to the other side  
I notice myself staring at your neighbor  
And I smile  
Because her body is made of tropical coral  
And it's beautiful.

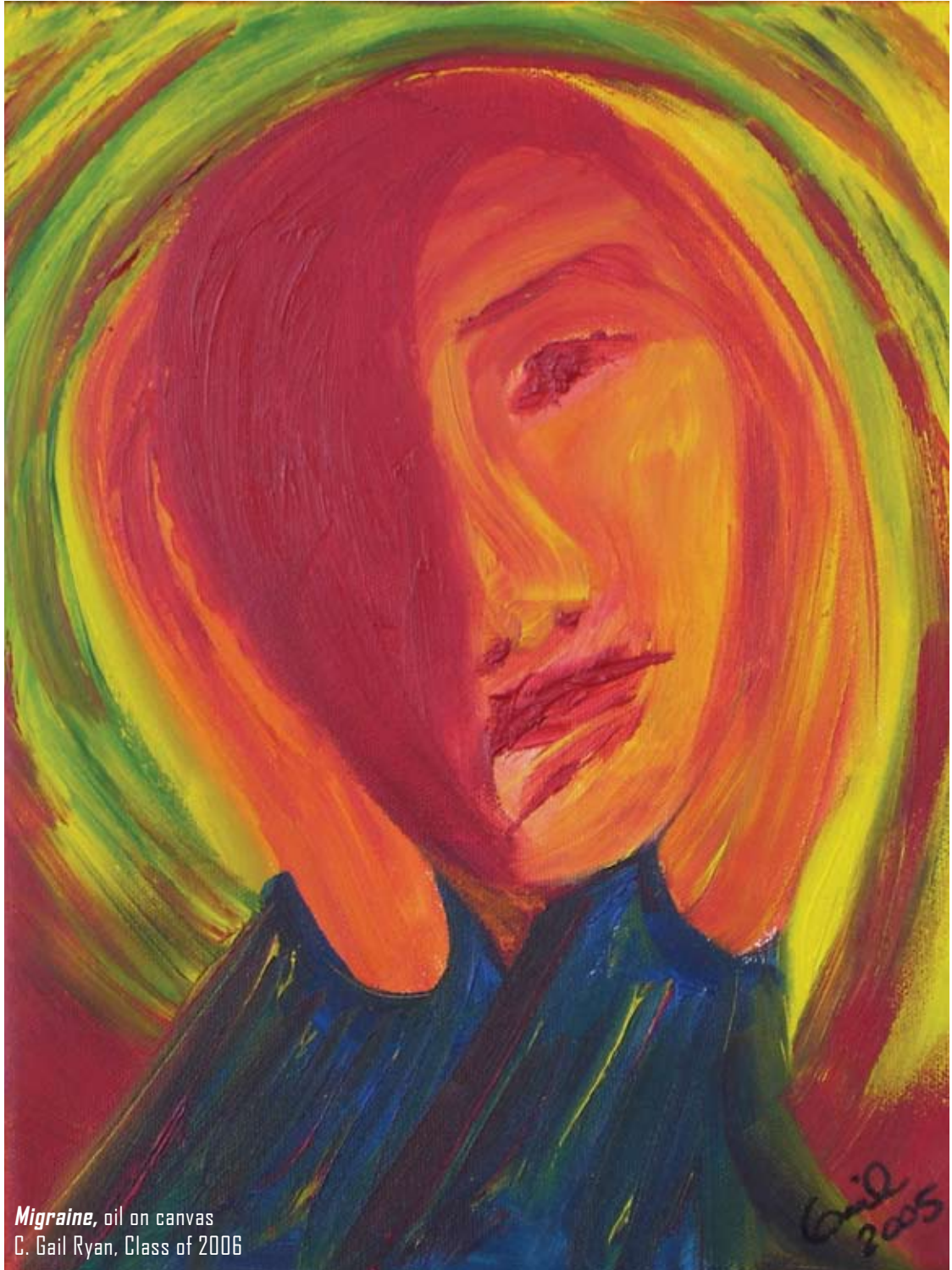
**- Vicky Millay, Class of 2009**



*Reflection*, sculpture  
Caren Armstrong, Class of 2009



*In My Skin*, oil on paper  
Tracy Slone, Class of 2007



*Migraine*, oil on canvas  
C. Gail Ryan, Class of 2006

## Learning to Fly

I saw a bird today,  
It lay dead  
On the pavement.  
Poor thing,  
Never did learn to fly.

I saw a nest today,  
All the babies but one  
Had gone.  
The mother sat,  
Waiting patiently.

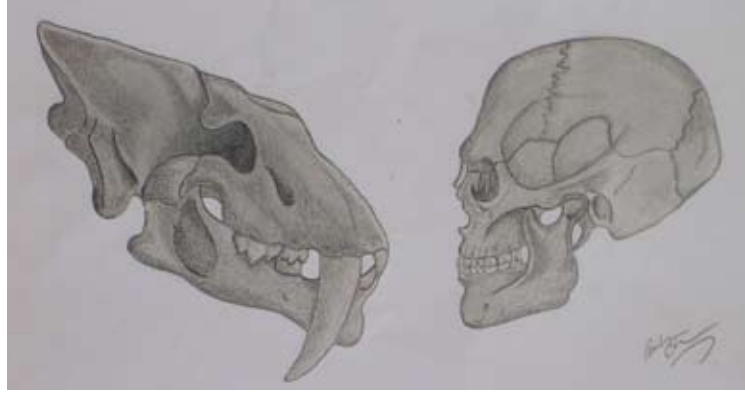
I saw her  
As she slowly beckoned  
Him to the edge,  
He was afraid,  
And came to peer out  
At the world hesitantly.

I saw him begin  
To trust and open up,  
A little bit.  
As she encouraged him,  
To step closer without fear,  
He looked at her lovingly.

I saw him fall  
As she pushed him,  
Pushed him over the edge.

He had trusted  
And she let him fall  
Without a net.

I saw the dazed  
Look of confusion  
And immense fear  
In his eyes  
As he closed up.



*The Brainsy and the Brawny*, pencil  
Andrew Clark, Ecology & Evolutionary Biology

I saw her sorrow,  
For she was only trying  
To teach him  
How to fly!  
She wanted to show him  
The world full of life,  
She wanted to teach him.

I saw him die  
A little bit  
As he fell,  
Although she dove  
To catch her little  
Love.  
He never trusted again.

I saw him grow up  
Full of fear  
Of what lay over the edge  
Of that nest.  
His world was enclosed  
In that small bed.

I saw the gardener  
Come by with his ax.  
He sat down to drink his beer,  
Then proceeded to cut the  
tree down.

I saw him plummet  
As his world fell apart.  
His mother was now too weak  
to catch his fall.  
Poor thing,  
Never did learn to fly.

I saw him die  
As he hit the ground,  
Destroyed by his fear,  
He lost it all.

I saw her crying,  
For her lost little Love,  
To whom she'd tried to show  
The world, the beauty.

I see you today,  
A little bird who is afraid.  
I know you,  
you who look with distrust at me,  
I only wanted to show you  
How to fly,  
As I once again,  
Try to do the same.

- Jaroslava Teet,  
Orthopaedic Surgery

### **Catching Comprehension**

I am referring to her in the masculine.  
Too late to catch myself,  
I can't remember the words to apologize,  
I hope she understands.

Legs slouch spread-eagled, feet propped up.  
Knees bend awkward at eye level with me  
with the drape strung out between them  
fluttering in time with the air conditioner  
like the makeshift blanket stage of a second grade puppet show.  
I cower in the corner opposite,  
beneath a burden of unrelenting English.  
I know the words for head and back, but  
Pap Smear?  
*Cómo se dice la cosa de que viene los bebés?*

As she cranes her head forward,  
her face wobbles into view.  
She is re-enacting her youngest son's birth.  
I can't tell what happened when, or why, but  
her face squints and pooches with the pains of communication.  
My interpretation insufficient for medical advice,  
my hand comes to rest on her right ankle.  
The sticky residue of fractured phrases  
And sweat, invests my palm.  
*No sé, Señora.*  
I hope she understands.



*Untitled*, Lithograph print, collage, mixed media  
Emma Taylor, patient UCIMC



*Lake Shrine*, oil on canvas  
Vicky Millay, Class of 2009



## **Abre los ojos y cierra las piernas** **- Abuela's wisdom**

*for my grandma libertad, may she rest in peace,  
for her good advice, for her contagious laughter,  
and for teaching me to count up to ten in spanish*

### **5pm after a 10-hour workday**

she lies down  
opens her legs  
her eyes tightly shut  
she prays  
*santa mar ía, ten piedad de mi...*  
in broken spanish  
he asks her to come closer  
no warning  
no words of comfort  
he penetrates  
pain pierces through her spread legs  
her eyes tighten further  
he pokes, prods  
using his hands roughly on her body  
then he is done  
he walks out of the room  
never to be seen again  
she lies there still  
legs widespread  
eyes shut  
wondering what happened  
wondering if he will return  
wondering if he will call

### **6:20pm after feeding her 80-year old mother**

she sits cross-legged on the couch  
to watch las noticias en el 34  
her eyes widen at the news of car pile-up on  
the freeway  
she utters  
*que la sombra de san pedro cubra a mis hijos*  
she calls her daughter immediately to make  
sure she is ok

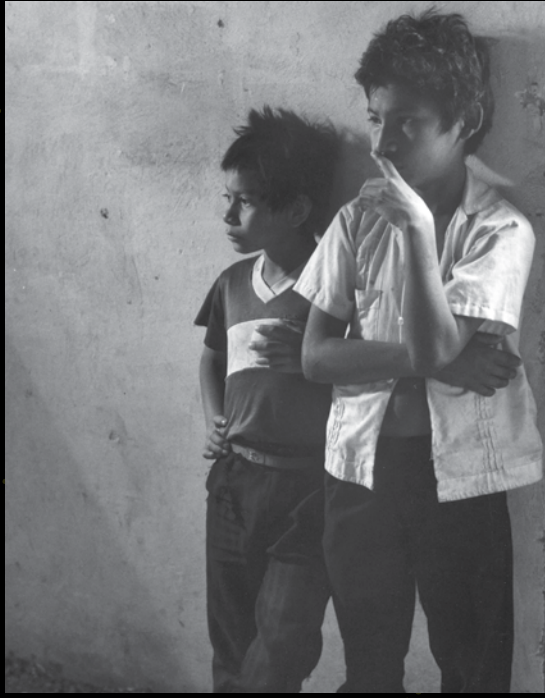
*mi'ja nomás me dejó con las patas en el aire*

she complains  
how the doctor was a "chino"  
and she couldn't understand his spanish  
her daughter reminds her not all asians  
are chinese  
she bitterly recounts  
having been left alone in the room for 15 minutes  
with her legs in stirrups  
with pain  
without explanation

### **am and pm over a 65-year span**

her widespread legs  
have born three children  
walked across many borders  
sold bread on the streets to support a family  
danced mambo in támpico  
marched in the union parades in méxico  
legs with hips that still sway  
even though they are many quinceañeras old  
her widespread legs  
have cradled a dead child at birth  
walked out on an abusive husband  
stood firmly while he abandoned her pregnant  
buried yet another one  
her widespread legs  
have overcome bone cancer  
*gracias a santo niño de atocha*  
stood in front of an assembly line for over 20  
years  
carried her grandchildren to sleep  
her widespread legs  
could have crushed a disrespectful doctor's head  
like a boa constrictor  
but instead,  
she closes her eyes  
kneels to pray  
for the saints to  
keep her children safe  
keep her job  
keep her away from the doctor's office

**- Erica Lubliner, UCI-SOM Staff &  
Post Baccalaureate Pre-Medical Program**



*Untitled (series)*, photos  
Greg Chinn, MD/PhD Candidate



## Evening

You and I  
wandered along pebbled streets  
in worn out tennis shoes  
with a guidebook and  
a Coca Cola with two straws  
Looking for a garden.

While our drowsy legs traced  
sinuous paths  
around the city's pulse,  
horizon swallowed sun

We asked for directions,  
our tongues choking on foreign words  
under rusting street lamps  
understanding

(at last)

the towering walls of the streets held the garden  
like the sea holds a delicate island  
forgotten by maps

Through metal bars we watched mist drift  
over well-behaved rows of roses,  
hydrangea,  
and fecund lemon trees

A monk strolled soundlessly  
on the trimmed wet grass  
We watched him touch the blossoms  
with his white palms

You held me with thick brown hands  
and breathed into my mouth  
and I breathed into yours  
until we could not breathe

Anymore.

- Sarah Mourra, Class of 2008



*Tears*, oil on canvas  
Mariam Naqvi, Class of 2009

## **Mulberries**

Mitch and I stand on the roof of the old barn,  
nearly slipping on the loose shingles,  
and eat mulberries pulled from a branch that  
dips and waves over us in the breeze.

I know I will go home marked with the juice of sin,  
but I will also have a little jar filled with all  
the sunlight wrought into purple darkness of joy  
that I couldn't stuff into my mouth this July day.

The mulberry branches gently sweep red gravel from the roof,  
growing out to touch the back of the barn  
as its spine slowly sags.

Next to the barn stands the headless windmill,  
a farmer's Eiffel Tower, where the wind hisses  
memories of pumping water and lighting the predawn milking.

This farm is rented out now,  
the house a perch for migratory students  
who ruffle their feathers and depart each season.

Away! Away to the horizon march the rows of green, knife-edged corn  
with smaller rows of pale kernels concealed in raspy sheaths.  
Small and tart, they yearn for the sweet heaviness of August heat,  
Little knowing they are pearls to be cast before swine.

Purple-smearred, Mitch and I wade through the rustling green sea  
that sneaks out of winter's treacherous muck each spring.  
The leaves part and we see our apartment buildings  
marching shoulder to shoulder with the corn.

We hurry back to number 1312 and number 1504,  
to dream of firm-breasted young women, working life, rock and roll,  
smooth cars gliding through the night, and war.  
Restlessly, we await our turn.

**- Richard Keslerwest,  
VA Medical Center, Internal Medicine**



*Flesh & Bones*, watercolor & pencil  
Daniel Chen, Class of 2009



*Incarceration*, photo  
Ryan Roza, Class of 2008



## ***Collage of a Chinese-American Girl***

I am a piece of paper, dipped  
in simmering cherry blossoms  
my Chinese blood oozing up the page,  
colonizing corners  
peering through every  
word that I inscribe.

And pasted on top, pieces  
of American independence  
snippets of "intellectual exploration and vitality,"  
arranged hastily, haphazardly  
loose edges flapping,  
flailing amongst the sighs.

In darkness I lie in bed alone  
with my legs strewn, black hair limp, disarrayed.  
Dreaming of a comet that will snatch me up  
scattering light over a lingering depression in the mattress.

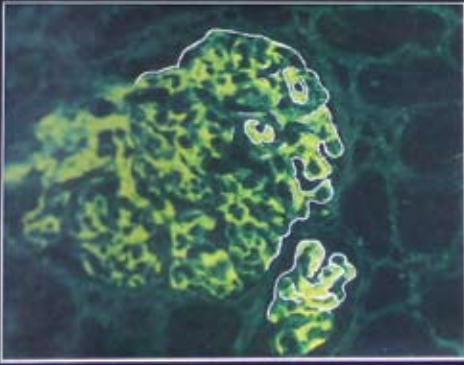
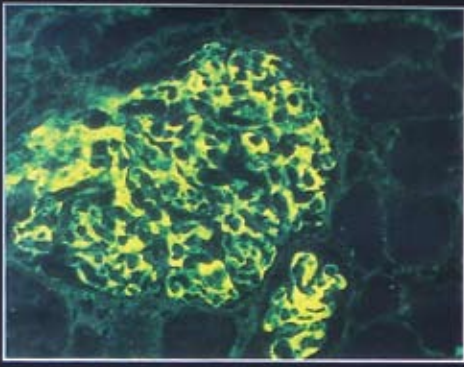
- Sheila Chan, Class of 2008



*Wanchun Buddha, Jingshan Park,*  
watercolor on paper  
Megan Stephenson, Class of 2008

*Schizophrenia,* photo  
Edan Wernik, Class of 2007





*Lupus*, glossy white pen on paper  
Sayeh Beheshti, Class of 2006

### **Science in Life**

*The eternal mystery of the world is its  
comprehensibility*

- Albert Einstein 1936

The goal is to see, experience,  
different forms, colors, shapes  
understand  
reflections, intensities, shadows.

Learn, explore, think  
have the exterior  
illuminated  
by knowledge of the interior.

See in the depths  
of a flower's red color  
processes  
through which pigment is made.

Enhance the brilliance  
of violet, blue, yellow, and green by  
concepts  
of light waves, transmission, refraction.

Magnify the glory of bright twinkling stars  
each with a different, delicate hue, through  
discovery  
of elements, nebulas, quasars, pulsars.

Expand the grandeur of high mountains,  
deep canyons, winding rivers by  
knowledge  
of crust movement, uplift, erosion, eon.

- **Moyra Smith, MD, PhD**  
**Pediatrics**

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Joshua Waltzman  
Audio Editor

Lauren Cheung  
Associate Audio Editor

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*Simple As*  
*What is Left*  
- Nick Binder

*Judas and Me*  
- Reuben Paul

*Green Signs*  
- Adam Kaplan

*The Bubble*  
- The Irvine Fever

*Nocturne in B,*  
*Op.62 Nr.1-Chopin*  
- Sheila Chan

...and more!





# UCI School of Medicine

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