

SCOTTISH MEDICAL HUMANITIES CONFERENCE

Image created by Carah Addison-Smyth
when a third year medical student in Aberdeen

WED 14th June 2023

ALL CHANGE!

New directions for Scottish Medical Humanities. Exploring the process, outcomes and possibilities through scholarship and creativity.

Hosted at University of Aberdeen

FREE networking event,
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WORKSHOP - Student submissions: exhibition, performance and presentations.

An opportunity for Scottish healthcare, arts and humanities students to present their work.

Facilitated by Dr Sarah Collins (University of Edinburgh) and Dr Kathryn Steven (University of St Andrews)

Stories and Biographies

Angus Bartlett

The story of your piece:

The bottle's creation stemmed from my realisation that existing hydration solutions for individuals with frailty and/or reduced mobility are often infantilizing or overly invasive.

A modular product that could accommodate for the diverse needs of users with individual requirements seemed to be the answer. As such the bottle is adaptable, with a variety of straw lengths, modular holders, and grips.

Consider an individual with a chronic illness prone to occasional flare-ups. During periods of relative stability, she can utilise the bottle with a short straw. However, when flare-up occur, she can easily customise the bottle to suit her specific needs. This may involve utilising a table or wall-mounted holder along with a longer straw.

The design challenges the prevailing trend of overly clinical product design. Instead, it embraces vibrant colours, user-centric form, and a socially inclusive nature that allows it to be used by anyone, irrespective of whether they identify as having a disability.

Short biography:

I'm Gus; a product design student graduating from Edinburgh University.

It was only last year that my interest in design for health truly took hold.

That was almost entirely due to the vast amounts of waste I had seen being produced by the health industry. I couldn't get my head around how such an industry, profoundly affected by environmental degradation and its detrimental impact on public health, could continue to produce such waste. As such, my mission became to explore the design possibilities of healthcare's green future.

Projects like BAYU, aim to explore sustainable ways in which healthcare can develop over the critical period of progression that we find ourselves in. This passion for the environment lies in my outdoor background which I spent surfing, sailing, and hiking. I am dedicated to translating this passion into tangible solutions that can reshape the environmental impact of healthcare.

Emily Beaney

The story of your piece:

'Deviant' is an experimental moving-image, sound and installation project that seeks to represent lived experiences of endometriosis. Addressing health inequalities and 'diagnostic imperialism', which exerts power over who has access to support and who does not, this project examines the label of 'deviance' when applied to women's bodies, using endometriosis as a potent example of pain being side-lined as deviance.

The 16mm moving image work was developed collaboratively, through workshops exploring sound, movement and form, with community group *The EndoWarriors*. Exploring themes of stigma, chronic pain and collective care, unpredictable rhythms of endometriosis experience inform, mark and interrupt the filmic body. Communicating with the senses, sharing knowledge with, through and between thinking bodies, *Deviant* aims to reveal the internal sensations, thoughts and emotions of endometriosis experience that remain hidden / unheard.

Short biography:

Emily Beaney is an artist, filmmaker and PhD researcher at Edinburgh College of Art (supported by SGSAAH). Her practice explores themes of radical care, control and health inequalities, working collaboratively with family, friends and community groups to draw upon lived experiences of illness and disability. These projects centre upon embodied knowledge and utilise experimental and performative film processes to communicate with the senses and highlight our embodied materiality and interdependence.

Jennifer Bolln

The story of your piece:

This is a landscape set in the shape of the uterus we have come to study in anatomy textbooks, but it is untouched by human influence, reflecting the fact that women's bodies for centuries have been under-represented in medicine. The ecosystem within is escaping outwith the set boundaries which not only demonstrates the medical condition the piece is named after, Endometriosis, but also hints at the notion that historically, women have been defined by possessing a uterus, though this idea is now beginning to shift. The clouds can be seen parting, revealing a bright sky, which mirrors the hope for a brighter future for women's health. I chose to represent Endometriosis in this painting as it is a medical condition which has only recently been officially recognised and is in some ways a flagship for highlighting the need to change the historical pattern of women being ignored in medicine.

Short Biography:

I have always been interested in the medical humanities and often found myself devouring medical related content in different mediums, such as film and literature, long before I applied to study medicine here at the University of Aberdeen. During lockdown, I realised my passion for expressing myself creatively, one such way being painting, and have since looked for ways to incorporate that with studying. Being part of the university medical humanities society and plans to intercalate next year studying a BSc Med Sci in Medical Humanities are two such ways, along with creating and displaying this piece here today. The creation of this piece was inspired by a triad of events: reading a book discussing the topic of women's health throughout history (Unwell Women by Elinor Cleghorn); my placement in obstetrics and gynaecology as a medical student; and also a personal encounter receiving healthcare as a woman.

Tzu-Yuan Chao

The story of your piece:

"Always try to keep a patch of sky above your life" --- Marcel Proust

People have different interpretations of the sky. Some people said it means grace, and others said it's passion. For me, it's the moment. Engaging in nature is the most significant moment that I can truly feel alive and live in the moment without taking any anticipation from others. While standing on the top of mountains, I can feel the boundlessness of time and space, which always makes me feel courageous and humble.

I'm glad I'm standing here, in Scotland, where Scottish people's hospitality and spectacular natural landscapes can profoundly evoke my emotion to make me feel and reflect. It's a very personal emotion that is extremely hard for me to express publicly. However, it's a powerful strength for people suffering from facing and being aware of themselves. So, I want to share this space, representing my most precious, peaceful, and secret mental space and where I can always find the gentle but powerful strength with suffering people and encourage them to engage in nature to find their inner-peaceful power.

Short Biography:

I am an ordinary girl from Taiwan, and I am studying for my master's degree in service design at GSA now. Unfortunately, I don't have the designers' creativity or artists' unique skills to create abstract artefacts. However, my magic power is to identify people's talents, inspire and coordinate them, make people gain a sense of achievement, and simultaneously make a more positive social impact. I positioned myself as a strategic, humanistic, and cross-functional innovation practitioner, embracing uncertainties and constantly seeking difference. Working on different projects and with partners strengthened my belief that doing the right things can benefit society greatly. Still, it's equally relevant to use the right mindset and methodology during the process to do things right. As a result, I believe self-awareness, reflection, and realization are crucial for maintaining wellness and improvement. I appreciate that Scotland's new life and environment profoundly enhance my sense to reunderstand myself.

Aminta Charansiriwongs

The story of your piece:

Surgeons are often regarded by the public as experts in their field, invincible machines that fight off pathology when taking hold of a scalpel in the operating room. It is the countless hours of hard work, sacrifices, and failures, however, that are perhaps not as widely known. This digital illustration depicts both sides to life of a surgeon through focusing close-up on a scalpel. Scenes of the good and the glorious are within in the background, with lesser-known adversities and hardships reflected in the shine of the scalpel. The cooler tones used in the scalpel reflection, as compared to warmer tones in the background, aim invoke thoughts of how – in some individuals – the process of becoming a surgeon means, ultimately, being more cold and less human.

Short Biography:

Aminta, who goes by the name Mimi, is a final year medical student at the University of Aberdeen. Growing up in Bangkok, Thailand, she has had a passion for medicine since young, but has also enjoyed the arts and humanities. Throughout her time in medical school, she has always stayed in touch with her creative side, attending online courses for digital illustration, a media she has found to be fun and easy to pick up. She intends to pursue a career in Neurosurgery in the future, but is determined to ensure that she does not lose her creativity and humanity along the way.

Tom Gibson

The story of your piece:

The work is a collaborative piece between professor of immunology and microbiology Dr Donal Wall at Glasgow University and myself. The piece explores the visual elements of his academic paper "Microbiome derived carnitine mimics as previously unknown mediators of gut-brain axis communication". Over the course of a month I reconstructed the paper and made a physical and digital collage utilising the printed word, medical scans, and data graphs to create a coherent yet complex print that features the entire academic paper as the backing for the visual elements. Once the work was completed it was signed and editioned (of which there are three) by both Dr Donal Wall and myself.

Short Biography:

Tom Gibson is a conceptual artist that utilises visual media and process art within his work to explore and question ideas of existence, identity, and the connection between the internal and external self. His work touched base with schools of thought of existentialism, semantics, and abstraction to attempt an understanding of the nature of life, reality, and purpose whilst gravitating towards absurdist methodologies. Tom is concerned with posing, rather than answering, questions, putting his focus on investigating the status behind normality, subjectivity, and bias.

Eimear Kinsella

The story of your piece:

Trap (2019) is a sculptural installation displaying non-visible references to the behaviours and qualities related to 'living'. The Trypanosoma brucei virus causes the deadly disease 'Sleeping Sickness', which is transmitted to humans through the bite of the tsetse fly. In T.Brucei research, detecting the virus is tricky as it constantly moves, mutates and disguises itself amongst red blood cells. *Trap* mimics the virus' nature by tricking the audience that a fly is trapped and trying to escape from the domes. Perceptions of movement, communication and living agency are stimulated through the buzzing sounds of the restless tsetse fly. The subject of the artwork is informed by research at the lab of Prof. Michael A. J Ferguson, the School of Life Sciences, University of Dundee, and made with the cooperation of researcher Zhe Ji.

Short Biography:

My name is Eimear Kinsella. I am an artist, a researcher and a bio-imagineer. My practice and research explore biological art at the intersection between art and science, fact and fiction, and nature and culture. As part of my current research, I have created three artworks as representations of ongoing research at the School of Medical Science at Dundee University and the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition at the University of Aberdeen. I have a Bachelor of Design Textiles Art and Artefact degree from the National College of Art and Design, Ireland.

Chloe Lee

The story of your piece:

My work centres around the customs of traditional Chinese funerals and the central concept of the afterlife. I wanted to connect the concept of an afterlife to organ donation as a physical representation of 'life after death'. My pieces represent traditional Chinese burial customs including experimentation with techniques used to make lanterns and their symbolism of a journey of a spirit into the afterlife. The material choice juxtaposes the mechanical strength of the metal to the delicacy of the tissue paper, alluding to the fragility of life and the power of organ donation. The paper-folded organs were created using joss paper, or 'spirit' money, which is burned in funeral ceremonies to bring fortune to the deceased in the afterlife. Their use in creating three-dimensional anatomical pieces represents this exchange of organ donation as an invaluable gift that can occur at the end of one's physical existence.

Short Biography:

As a student of six years in Aberdeen studying Medicine, I have had opportunities to explore medicine through a different lens through the study of medical humanities. My appreciation for holistic medicine and the associated complexities of well-rounded patient care has grown with my techniques to explore the human form through embroidery and sculptural work. As a student, you learn human anatomy in great detail working with models and images of varying scales; my techniques to understand and study the human form creatively are reflected in my small-scale art which frees my work from the limitation of complex anatomical details. The university course is traditionally very structured and rigid, yet expressive work through different art media has been transformational in balancing my understanding of science-based medicine with the cultural and spiritual dimensions important to patient care.

Wing Lam Joyce Lo

The story of your piece:

Primary observational digital painting of 2 women and a man, named "Clock, Time". This art piece I've created focuses on cancer health issues. In the abstract realm of a clock entwined with health illness, time becomes a vessel of transformation. Each tick and tock resonates with resilience, reminding us that every moment is an opportunity for healing, growth, and the pursuit of well-being. As the hands move, they paint a tapestry of hope, strength, and the unwavering spirit of those navigating the complexities of health challenges. It serves as a constant companion, whispering that even in the face of adversity, every passing moment holds the potential for resilience, strength, and the capacity to find beauty amidst the challenges. Creating art for the cancer issue fosters a sense of unity and community. This shared experience within the piece cultivates empathy, understanding, and a collective determination to support those affected by the disease. By creating and appreciating art, we stand together in the fight against cancer, offering hope and encouragement to those who need it most.

Short Biography:

Joyce is currently a year 1 graphic design student of the University of Edinburgh. She is a student who is pursuing a dual passion for graphic design and art therapies. As a graphic design student, Joyce possesses an innate ability to transform ideas into visually stunning creations. To her, art is also a source of self-esteem, gaining praise or criticism, devolving this sense of self-confidence through arts. Simultaneously, Joyce has developed a profound interest in the therapeutic power of art. She recognizes the immense potential of using artistic expression to promote healing, personal growth, and emotional well-being. Fascinated by the field of art therapies, she's delved deep into studying the psychological and physiological benefits of creative engagement. Using art as a means to uplift and inspire individuals facing physical or emotional challenges. Through Joyce's unique combination of graphic design and art therapies, she aspires to bridge the gap between visual communication and emotional well-being. With Joyce's interdisciplinary approach and understanding of the therapeutic potential of art, she is determined to inspire and heal others to her journey to personal growth.

Laura McConville

The story of your piece:

In the UK, it is estimated that 1/4 pregnancies end in loss during pregnancy or birth and 1/5 pregnancies ended in miscarriage. Even with the growing public discourse, many parents still long for their losses to be acknowledged in a more tangible way. Yet, these spaces have not been visualised internally.

A memorial translated through the interior. A repository of names, dates and stories of loss, guides the user through moments of reflection, contemplation and understanding. Solas is for those who feel they have experienced grief as a result of pregnancy loss in the present day and/or in the past. This project fills a gap as such a space currently does not exist. The memorial is housed in the last remaining building of the old Royal Victoria Hospitals, Edinburgh. SOLAS presents the visitor with a walk through of the bare bones of one's grief, adapted through delicate framework. Within, visitors are welcomed to write a scroll then stored within The Archive, giving an opportunity to revisit.

Short Biography:

I am a creative and highly curious Interior Designer with an avid interest in sustainable design that places importance upon the wellbeing of the user. I am a strong advocate for positioning sustainability in mainstream design culture whilst placing social issues as a priority. I decided to challenge my design abilities in my final year of my degree by addressing an issue that often goes unnoticed. Only a few years ago, my eldest sister had an ectopic pregnancy, resulting in a decrease in her mental health state due to feeling as though she had nowhere to go to grieve. Having grown up surrounded by a culture that turns to materialisation as memorialisation, I grew interested in the concept of how we could apply this to other matters that generally go unnoticed, such as pregnancy loss.

Zohra Malik

The story of your piece:

My piece is a semi-abstract painting using acrylic paints, crayon and felt tip on board. The piece is based on my experiences of trying to learn and understand medicine being dyslexic and having ADHD in comparison to studying medicine whilst on ADHD treatment. The inspiration for this piece was the difference I observed in appearance of notes I made with and without Ritalin. I aim to contrast the chaotic, stressful, painful, yet more dynamic experience of studying without Ritalin compared to the efficient and focused state of mind that these drugs can induce, yet simultaneously the loss of personality and emotional dullness that accompanies it. Through this, I aim to discuss the benefits of such medications in allowing one to be able to navigate a highly demanding course such as medicine, as well as the sacrifices involved.

Short Biography:

I am a medical student in my fifth year at Edinburgh University. I was first introduced to medical humanities through my intercalation when I studied Anthropology and Sociology of Medicine which I really enjoyed. I have always loved drawing and painting and since coming to university have found it to be a relaxing escape from the stresses of placement and exams. Before starting medical school, I studied Fine Art in London for one year where I explored migratory processes through miniature painting, film and installation. Since starting medical school, I have undertaken courses in abstract and landscape painting. I hope that in the future I find space in my career to combine the skills and knowledge from my art education with those of my medical education.

Aphia Millar

The story of your piece:

This story piece was inspired by my research into the Genetically Modified Babies CRISPR trial. I found the topic fascinating and decided to write this piece as a way of gathering my thoughts. Although it may be perceived as a dystopian society, the reality is that this research, in the aim of creating genetically modified babies, has already begun. Through the humour and irony, I hope the seriousness of the topic is still conveyed and leaves the reader with their own profound thoughts.

Short biography

My name is Aphia Millar and I am a 4th year medical student at the University of Aberdeen. Writing has also been something I am very passionate about. Joining medical school I often found it hard to continue this creative outlet but throughout the Humanities course I was immersed back into my love for story telling. Medicine is often portrayed as a scientific, ridged and almost cold degree, yet I truly believe the art form comes with compassion towards helping people; considering the person and not just the disease. Humanities, whether it be writing, art or music should be strongly celebrated in medicine and the degree should never take away creativity, but instead, creativity should enhance the degree.”

Fiona Muir

The story of your piece:

This piece is a reflection on my time at University of Edinburgh - a university that has a strong history of innovative neuroscience research, was the first British university to allow women to study medicine and is where I am currently a postgrad research student. Scotland's ethos of creativity and storytelling has become more and more evident as I interact with different communities and learn of current policies and initiatives. By entering this world, I continually see deep connections between medicine, health, science, research, art, and creativity.

Collage was used to capture this intersection, overlap and weaving together of multifaceted layers. The materials used for collaging were items I have collected over my time here. The watercolour allowed for bold colors to contrast the black and white of traditional paradigms. This piece also interfaces with the natural world and explores the boundless interior world. At the centre is a neuron, the source of connection within us and between us.

Short biography:

My lifelong curiosity toward science and creativity has led me to University of Edinburgh to pursue an MScR in Health Humanities and Arts. Here, I lead incisive research into how an art-based approach reconceptualizes the dementia care experience beyond traditional paradigms. Specifically, through a printmaking workshop and individual interviews, participants in my study are creators of a new evidence base of accessible, embodied knowledge. The workshop and following display of artwork will facilitate important conversations around caring for people living with dementia.

I received my Bachelor of Science from Emory University in Neuroscience and Behavioral Biology where I studied the complexities of biological mechanisms and was fascinated by the juxtaposition of the body's fragility and resilience. Recognizing the balance between care for the person along with treatment of biology, my goal is to return to a clinical setting as a Physician Associate with the commitment to integrating creativity and healthcare.

Alice Quigley

The story of your piece:

The Music Box

There is no current cure for Alzheimer's, but medications are available to help symptoms. One of the most efficient ways to treat Alzheimer's is a combination of pharmacological support and safely designed environments. Having a diagnosis of a disease with no current cure can cause emotional trauma - not only for the individual directly affected, but also for the family. LOOP was created in the hope of changing this, so that families and individuals can be supported through the diagnosis and symptoms of early-onset Alzheimer's. LOOP is a day centre, where families can reunite and engage in everyday activities in a specialised setting - something they may not be able to do anymore within a non-specialised environment. It feels like home, rather than a clinical setting, where independence is supported and promoted, not hindered. The project name 'LOOP' refers to the user's journey throughout the building. A clear, visible spatial layout aids users, along with a strategic colouring, so that they feel confident to explore and find their way back, always keeping them 'in the loop'.

The 'Music Box' pdf attached is the main image, which shows the main space of the project, the Music Boxes. Music has the potential to help alleviate some of the symptoms of Alzheimer's, such as frustration, it can improve behavioral issues, and provide a new form of communication. It was important to make an acoustic environment, using a double stud steel wall frame, with acoustic oak panelling so the music can be fully enjoyed.

My design book gives some context to the whole project.

Short biography:

My name is Alice Quigley, and I have just finished my final year at Edinburgh College of Art studying Interior Design BA (Hons). As an aspiring interior designer, I am passionate about creating functional, inclusive, and meaningful designs that positively impact people's lives. For me, interior design is more than just creating aesthetically pleasing spaces. It is about designing environments that address the needs and preferences of diverse users, from individuals to communities, and promote well-being, safety, and comfort. One of the most rewarding aspects of interior design is the opportunity to make a tangible difference in people's lives. Whether it's a healthcare facility, a workplace, or a residential setting, every space can enhance or hinder the experience of its users. I am excited to contribute to the future of interior design by creating spaces that look beautiful and improve the quality of life of those who inhabit them.

Felicity Pelling

The story of your piece:

This piece explores the way in which perspective shapes the experiences shared between healthcare professionals and patients. By juxtaposing these separate experiences, I highlight that what is routine for one person is life-changing for another. The dissonance that exists between Part I and Part II illustrates the ease with which a life-changing moment can be documented neutrally during a routine interaction. This is emphasised by the disharmony between these narratives, which are unrecognisable as accounts of the same interaction, and their feeling of incompleteness. In Part III, the integration of these distinct narratives demonstrates that combining different perspectives can entirely reconstruct the meaning behind an interaction that is uniquely experienced. By integrating these portrayals, a new meaning is created which can only exist when the corresponding parts come together. I use this piece to emphasise that such shifts in perspectives can empower healthcare professionals to provide holistic care.

Short biography:

I am a fifth-year medical student at the University of Edinburgh with a specific interest in medical humanities. I have a BSc in Medical Sciences with Humanities, Philosophy and Law from Imperial College London, where I graduated with First Class Honours and achieved the highest overall & dissertation mark in my cohort. While producing my dissertation, titled 'Do digital fitness apps empower individuals or drive them to consume?', I pursued my interest in medical sociology. I drew connections between neoliberal understandings of health as an individual responsibility and media portrayals of health, with close reference to sociological theory. Alongside my studies I am currently employed as a curriculum developer for the University of Edinburgh which involves auditing the integration of Social and Ethical Aspects of Medicine into clinical teaching. Outside of medicine, I enjoy running, wakeboarding, and reading fiction novels.

Ellen Richardson

The story of your piece:

I am conducting a zine-making workshop with practitioners and clients of herbal medicine and positioning this within an action research paradigm as it offers practical outcomes and tools for change. Zines have a long history within activist, counter-culture, and pedagogical traditions and I chose to use them both in this research and as a personal tool to process the research because of several reasons. Methodologically, zines fit with research into herbalism as it might be perceived as a counter-culture suited to DIY media which emphasise personal experience in the face of hegemonic social discourses about 'evidence-based' medicine. As material creations dependent on the paper, pens, magazines, and other paraphernalia available, zines emphasise how matter has agency in the production of knowledge.

I present three zines. The first is used to recruit research participants (collaborators) by communicating the expectations of the research in an accessible way. The second is a zine I used to process my understandings of new materialist theory as I worked through the complexity of Barad's (2007) agential realism and created a pedagogical reference material for myself. The third is an autoethnographic zine which reflects on my personal experiences in this research.

Short biography:

During my undergraduate degree in Social Anthropology, I became deeply drawn towards medical anthropology for its significant capacity to produce insightful knowledge as well as make a difference to people's everyday lived experiences. The theoretical and pragmatic nature of medical humanities makes it endlessly relevant. Health and healthcare are ubiquitous issues around which complex socio-cultural and politico-economic systems have developed in response; while it has not always been recognised, medical humanities therefore deserve a space alongside the natural sciences in producing knowledge about these topics. Moving towards arts-based methodologies in my Masters', I have come to realise the possibilities creative methods hold for producing new forms of knowledge and for more equitable, action-focused research to work alongside traditional quantitative and qualitative methods.

Matt Scott

The story of your piece:

Both these images are digital collages assembled from varied images of red objects sent in by friends and family during Blood Cancer Awareness Week. Polycythaemia is a rare disease, and rarer still to be found in the young, so I have often felt fairly isolated in my experiences of it. Both works are a playful attempt to explain some of the mechanisms of and treatments for the disease I've learnt over the years.

'Polycythaemia' looks at the characteristic ill effect found during disease - a problematic overproduction of red blood cells and platelets. Central to the image is the main treatment I take daily, hydroxycarbamide urea. Also referred to is the vaguely medieval feeling treatment by venesection - medical bloodletting.

'Janus Kinase' relates to the characteristic mutation, JAK2 V617F, found in almost all polycythaemia patients. This signalling pathway is named after the Roman god Janus, god of ends and beginnings, gates and doorways, war and peace. In polycythaemia this feedback system is left turned permanently on, a gate left propped open, an army marching out without a battle to fight.

Short biography:

I'm Matt, a 3rd year Graphic Design student at Edinburgh College of Art. Aside from graphic design, I have a keen interest in collage, ink painting and printmaking.

At age 15 I was diagnosed with polycythaemia vera, a rare blood cancer. Though it does have quite an impact on day to day life, my condition is well controlled and I am able to live an active life. I am coming up to 15 years of being diagnosed, and was hoping to engage a bit more with patient support groups, of which a Blood Cancer UK activity was the inspiration for this art series.

Anna Trevithick

The story of your piece:

My headpiece was designed with the purpose of being part of a larger self-devised promenade performance for children, called "*I Hope your standing by the Ocean*". This piece is inspired by personal memories experienced during my childhood at Broad Haven beach, a place I relate to my grandma, who sadly passed last March after suffering from Alzheimer's for several years. This piece aims to introduce different forms of creative therapy/exploration to a younger audience, encouraging the development of body and emotion through non-verbal forms of communication.

The headpiece is a section of my movement-based design inspired by the term; "*breathe like a jellyfish*", often used in meditative and yoga-based practices. The structure of the jellyfish is made of vacuum-formed plastic and millinery wire to create the silhouette of a Jellyfish head. The lights are programmed to pulsate in a rhythm that slows down the heart rate, reducing anxiety and stress.

Short Biography:

I am a 4th Year student studying Performance Costume (BA) at the Edinburgh College of Art. My work focuses on the interconnection between theatre and Creative Therapy, producing performances that aim to encourage emotional exploration through visual, tactile, and sound-based displays. Over the last 4 years, the importance of developing alternative ways of connecting has become more prominent. With the impact of covid-19 and the increase in the social stigma surrounding physical touch, allowing alternative methods of connection between persons will ensure society remains united. I have worked with several different charities ranging from Best Buddies to Special Olympics. These, as well as personal experiences with mental health and creative arts, have influenced my opinion on the importance of introducing creative therapy to various age and social groups. I hope to continue to encourage this through performance, developing interactive and multisensory experiences that encourage exploration into well-being.

Jingjing Wang

The story of your piece:

This artwork (acrylic paint and biro) takes inspiration from Michelangelo's 'Creation of Adam'. Michelangelo's painting represents the creation of man by the creator. His format is adopted here as a reflection of the digital information age where the creation of new innovations are guided by the primary stakeholder - the patient. Depicted on the left is a robotic arm, inspired by surgical robotics and AI, upon a background of binary code spelling 'research' flowing into a constellation of cells towards the hand of the patient as 'God'. This represents the interplay between future technology and the complexities of human physiology.

The future of medical research is in the hands of patients - understanding people (genetically, psychologically, culturally, and philosophically) is essential to formulating insightful research questions and exploring ways to improve health in society. I hope the audience feels empowered to undertake meaningful research that holds patient needs at greatest priority.

Short biography

Jingjing is a fourth year medical student at the University of Edinburgh. She has an intercalated degree in BMedSci (Hons) Surgical Sciences and is an aspiring Academic Surgeon with interests in Paediatric and Orthopaedic Surgery. Jingjing is the incoming President of the Edinburgh Student Surgical Society and a member of the Student Audit and Research in Surgery (STARSurg) collaborative steering committee. She is really passionate about academic surgery, education, widening participation, and promoting diversity in surgery. Outside of her studies, Jingjing enjoys music, painting, and trying (and failing) at adhering to a healthy sleep schedule.

Bhanu and Pia Wani-Singh

Short Biography:

Bhanu Wahi-Singh (BmedSci Epidemiology) and Pia Wahi-Singh (BMedSci Immunology) are 4th year medical students at the University of Edinburgh College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine. Originally from the United States, they co-founded Diverse Unified Real Global Action (DURGA), a 501(c)3 non-governmental organization in 2016 while in high school to remove barriers to education and health in the Jammu and Kashmir Region of India. To date, they've helped raise over £30,000 to fund over 9 service projects, including the health camp at village Nud. For more details about DURGA, please visit: <https://durgaforgood.weebly.com>

Outside of their advocacy work, they are both passionate about artwork. Their work won first and second prizes at the St John's Hospital Art Competition and is on display in the newly refurbished St John's Hospital Student Accommodations. Both are also avid researchers and enjoy epidemiological and clinical research alongside their medical school training.

The story of your piece:

When we think about healthcare in the West, what do we think of? Perhaps the GP's consultation room, the hustle and bustle of the hospital ward, the sterile surgical theatre. We do not often get an opportunity to see how healthcare functions outside of our bubble – how it still functions in much of the world.

'The Consultation' depicts a health camp taking place in the Village of Nud, in the Jammu and Kashmir region of India. A healthcare desert, inhabitants of this village are often deprived of primary healthcare due to great poverty in the region and a lack of readily accessible healthcare facilities. Thus, major health conditions go undiagnosed and untreated. This consultation and the follow-up care provided at this health camp - in an old school building without air-conditioning in the Indian summer – may be the first primary healthcare intervention he has ever received.

Shuen Wong

The story of your piece:

This series of poetry pieces was inspired by my psychiatric block in New Craig's Hospital, Inverness. They cover some of the most common psychiatric conditions. The pieces do not claim to assume patient experiences; they are simply extrapolations from my own emotions and encounters during the block. I sought to use clear metaphors and direct language that would avoid wrapping the conditions in enigma, and unambiguously express my personal reflections.

The first piece "Depression" looks at the insidious, recurring nature of the condition. It follows the persona as she unknowingly sinks into the disorder and explores the encompassing nature of depression on identity. The second piece "Anxiety" means to reflect the experience of anxiety and appreciate the value of simple maxims. The final piece "Addiction" explores the uncontrollable factors that lead to addiction. It reflects on the biopsychosocial model and its impact on how we view those with the condition.

Short Biography:

My name is Shuen Wong, and I'm a 4th year medical student at the University of Aberdeen (UoA). I'm originally from Singapore and have studied in the UK since my 'A' levels. I'm currently part of the Remote and Rural Programme that Aberdeen offers, which has given me the opportunity to spend all my placements this academic year in Inverness, Scotland. As President of the UoA Medical Humanities Society, I've long been fascinated by the art of medicine, as it is my belief that humans best create and relate to one another through art. Recognition and application of this gives us the ability to go beyond the tangible advances of modern science, to touch the hearts of both patients and fellow doctors. I particularly enjoy writing, because I relish in the power of language, which enables me to both express myself and empathise with others.

Jane Wu

The story of your piece:

I am excited about the opportunity that the Scottish Medical Humanities Conference presents. I believe that this conference provides a unique platform for me to showcase my artwork and engage in meaningful discussions on the intersection of medicine and the humanities. My artwork delves into the experiences of those grappling with anxiety and depression, exploring the ways in which today's societal dysfunctions can take a toll on our mental health. Through my creations, I aim to spark conversations about the unregulated emotions that can manifest in the human mind and body. By utilizing bold and vivid colours, I emphasize the intensity of these mental health conditions and the discomfort that often accompanies them. My pieces offer a glimpse into the patient's perspective, highlighting the unique experiences and emotions of individuals struggling with mental health issues, while also offering insights through the eyes of a doctor.

Short biography:

As a medical student and artist, my life has been a balance between science and creativity. Throughout my life, I have always been drawn to both fields, finding beauty and meaning in the human body and the creative expression it inspires. I began my artistic journey at a young age, exploring various mediums and techniques to express my ideas and emotions. As I grew older, my interest in medicine developed alongside my artistic skills. I was fascinated by the human body, the intricacies of disease, and the power of medicine to heal. When I entered medical school, I realized that my artistic background could be a valuable asset in my studies and future career. Through my art, I am able to explore the emotional and human side of medicine, helping me to better understand and connect with patients on a deeper level.

I believe that the intersection of these fields holds great promise for the future of healthcare, and I am excited to be a part of this growing movement.

Tessa Yau

The story of your piece:

The focus of my project was to explore the broad theme of wounds, a topic I find visually and conceptually very fascinating.

“A Study of Wounds” is a collection of work from the exploration phase of my project, displayed in the format of an A4 book which I sewed together. I wanted this piece to showcase my own unique perspective of wounds as both an artist and a medical student. A wide variety of different media have been used for this piece – ranging from traditional art materials such as oil paint, watercolour and pencil, to unconventional materials such as bubble wrap, gelatin and bandages. This book explores the hidden beauty of the subject matter, with accurate and representational pieces contrasting with more playful, abstract studies, drawing on concepts such as the colour, pattern and texture which can be seen in wound

Short biography:

My name is Tessa Yau and I am a 3rd year medical student from the University of Aberdeen. Art has always been one of my favourite hobbies and it was a subject I took to Advanced Higher level at school. I was very excited at the prospect of combining two of my interests together as part of the Fine Arts and Medicine medical humanities course towards the end of last year, which has allowed me to explore the close connection between art, anatomy and medicine. My typical art style is representational, and my favourite subject to paint would be portraits, however during this project I have tried to push myself outside my comfort zone and experiment with new materials and styles.

Qiqi Yuan

The story of your piece

There are so many women around me who worry about problems related to the gynecological diseases, like corpus luteum rupture, the uterus falling off, endometrial test polyps, fallopian tube obstruction, dysmenorrhea, pelvic inflammatory disease, adnexitis, and other gynecological diseases can bring women a lot of trouble.

Knowing about the pain of women around me, I also began to pay attention to it, so I went to the gynecological outpatient department of the hospital for an examination, so that I can learn more about their feeling.

For example, Pony is my roommate. She experienced the pain of corpus luteum rupture. Pony said: The inpatient department is a magical place where people's desires are erased, Ma said. Everyone wants to get well and get out of there.

In this case, I created four paintings about some gynecological diseases to illustrate.

Short Biography:

I am Qiqi Yuan, a postgraduate student of Illustration at Edinburgh College of Art.

Creating drawings is my hobby, I like to focus on the things around me and document them through illustration. The work ranges from story character development to bespoke illustrations. At the same time, I also hope to convey some messages through my illustrations.

I hope you will enjoy my project artworks.