

# Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

It can be hard to make time for art. Life is busy, perhaps especially in medicine, and our attention is pulled in a thousand different directions. Taking the time to pause, to create, and to generate space for new personal and communal connections requires commitment. It also requires some degree of safety and health, which are not always given; our haunting cover art from Ley Killeya reminds us of those who must prioritize the search for a safe place in which to find rest from violence and instability. Art in this way is a privilege.

Yet, art is also a necessity. We see art emerge from the most surprising circumstances, pressed upon by a human need to not only make sense of the world, but to reveal reality in a way that is often impossible to describe in simple forms. Through our words, visual art, music, and more, we can sink into a state of understanding that moves beneath the surface of our immediate experiences. This helps us find whatever is deep within us, while also connecting us to one another.

We are so grateful to our contributors for what they have shared with us, and the ways in which our lives are enriched as they point us to beauty, struggle, and resilience. A life in and adjacent to medicine—which all of us at some point experience, whether through our careers, our own health journeys, or in caring for loved ones—exposes us firsthand to the ways in which life is complicated and precious. Creative expression allows us to face these moments, even if life moves quickly, and stopping to reflect sometimes feels impossible.

As Editors, it took us quite a while to get this issue out. Many on our team faced unexpected challenges, urgent deadlines, and major life events that pushed back our goal time and again; we, too, were reminded of the difficulties of prioritizing art amidst the busyness of life. We want to thank our contributors, as well as our audience, for their patience with this journey. We believe that the wait is worth it.

Mindy Buchanan-King  
Cambray Smith  
*Executive Editors*

Yoshiko Iwai  
*Editor-in-Chief*