ART OF MEDICINE
Anatomy of a Medical Student
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Abstract
A reductive linocut is created in progressive stages from a single block. Each color is printed on top of a previous layer, such that each cut is irremediable. This reductive linocut print is of a young woman's face with one side exposing what lies below her skin. The finality imposed by this medium offers an apt analogy to a medical student's first human cadaver anatomy dissection.

Figure. Anatomy of a Medical Student

Media
Reductive linocut print.
A reductive linocut is created in progressive stages from a single block. Each layer is carved and color is printed on top of the previous layer. The medium was invented by Pablo Picasso,¹ and it is aptly referred to as the “suicide print,” as it is virtually impossible to go back and recover from a mistake. Each cut is decisive, irremediable. When I first held scalpel to skin, I was doing dissection with fellow students, and there was tremendous pressure not to make a mistake. A broader ethical challenge for us medical students would be to pursue dissection while expressing respect for our cadaver’s humanity.

References

Fatimah Hafeez Choudhary is a Brooklyn-based artist and medical student at the SUNY Downstate College of Medicine in Brooklyn, New York. She earned a BA in studio art at CUNY Brooklyn College. She merges her experiences in art and clinical training to explore themes in the medical humanities.

Editor’s Note
This is the co-winning artwork of the 2018 John Conley Art of Medicine Contest.

Citation

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Conflict of Interest Disclosure
The author(s) had no conflicts of interest to disclose.

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