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A QUARAN - ZINE

# WORK [S] FROM HOME

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Allison Nowak Shelton  
Amna Basheer  
Carol Bellese Choi  
Coby Liu  
Elfreda Chan

Eugenia Cheng  
Fionna Lanning  
Hui-Ying Tsai  
Jacqueline Shiu  
Jessica Lo  
Karen Goins

Patricia Ng  
Sheri Shih Hui  
Siobhan Barnes  
Siobhan Fisher  
Stacy Leung





# MEET THE EDITORIAL TEAM

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## ASSOCIATE CREATIVE DIRECTOR **Eugenia Cheng**



I love using my creativity at work. But what I love more is being able to use my creativity outside of work. This zine was the perfect opportunity to collaborate with talented individuals outside my profession. Bringing together like-minded creatives to share ideas has broadened my horizons. It has been a huge privilege to work with the editorial team and all the amazing contributors.

## COPY EDITOR **Allison Nowak Shelton**



This zine comes at a time when I find myself transitioning from academic writing to more public-facing writing, as well as attempting to recapture the creative spark I had as a child and teenager. This group of like-minded women has helped me brush off those cobwebs and shift some of my personal “to do” projects to “in progress.” Thanks to my fellow editorial team and contributors for all their labor and ingenuity, especially Jess Lo, the fire behind it all!

## CREATIVE DIRECTOR **Fionna Lanning**



I’ve always struggled to find time to create work that isn’t for work. So when Jess Lo reached out and pitched the idea of putting together a creative zine, I was eager to participate. Being a part of this project has not only given me the freedom to design for “myself,” it has also allowed me to connect with a wonderful and talented group of creative women.

## CONTENT STRATEGIST **Elfreda Chan**



Would you believe that I sat next to Fionna Lanning over 20 years ago in an IT class to learn how to use computer software? Pretty sure we haven’t done much together since - until now. Something about this group of women, many of whom I grew up with, enticed me to work on this project. It almost didn’t matter what the project was, but it was definitely a bonus that I got to flex my magazine-making muscles and “get my hands dirty” to create something we’re all super proud of.

## OPERATIONS **Jessica Lo**



If art-play once offset the strain that came from a busy analytical role in the workplace, then the sudden void in my schedule caused me to prioritize art in the absence of reason-for-being. As a wave of creativity built up on social media, I was prompted to ask whether other content creators wanted to pool their output into a zine. The response was affirmative, melding our collective experiences into a mindful nourishment for me, and hopefully for others.

#### CONTRIBUTORS

Ada Ko  
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Coby Liu  
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Stacy Leung

#### COVER ART

Fionna Lanning

🌐 [www.fionnamariani.com](http://www.fionnamariani.com)



# INTRODUCTION

by Allison Nowak Shelton

## Ritual Tensions: *home, collectivity and creative outlets*

At the time of this publication, the global COVID-19 pandemic has been, and continues to be, a collective experience and yet also a deeply personal one. It's brought into clear focus something that has always been true: we are all individuals, and yet we are also integral parts of something bigger. We're connected in this larger something, and we're more similar than it can sometimes seem. The people reaching out for connection during this crisis and the ones engaged in deep personal reflection are actually one and the same, just on different days... sometimes different hours on the same day. Many of us are feeling this, deep down in our bones and also in our daily lives, our work, our cities and towns. Call it a citizenry, call it community. For better or worse, while separated by language, culture and distance, we remain connected by *our vulnerabilities*.

Within these pages, an eclectic collage of artworks and writings tells the story of ritualistic reactions to vulnerability in quarantine. The work[s] here reflect the varied backgrounds and sensibilities of the creators themselves, as well as the many disparate responses available in an unprecedented time of tension, fear and fatigue. As I write this, thousands of people in the US are protesting police brutality against Black people following the senseless murder of George Floyd... all in masks with hand sanitizer at the ready. My colleague has already lost both her aunt and her family friend, both nurses on the front lines of the COVID-19 outbreak in New York, to the virus in the last month. Hong Kong, where many of our contributors have called home, has also experienced its share of recent unrest, and Greta Thunberg still continues to show up on my Instagram feed every Friday, still raising her "Skolstrejk för klimatet" sign with her stoic yet somehow hopeful face, absurdly and inspiringly measured for a teenager against a backdrop of chaos. The confluence of events has made me stop to wonder: How *do* we handle vulnerability? How do we protect/strengthen/acknowledge/respect/work out the vulnerability of our bodies, our institutions, our histories, our identities, our families and friendships, our planet and ourselves? It's the tension involved in these processes that I see being creatively transformed within the pages of this zine.

With this collective project, I - we - have found humor, consolation and hope in one another's work. We have leaned in to our vulnerabilities, and I hope the zine inspires readers to do the same. Working from home, or "WFH" as it is now commonly known, has become more than a mere aspect of certain careers. It offers a new perspective on labor, on women, on the concepts of stability and instability, and on what it means to work and to be home. We acknowledge that we are all privileged in some way; though some of us are newly unemployed, others suffering losses of all kinds, we all have homes and we're all working in them. We have our art, our voices, and more than that, we have one another. But this zine is not about comparing struggles; it's about sharing and honoring them, and choosing to be inspired by them.

The collection is organized into three sections: Reflect/Accept/Envision. Though not exhaustive and certainly not linear, we've discovered these to be three important phases of our quarantine experiences as revealed by our own creative work. Reflect: We reflect on our situations, past and present. Accept: We bristle and moan, but we eventually accept our new normals. Envision: We aspire and attempt to envision what comes next. In this zine, you'll find reassessments of daily habits, including rituals of mind, body

and spirit. You'll find brave forays into unfamiliar art forms, as well as reconnections to times gone by. And you'll find revelations and hopes for the future. Above all, I hope this zine will help you recognize the tension of ritual and ritual tensions in your own life - that is, the ability to work through new and different challenges every day in creative ways.

This zine has been a light for me in a dark time. Letting the work of my fellow women wash over me, inspire me, make me laugh, make me pause, and especially make me spring into action has been everything I needed and more in my own experience of quarantine. May the works you see here be the same for you: A salve. A spark. A powderkeg. A new ritual. Or two or three. A new outlook. A rebirth. And maybe even a collective embrace toward healing.

*Allison Nowak Shelton is a writer and educator based in NYC.*  
 🌐 [www.allisonnowakshelton.com](http://www.allisonnowakshelton.com)

*All opinions in this zine are the authors' own and don't reflect medical expertise. All materials herein are also owned by their respective creators. Don't redistribute this content without permission, and please credit the creators!*

## NAVIGATION TIPS



▲ Scroll up and down to browse through the pages.  
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Click on a chapter title or thumbnail in the contents page to jump to that contributor's content.

All underlined text in the body of the zine are clickable links.

Social media icons that appear throughout the zine are also clickable links and will take you to the contributor's website or social media page.



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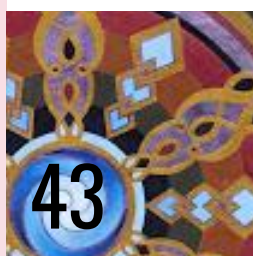
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Karen talks about being a homebody artist, yet that ease is undercut by pandemic tensions.



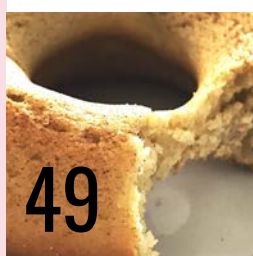
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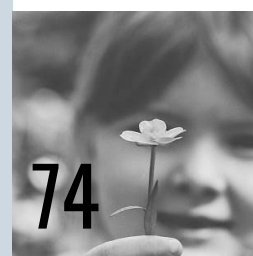
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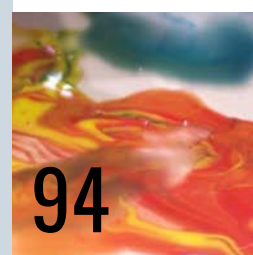
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# [ REFLECT ] ACCEPT ENVISION



# CAROL BELLESE CHOI

Hongkongese-Honduran and American-born, Carol Bellese Choi is a painter based in Hong Kong. Her body of work is an exploration of art forms including murals, paintings, illustrations and comics. Coming from an eclectic background, the celebration of identity has become an important theme in her work, always with a dash of humor.

Her comic strip, “Corona Chronicles HK,” drawn during her two-week confinement at a government run quarantine camp in Hong Kong, was featured in the *South China Morning Post*.



[@carolbellese](#)



## A SLICE OF LIFE IN A GOVERNMENT RUN QUARANTINE CAMP IN HONG KONG

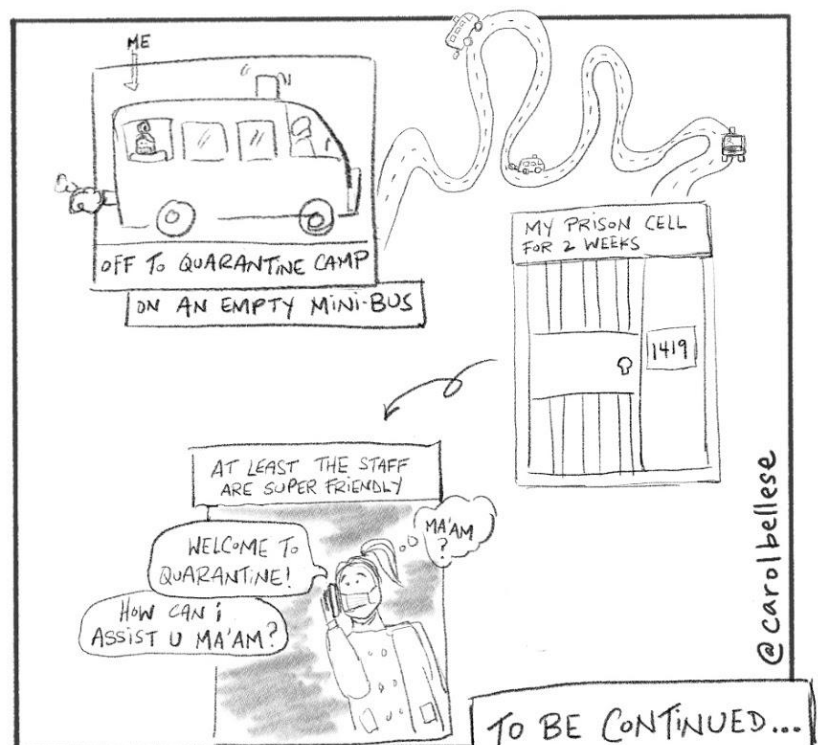
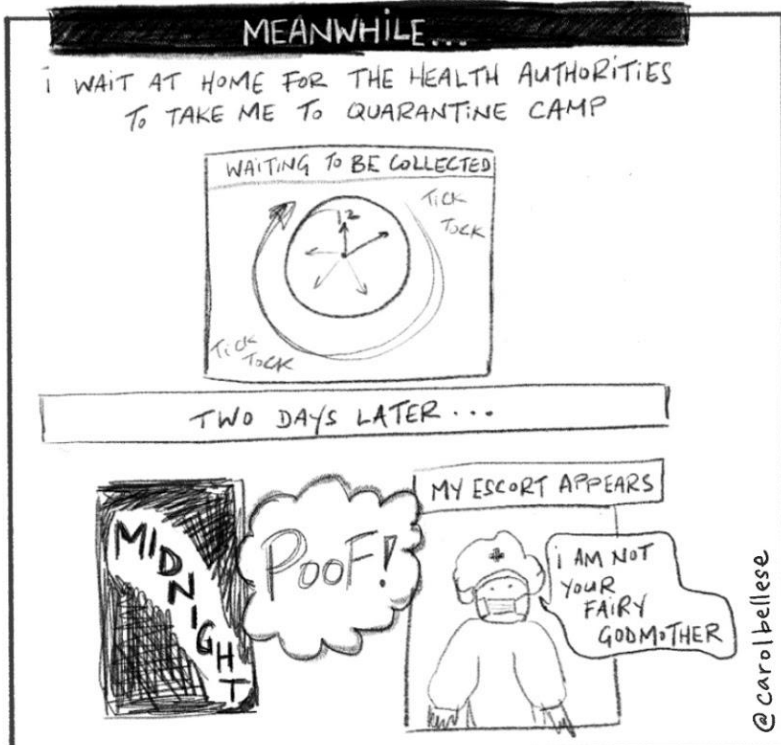
In mid-March, at the beginning of the peak of the pandemic in my home of Hong Kong, my boyfriend tested positive for COVID-19. He was confined in the isolation ward of a hospital, and as a close contact I was transferred by the local health authorities to mandatory isolation in one of their quarantine camps. What follows are my daily doodles recording our experiences over the two weeks that he spent in the hospital and I spent in quarantine.

Initially, these doodles were personal and meant only to cheer up my boyfriend and myself, but after a few days, my boyfriend shared them with friends who were also in hospital or quarantine, and my drawings ended up being a source of daily comic relief for all of us. In an unexpected turn of events, my “Corona Chronicles” were featured in an article in the *South China Morning Post*, where I was interviewed about the positive power of humour in stressful situations.

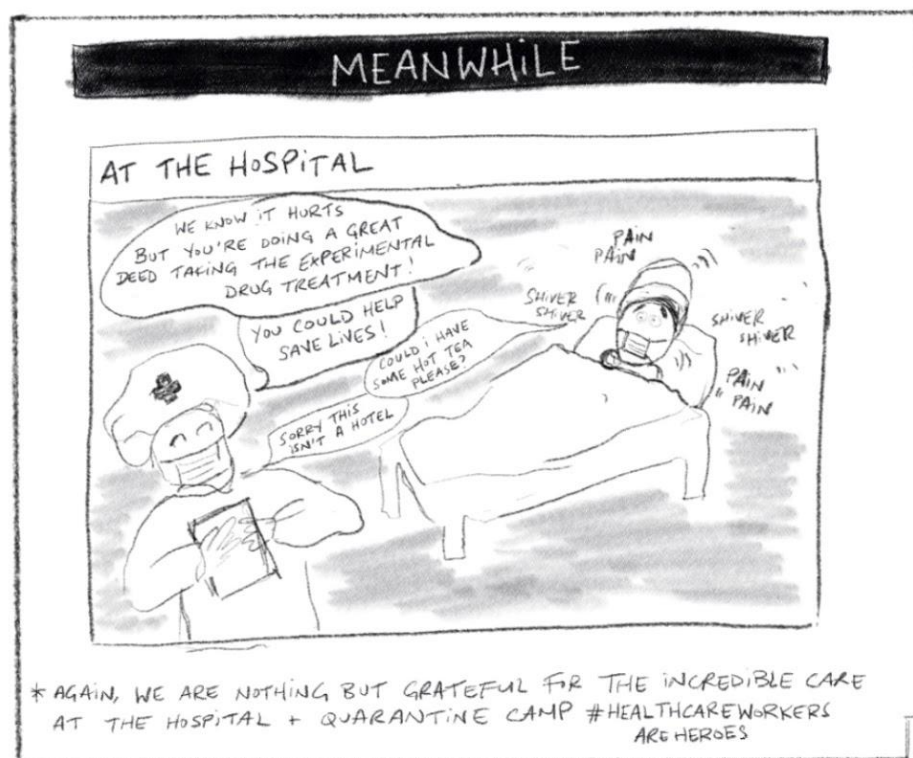
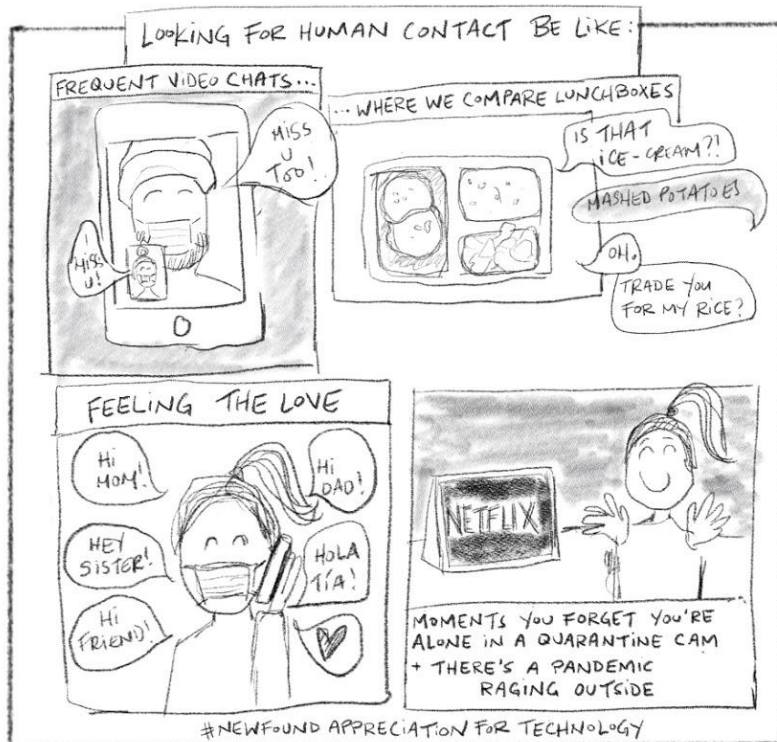
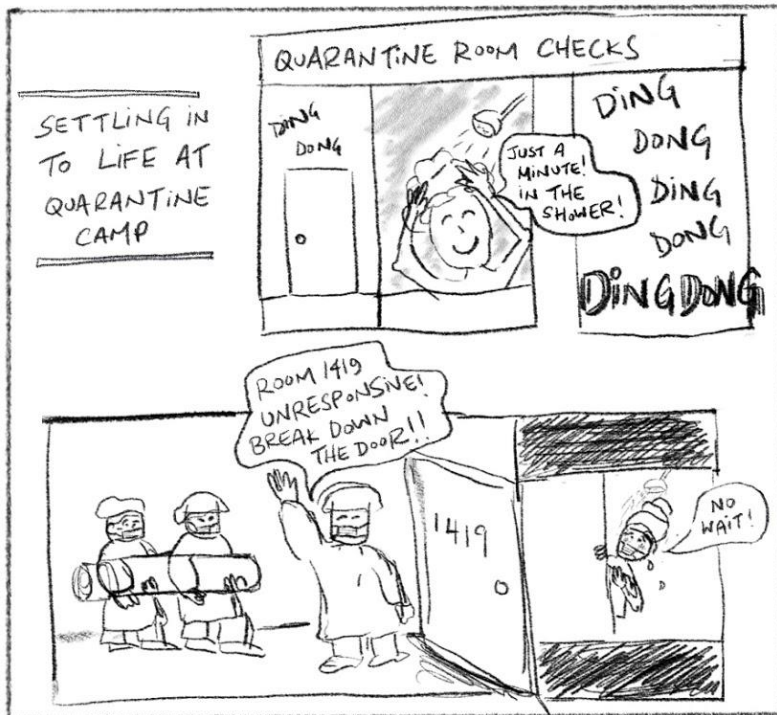
I hope you find some of our stranger-than-fiction moments relatable, or at the very least, I hope you have a little chuckle.



\*EXAGGERATED FOR COMEDIC EFFECT. WE ARE NOTHING BUT GRATEFUL FOR THE INCREDIBLE HOSPITAL CARE #HEALTHCAREWORKERS ARE HEROES







@CAROLBOLES

TO BE CONTINUED...





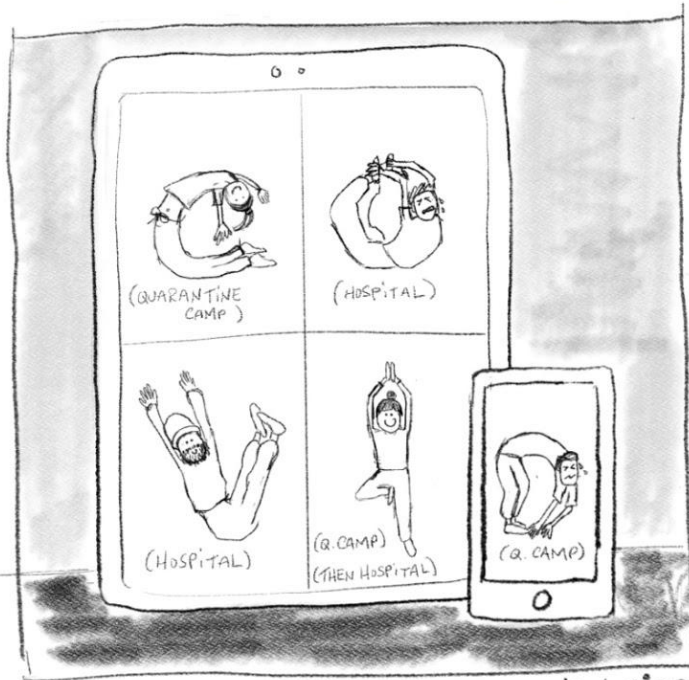
TO BE CONTINUED...



# CORONA CHRONICLES CHAPTER 4

✓ SUPPORTING EACH OTHER IN ISOLATION

DAILY VIDEO CHAT YOGA SESSIONS



#CORONA FAMILY CIRCUS

CICADA SEASON IN QUARANTINE CAMP



BUZZ BUZZ  
BUZZZZZZ  
CICADA  
CICADA  
BUZZ BUZZ  
BUZZZZZZ  
ZZZZZZ

WHERE ARE YOU?!

SILENCE.

... BUZZ  
BUZZ  
CICADA?  
CICADA?



CELEBRATING SMALL VICTORIES



CELEBRATING YOUR ANNIVERSARY IN ISOLATION



DAILY ROUTINE AT THE HOSPITAL

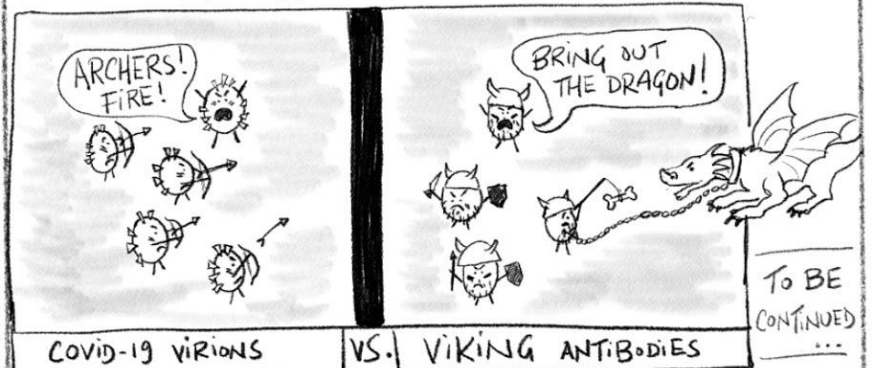
7:00 AM MUCUS COLLECTION...



... FOLLOWED BY DISAPPOINTING NEWS



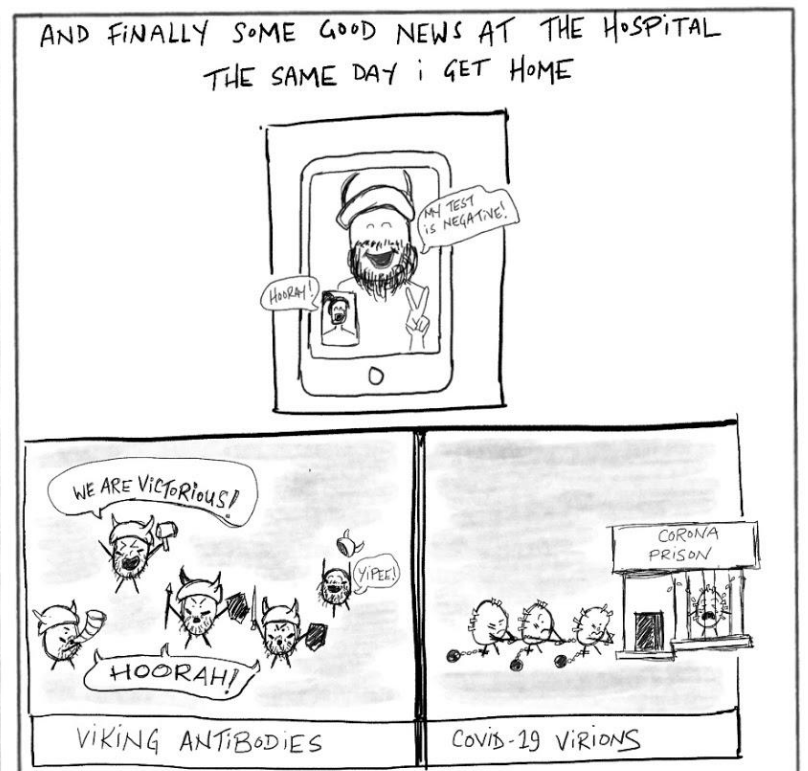
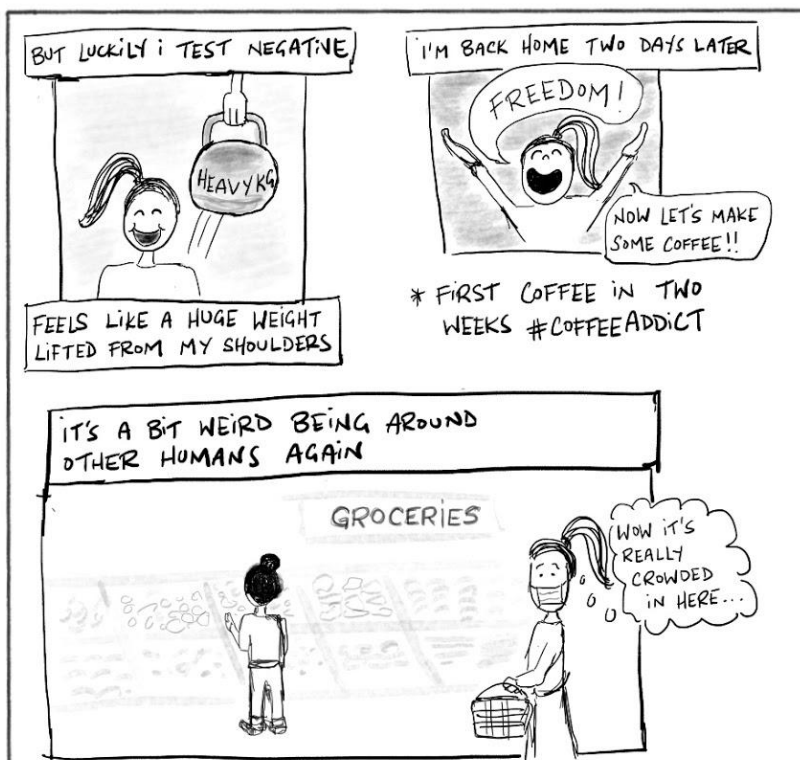
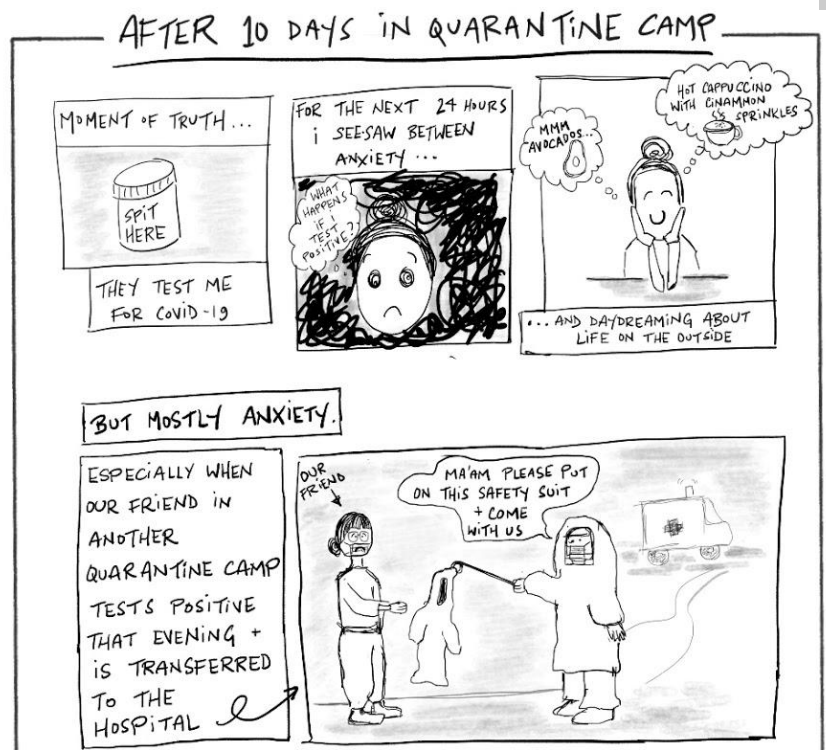
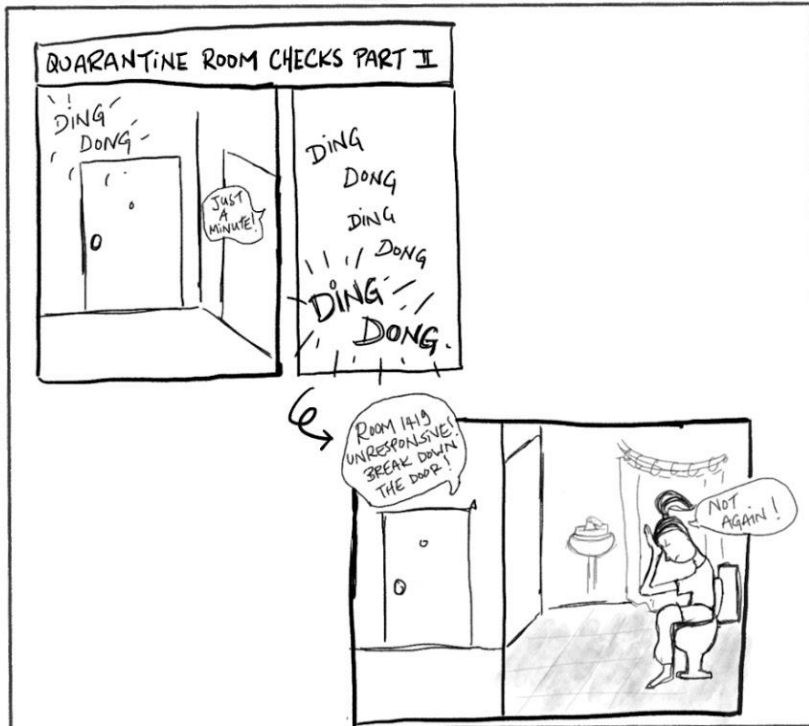
AND THE BATTLE RAGES ON...



TO BE CONTINUED...

@CarolBellere





@CAROLBALLESE





The first virtual yoga session I led with my boyfriend and our friend who were both hospitalised for COVID-19 treatment. Pictured clockwise from top left: our friend in hospital; me in quarantine camp; my boyfriend in a different hospital.



My room in the quarantine camp (please excuse the unmade bed).



One of my meals during quarantine.



# COBY LIU

Born in Hong Kong, Coby moved to North America at a young age, where she lived in Toronto, New York and Chicago. Growing up as a third culture kid, she was exposed to various cultures and languages, which enabled her to use her experiences and creativity to think outside the box. With her keen interests in many handicrafts, she loves spending time on new projects. She is also an avid yogi and has been teaching yoga for the past few years.

She co-founded Rosey Cloud, a handmade soap and skincare brand in Hong Kong. Before starting her own business, she was a marketing/media professional for over 15 years.



[@cobycobster](#)



# REKINDLING MY LOVE AFFAIR



Since a very young age, I've always enjoyed expressing my creativity and artistic ability. I would paint, draw, sculpt - you name it, I did it! And I would always make gifts for friends and family.

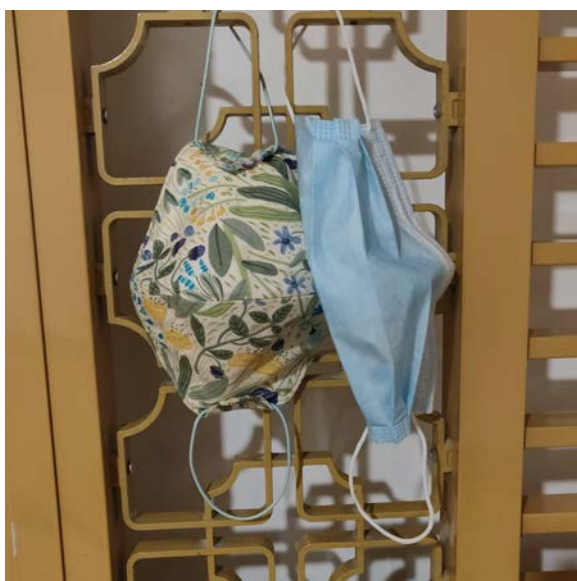
I thought I could have chosen art as my career path, but the typical Asian kid in me took the advice of my parents to stick with the "right" track, which meant pursuing a career in business. As the first member of my family to go to university, this was particularly important to my parents.

That said, I would always quietly pursue various creative "projects" at home in what little spare time I had, sometimes quite stealthily (my other half knows not to ask what I am making until it is finished). Without the benefit of having any formal training, for years I picked up various handicraft skills through a scattergun approach of trial and error. Now, I sew, knit, crochet, carve, teach yoga... and many more things, all self-taught.

My ultimate go-to source for any new ideas and tutorials has historically been The University of YouTube! The real catalyst for these hobbies, though (and I have been particularly fortunate in the last couple of years), was when I said goodbye to the corporate life and started to work with startups. That's when the creative juices started flowing and reignited my passion for handicrafts.

During the early stage of the COVID-19 breakout in Hong Kong, people knew exactly what to do. Having gone through a Baptism by fire with SARS in 2003, there was a mad scramble for masks, hand sanitizer, bleach, toilet paper, rice, flour and almost anything else considered an "essential." I was not very successful in fighting for my surgical masks, plus the price had been inflated up to 3000% at one point! My thinking was that something was better than nothing, so I started to make my own cloth masks.





“My thinking was that something was better than nothing,  
so I started to make my own cloth masks.”





The fabric market in Hong Kong is an institution with multiple generations of family run shops and customers visiting them. It's no more than a small parcel of land with a metal beam structure covered with corrugated sheet metal or plastic as a roof. It's amazing that the place has not been blown away in one of our regular typhoons. Whenever I take someone there, especially a first-time visitor, they describe it as "awesome," "phenomenal," a "must-visit place," "eye-opening," "mind boggling," "intimidating," "hot," "stuffy" or all of the above! Everyone inside is super friendly and helpful – no hard selling. They genuinely try to help you find what you're looking for.

After going to the fabric market and choosing the fabric, the next challenge was finding a mask pattern to draw that was also the right size and fit. It really took me a long time to get it right with multiple iterations, be it too big, too small, not the right shape for my face, or the wrong type of fabric that didn't breath well.



Thankfully, most of my prototypes were suitable for friends and their kids, therefore minimal wastage.

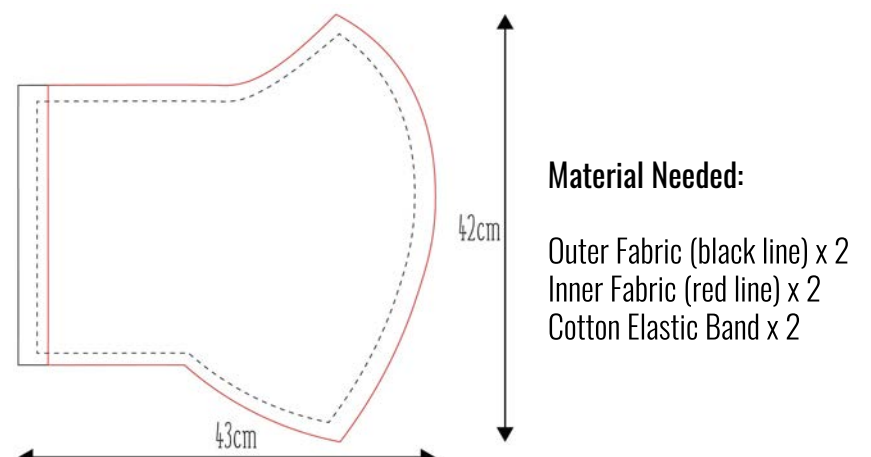
The first few masks were hand sewn. It used to take me a couple of nights after dinner to make one mask. Once finished, I would post a picture on social media, and friends started asking if they could buy my masks! That kept me busy for many nights; I even missed out on my usual Netflix catch-ups.




I used to have a sewing machine when I lived in North America, but I never really learned how to use it properly. With the mask demand growing, a friend offered to lend me her sewing machine, as she said that the machine didn't quite "listen" to her.

So I took it for a ride... and I was unstoppable! The first weekend I had the sewing machine, I made 5 cloth masks in a row! As I continued to make these cloth masks, I am happy to say that I finally got a pattern down.

COVID-19 has obviously changed us all in many ways. Amongst my circle of friends, I see a lot more people having the time to focus a bit more on their relationships and hobbies. I think when we finally emerge from this, many of us will have reassessed our priorities. And we may in fact have many more people, like me, pursue their passions rather than stay on the "right" track.







The Hong Kong fabric market is  
“awesome”, “phenomenal”, “a  
must-visit place”, eye-opening”,  
“mind boggling”, “intimidating”,  
“hot”, “stuffy” or all of the above!”





# EUGENIA CHENG

Raised in Taiwan, Hong Kong and the UK, Eugenia is a British architectural lighting designer who currently resides in Hong Kong. Her interests in art & design started early; she was an avid photographer and explored art, graphics and still life drawing in school, with particular focus on food, color, texture, light and shadow. Her passion for creativity continues outside her profession, where she engages in food photography, ceramics and still life studies in digital formats by avocation.

With the advent of easily accessible technology for illustration and graphics, Eugenia continues to enjoy creating digital food illustrations during her spare time. She draws inspiration from produce markets, media, literature, and ingredients simply found in the kitchen. The artworks are evoked by image association of memories, emotions, conversations and experiences. Eugenia hopes her illustrations bring happiness and inspiration to those seeking a light and colorful taste of daily art.



[@genecheng](#)

# COLOURFUL TASTE

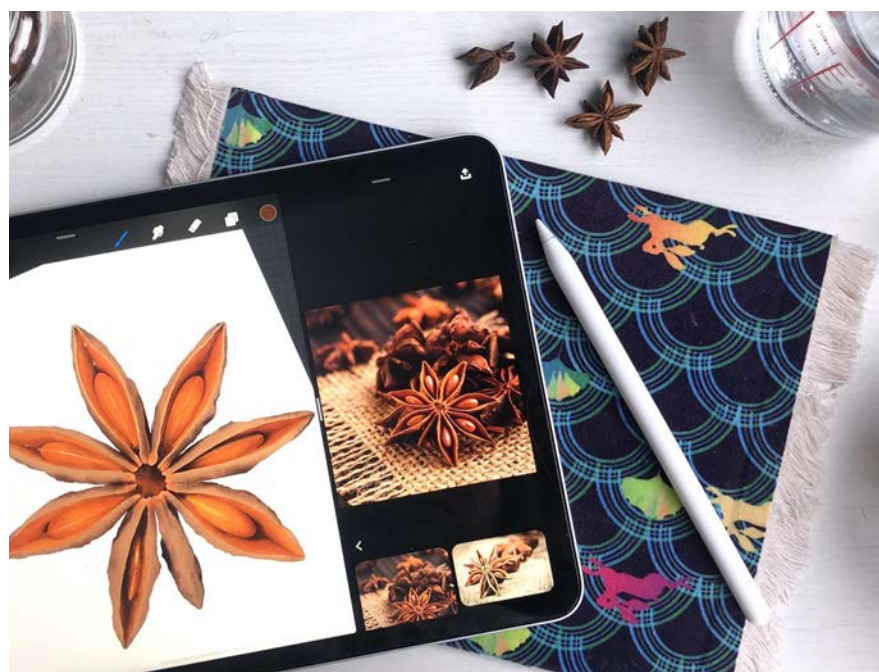


Illustration progress: I would often study the real objects and reference images.

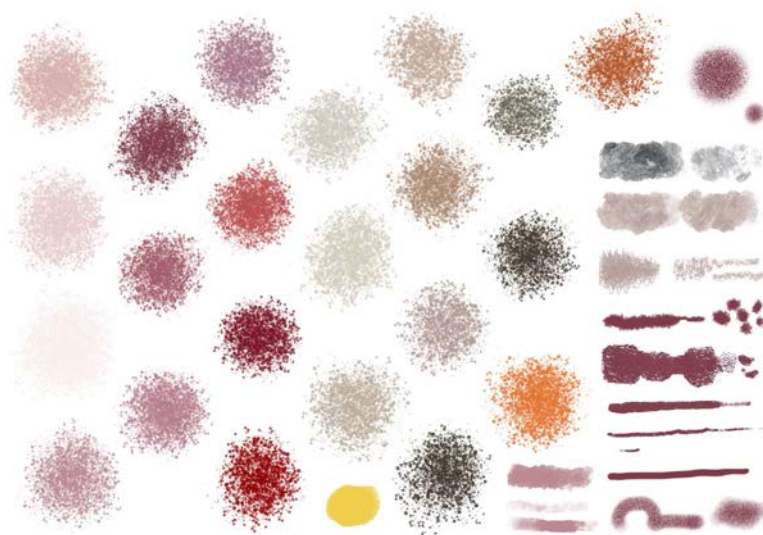
When COVID-19 hit Hong Kong and case numbers three-folded within days, the government did not issue mandatory lockdown. Instead, it encouraged non-essential workers to work from home and stay in during weekends to avoid crowds. The hourly news updates on the virus, plus fearful memories of SARS, convinced many traumatized Hong Kong citizens, including my husband John and me, to distance socially, voluntarily stay home and conserve surgical face masks that soon became scarce and expensive.

With the world suddenly at a halt, days seemed longer, and time became disposable. Cramped inside our shoebox-like apartment, the initial enthusiasm of cooking 3-4 meals a day and organising the apartment together started to dwindle; my patience and tolerance over the smallest of things wore thin. It was evident I needed personal space from the high tension, to focus on something other than cleaning, television and social media.

Fed up with feeling mundane and frustrated on what felt like the 1,023rd day, I promptly decided to end this self-pity and misery by making good use of the newfound time. I turned to what used to make me happy: colourful art. As a hobby artist who loves food, especially fresh produce, it was not difficult to find drawing inspiration in the kitchen. For a few hours each day, with my husband also engaged in his own newly discovered hobbies, I happily sat close by and drew.

There was no pressure to meet deadlines, so the drawing process was relaxing and fun! It calmed my fluctuating

emotions, and helped me regain sanity and positivity. It allowed me time to contemplate and reflect on COVID-19's aftermath. I woke up each day motivated, rummaging through the kitchen, searching the internet for inspiration. Being homebound was once again convivial. **Days were no longer dull; I found colour in these dark, morbid times.**



Planning the colour palette for the illustration and testing the different brushes

As of mid-May 2020, Hong Kong has slowly risen to its feet, but nobody knows what the future holds or whether this catastrophe will happen again. The experience reminded me of my creative passion, the importance of staying kind, happy, positive and productive during tough times. **Art became my formula in finding an individual tranquil haven at home, however small the space.**



Some say oranges are the fruit of happiness and the colour orange encourages joy.

What follows are a series of colourful food illustrations I drew at home during this time. I hope by sharing these artworks and my realisations that stemmed from them, my work will bring some happiness and positivity to you, as it did to me.

# PEACH PERFECT



Inspired by a girlfriend who once said peaches were her favourite fruit because **“while life isn’t always peachy, the idea of it is”**.

I was reminded of this conversation as I was eating peaches one day (which happened at a gathering, pre-COVID-19), that life, like art, is never perfect.

What is perfect is accepting the imperfection that is reality, and one must stay positive and make the most out of what is given. We are in a situation we cannot change or reverse, but we can adapt, look forward and hope for the better.

Only optimism can make us stronger, despite those that say otherwise.



# GINGER, GINGER



Inspired by a family group chat on the health benefits of ginger, which is known for being packed with multi-vitamins and minerals that ease muscle pains and migraines, help digestion and fight infections.

The illustration was hard to draw; the different colours, layers and textures were difficult to grasp. Many a time I wanted to give up, agonized by the repeated voice in my head telling me, “let’s just draw something else that’s easier”. Despite trying to start another piece, somehow I kept going back to this ginger; I could not get over my obsession with completing what was started.

The experience was satisfying, and though the challenge for perfection was real and time consuming, the result was perfect for me, and I was glad I pushed through and didn’t give up.

I hope this illustration will help encourage and inspire everyone to stay hopeful, positive and healthy, especially during difficult times like these in which strengthening the immune system and keeping the mind strong are so important.

This piece is dedicated to all the medical staff around the world, especially my friend Dr. Kerry Wan MBBS, MRCS, who has risked her health and life working long, tiring and stressful shifts at the A&E during the past 5 months (and counting).



This is a study of photographer Chapman Burnett's work, "Sunday Breakfast".

The illustration was inspired by my husband, who insisted on frying sunny-side-up eggs at 1:30am to accompany his instant noodles during one of our early COVID-19 lockdowns. In fear of waking up the dog, we only turned on the rangehood built-in light as opposed to the main open kitchen lights. Because of the dark surrounding, as he cracked the eggs on the pan, I caught a glimpse of the focused light shining down and through the empty brown eggshells.

It was interesting, as it was the first time I saw eggshells through light in such a way; the shadows, textures, colours and speckles were intriguing. Who would have thought one could have so much fun researching, studying and drawing eggshells? The experience was exuberant.

I guess life really needn't be complicated to be interesting; sometimes the simplest things can also bring joy and fulfillment.



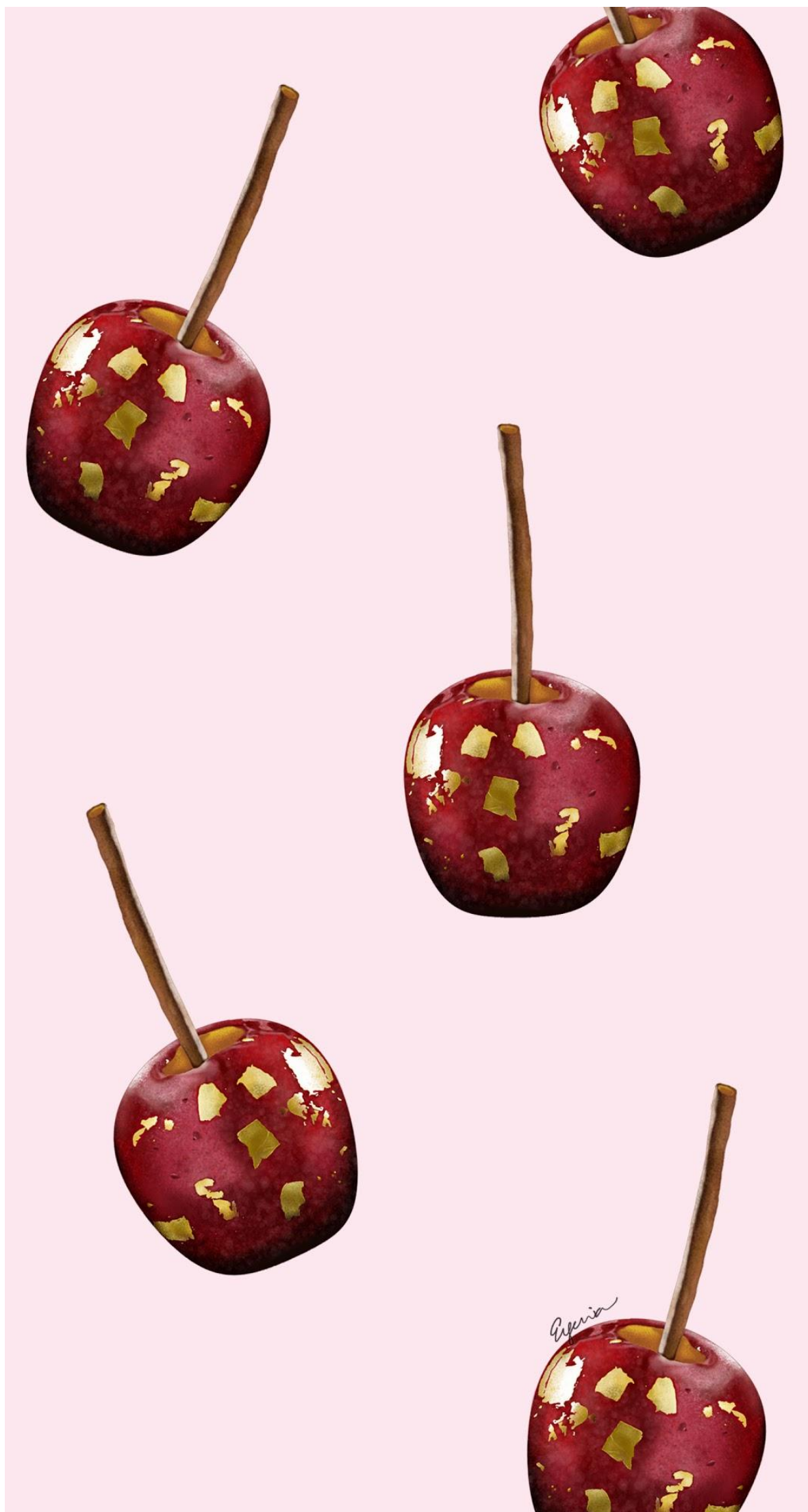
# CANDIED APPLES



This piece was inspired by the amazing photographer William Mullan (@pomme queen), who wonderfully captures the beauty of different types of apples (and the occasional flowers) against vibrant and sometimes contrasting backgrounds.

I started the drawing a week before Christmas 2019, completing it on Boxing Day. And though I was happy with the original composition, I periodically found myself wanting to revisit the piece.

Unlike some of the choices we make in life, an artist can revisit, rework or reconfigure their artwork multiple times at any moment anywhere, without having to answer to anyone but themselves. The freedom to do so is very liberating; it's a joyful and exhilarating process in which one can profusely explore the same subject through different compositions and aesthetics - it's subjectively limitless.



# PEARLS, LYCHEES & SUNSHINE



This illustration was inspired by the reminiscence of holidays to the island beaches and resorts in Thailand and Malaysia, far, far away from hectic metropolitan life.

The sweet taste and vibrant colours of lychee bring back memories of fruity coolers, sorbets on the beach and strolls through the colourful fruit stands, while enjoying the infinite ocean view glimmering like a sea of pearls under the sun.

I am optimistic the day will come when travelling is safe again, and holidays are once again stress-free.





# SHERI SHIH-HUI

Sheri Shih Hui is a Taiwanese interdisciplinary designer based in New York City, working with various creative methodologies to realize the previously unimagined, including using digital modeling and fabrication, molding and casting using bio-materials with textiles and fibers, DIY electronics and film photography. Her bio-inspired parametric fashion collection was selected for the CFDA+2015 Design Graduates and published in the *Council of Fashion Designers of America* talent book. Sheri continues to generate conversations between fields by experimenting with various materials and forms in the hybrid fabricating process.

Her quarantine projects reflect the coevolution between human beings and microbes, not only offering philosophical insights, but also including practical steps of traditional heritage of food and culture. The goal is to turn our sight from the virus war to the interdependence of humans and the environment.



@chi\_sheri



Stay at Home! Be in quarantine! Finally, I'd been granted "a room of my own" to lock up and focus on myself. I took my time to read the books that I brought back from Taiwan weeks ago. My life during this period was full of the practices of drawing, developing films, culturing and fermenting, reading papers, studying recipes and making sourdough bread from scratch. I reflected on them during "New York on Pause," and gladly picked up stuff that had been on pause because of work and routine. I also looked into my notes about my trip to Jogja last summer. My thoughts during the pandemic involved reflecting on the practices I'd been doing.

I went to Jogja, Indonesia, last summer, and experienced life in a society that carries on its heritage. The youth in Jogja actively engage in their communities and create social movements, making civil society very well-functioning. During the pandemic, these communities spread safety information much more effectively than their government.

Every night I would join the spontaneous gathering in the residence courtyard and house. Visitors came to meet friends and new faces, share their thoughts, and also their remarkable homemade fermented drinks and treats - fermentation is the activation of vital microorganisms in food. I was so awed by the young people who occupied many roles: artist, activist, citizen scientist, maker, farmer, researcher, designer, teacher, etc. During my two weeks there, I tried to absorb the profound knowledge embedded in their culture.

Now, back in New York, my world has changed. I realize I have so many ways to connect to the "microcosmos". I brought my microorganism friends with me; they traveled from Jogja as well. Later, I made tempeh, shared the SCOBY (fermentation ingredient) with a friend I met on a farm, and introduced tapai wine to my colleagues. This is a continuous journey for myself and the microorganisms.



At this moment, the war between humans and “the invisible enemy” has already been put forward by officials and the media. Some popular defenses to the pandemic “attack” include hand sanitizer, antibacterial liquid, and disinfectant that can kill 99.9% of viruses and bacteria. These are not newly invented. After bacteria was discovered to play a role in disease in the late nineteenth century, antibacterial products were established. Sanitation standards in the food industry led to more antibacterial products used on our bodies, on animals, and in food growing and food processes, but this has resulted in fewer and fewer bacteria living in our bodies. This approach comes at a cost; it disregards the fact that bacteria is an ancestor to and has co-evolved with humans. Bacteria composes the human body and can also be the key to good function of the body. Though sanitizing does kill the virus, how can we use the quarantine to think about changing our relationship with bacteria?

I suggest reconnecting to the world in which humans were once deeply rooted and finding knowledge in cultural/culturing/culinary heritages. We must get to know the relationship between humans and other species like microorganisms and their importance in soil and food, and learn about the issues of food security and safety. For example, what leads farmers to dump the unsold surplus of

food while there are people waiting in long lines for a free meal? Support the distribution of diverse food sources for local independent farmers to support enriched nutrition intake. These experiences of learning, growing and making will stimulate our creativity and sensitivity to the world. If we understand the relationship between humans and other creatures in the natural world, we can prevent river pollution, chemical dumping in soil, waste generation, and the loss of our traditional heritages. From an evolutionary point of view, people can’t survive without food and suitable environments. Without the relationships with other organisms, people won’t have the essentials to be alive.

I am aware of the “indeterminacy and precarious condition” of the global economic situation during the pandemic. Yet, would we have ever recognized this problem had we always lived in a seemingly “stable” world? My living room looks more or less similar to what it did three months ago, but now I know I have a lot of tiny little creatures keeping me company: yeast in my jar, lactobacilli on my veggies, and different mold cultures on my beans and rice. I hope other people can also find their starting point and make something that celebrates microorganisms during quarantine. For me, I have found tempe and other things on my journey, and I’ll share them with you here.





# TEMPE (TEMPEH)- HOW TO GROW



**How To Make :**  
By Sheri Shih Hui

**1.** YOU CAN USE ANY BEAN, GRAIN, SEED TO EXPERIMENT. LIKE SOY BEANS, BLACK BEANS, BLACK EYED PEAS, CHICK PEAS, LENTIL, BARLEY, FLAX... OR MIX THEM!

**2.** SOAK THE BEANS IN WATER TILL THE SKINS CAN BE REMOVED. TIME VARIES DEPENDING ON THE TYPES YOU HAVE (6 hrs - 24 hrs)

**3.** YOU CAN LEAVE THE BEANS IN THE SKINS OR DE-HULL THEM. THE FERMENTATION TIME MIGHT VARY.

**4.** COOK THE BEANS IN WATER TO TENDER. I BOIL THEM AND SIMMER FOR 12-15 MINS. IF THE BEANS WERE DEHULLED, DON'T OVERCOOK.

**5.** DRY THE BEANS ON PAPER TOWELS FOR 15-20 MINS. TOO WET - GET MOLDY. TOO DRY - THE TEMPEH SPORES CAN'T GROW.

**6.** MAKE SURE THE BEANS COOL DOWN. PUT THE BEANS IN A CLEAN BOWL. SPRINKLE THE TEMPEH STARTER OVER THE BEANS AND MIX WELL. \* I USE "RAGI TEMPE" AS THE STARTER. DON'T PUT VINEGAR TO MIX WITH IT!

**7.** FILL THE ZIP-TOB BAGS. A HANDFUL SIZE OF BAGS IS GOOD. \* PRICK HOLES IN THE BAGS AT 3/4 INCH INTERVALS. \* FOLD THE EXTRA SPACE AT BACK AND TAPE IT, IF NEEDED.

**8.** PLACE AT A SHADED, AERATED, AND WARM PLACE (80-90 °F) FOR 2-3 DAYS, TILL COVERED WITH DENCE AND FIRM CAKE.

→ SEE NEXT PAGE FOR DETAILS.

→ RAGI TEMPE THE INDONESIAN BRAND OF STARTER.

**TEMPE**  
天貝

My trip to Jogja, Indonesia in summer 2019 gave me new horizons. People live their lives by carrying on their wisdom of treating land, growing plants, and making food. During the time I stayed in Life Patch, the artists' residence, I met dozens of enthusiasts who tried so much to improve their environment, and find justice for the people and land. I watched and learned their practices and also selfishly fulfilled my nostalgia for old Taiwan (why did we give away our inheritance so quickly and so completely?).

One afternoon, I started to learn traditional tempe making. We chopped one Indonesian banana leaf, washed it with water, and placed it directly on a gas stove to sanitize. We wrapped and folded the beans into different styles, triangular and rectangular, using sticks to secure the folds. The last step was to place them into a basket with a lid, and store it under a table.





# TEMPE (TEMPEH)- HOW TO EAT



## OREK TEMPE (SAUTEED TEMPEH)

This “how to cook and eat tempe gathering” happened on April 26 during Oki-Wonder lab via a Jitsimeet video call between Jogja, Okinawa, and Brooklyn. The tempe cooking was led by Citra Kirana, now illustrated by Sheri Shih Hui.

When I made the orek tempe in Brooklyn during quarantine, I substituted some ingredients that I couldn't find here. I grow my tempe, which is fresh and beautiful, then slice it thinly and deep fry the slices until golden. Deep fry bay leaf and citrus leaves (lemon juice substitute for citrus leaves), and add them before serving. Peel garlic and shallots and mash into a paste with chilies (red shishito and tomatoes substitute for chili, and I also added white peppercorns, cilantro seeds, mustard seeds, and ginger for more flavors!). Place a frying pan on medium heat. Add the spices (I also added lemongrass and bay leaves). Add water to loosen up if needed. Add tempe, brown sugar and seasoning with sweet soy sauce (substitute tamarind puree and soy sauce for sweet soy sauce). Serve with the bay leaf and sprinkle with finely chopped citrus leaves and chopped red chilies (substitute lemon juice for the herbs). Compared to the traditional recipe, I added many flavors.





# TEMPE (TEMPEH)- HOW TO EAT



## JANGAN TEMPE (TEMPEH SOUP)

As I mentioned in the previous recipe, I also learned this Jangan tempe recipe during the video call of the cooking gathering hosted between three cities. If you don't have the ingredients at hand, feel free to substitute as you wish. The substitutions you choose will be the creative approach in your cooking! The tempe I used in this receipt was also freshly homegrown, which was full of microorganisms and flavors.

Thinly slice the tempe, shallots, garlic, galangal and ginger (I didn't have galangal, so I added more ginger). Roughly slice chillies (substitute long hot pepper) and mash candlenuts (substitute macadamia nuts, almonds, or cashews). Put a bit of oil in a pan over medium heat. Add shallots and garlic, followed by galangal, ginger, and candlenuts. Add lemongrass, tempe, coconut milk and chillies. Add water, brown sugar and season to perfection.



- ① Thinly Slice Tempeh into 4cm length.
- ② Thinly Slice three Shallots, three cloves of garlic, galangal, and ginger. Roughly slice chillies.
- ③ Bash Candlenuts in a pestle and Mortar until fine.



- ④ Put a little bit oil in a pan over medium heat.
- ⑤ Add Shallots and garlic, followed by galangal, ginger, and Candlenuts



- ⑥ Add Lemongrass, Tempeh, coconut milk, and chillies.
- ⑦ Add Water, Sugar, and Seasoning to perfection!

Sheri May 10, 2020



# SCOBY, YEAST, AND HOW TO PRESERVE FOOD



## KOMBUCHA



You must have SCOBY to start. Usually, the lighter one is better. You can try to brew a starter tea or use the tea that came with the scoby.

Wash scoby with clean water (if the tea is old). Brew any tea you want. Must add sugar. I used a teapot of peppermint tea and 7 spoons of water. Taste to see if it has sweetness, if not, add more sugar. Wait until the tea is cold and pour it in a clean container. Let it sit from 5 days to weeks before drinking.

## SOURDOUGH



Grow your yeast for bread! You can continually use it to grow more, and the flavor will get better and better. Homemade sourdough from scratch: raisins:water = 1:3 but you will need at least 200g. Ferment the raisins for 7 days. When bubbly, the raisins will float on the top, and the water will be

turbid. Then it's ready. Remember to shake it daily. Squeeze all the liquid from the raisins.

Mix 50g of the yeast water you made with 50g bread flour and 0.5g salt. \*Don't put the salt on the yeast directly, it will kill it! Leave it 5-8 hours depending on how warm the room temperature, or wait until they're 2.5x larger. The rest you can store in the fridge for a month.

Mix with 100g yeast water, 100g bread flour, 0.5g salt, and leave 5-8 hours again, and it will get 2.5x larger. Then it is ready to mix with your dough.

Expanding: 25g starter + 100g bread flour\* + 100g water + 0.5g salt. The starter can store in a fridge for 2-3 days.

\*all purpose flour is also fine.

## LACTIC ACID BACTERIA (ACIDIFICATION)



How long can your vegetables last in the fridge? Ferment your vegetables to last longer, keep their nutrition, and make them easy to digest, tastier, and even safer. Simply use salt and water to achieve fermentation. The simple way to start: 1. Chop the vegetables. 2. Add salt and squeeze the water out

(taste and you will know how much salt you should put in). 3. Soak them in the clean jar with the salty water, and be sure everything is underwater. 4. Leave in a cool place in the room for weeks (try them in the meantime).



Add flavors and be creative! Chili, ginger, garlic, onion, shallot, and garlic chive are usually added in kimchi, and caraway seeds, juniper berries, dill and celery seeds for sauerkraut. Be creative with your homemade fermented wonders.

**AND THERE IS SO MUCH MORE... YOGURT, RED YEAST, KOJI (FOR SWEET WINE, SAKE, SHIO KOJI, MISO), NATA DE COCO, ETC.**



# KAREN GOINS

Korean American-born artist Karen Goins is a marker artist based in Taiwan. With an MFA in oil painting, her focus has always been in portraiture. She began her exploration with markers almost 4 years ago after taking 10 years away from art to concentrate on being a full-time mom to her now 13-year-old daughter.

Starting with just the intent to exercise her creative brain again, she began posting her “polaroid portraits” on Instagram as a space to exhibit her work. An eyewear enthusiast, Karen has consistently incorporated the theme of eyewear into her work as a recognizable signature. Her work has no layers and isn’t meant to be complicated. Rather, it is just simple sketches for those who are interested in seeing her portraits on their IG feed and hopefully inspire them to create. It has led to opportunities to work for Reese Witherspoon’s Hello Sunshine, a platform for changing the narrative of women, and most recently, *Vogue Spain*.



@ karen.goins



# Q&A WITH KAREN GOINS

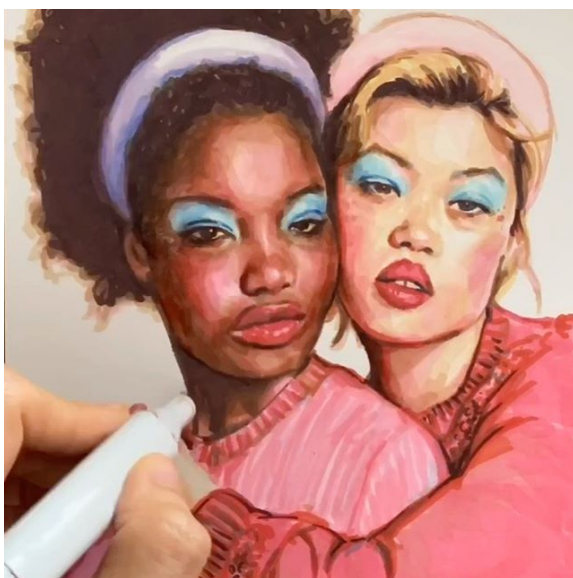
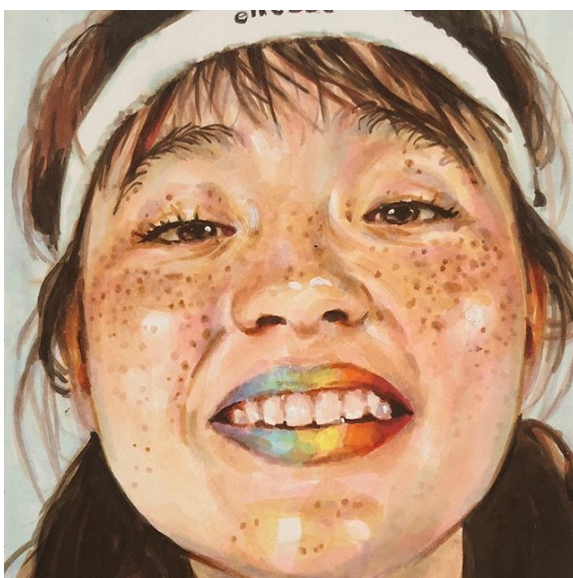


**Q:** How has quarantine affected your artwork, if at all? What, if anything, has been most influential: Being at home? The anxieties of a pandemic? Personal struggles?

**KG:** Quarantine hasn't necessarily affected my artwork. I have always worked from home; however, the pandemic did mess with my mental health. As one who suffers from a panic disorder, it was a bit of a struggle to see the light through this new reality everyone was coping and battling with every day. I had to go back on my medication for some time to quiet the noisy, dark thoughts in my brain.

Thankfully, I live in Taiwan. Taiwan was one of the first countries to respond to the pandemic, a lesson they learned after being one of the hardest hit during the 2003 SARS experience. There was no noticeable lifestyle change, as everything pretty much remained open and life just continued with extreme caution and safety measures in place.

My daughter's school, and some others, closed for a few weeks after Chinese New Year to ensure the safety of others, from those who possibly may have traveled out of the country. Parents had to constantly update and report their travels, which included interactions with [...] individuals who traveled overseas. All travelers returning from anywhere had to fulfill the mandatory 14-day quarantine. It was just intense. If anything, creating art kept me sane and helped distract me from everything.



One notable experience I have encountered through this pandemic is fear, not just my own, but [that of] others because I happen to be a U.S citizen who lives in Taiwan. My daughter is a competitive policy debater. Before COVID-19 came to existence, we traveled nearly every month to compete in the US. This season alone, we went to Michigan, Kentucky, Stanford, Berkeley, China, twice to Utah, and New York. Never mind the fact that I have a fear of flying, but we flew to Westchester, NY, one week prior to its official first confirmed case.

Upon arrival to the tournament in New York, I got a text from the debate coach that the superintendent of the school was trying to block us from participating in the tournament because we were from Taiwan. They wanted to know if we were tested or screened for the COVID-19 virus. In the end, we were able to attend the tournament, but not without a little bit of an exchange... It was extra sweet and a proud mommy moment, because my girl happens to be the only middle schooler in the nation who debates in the high school policy varsity division with bite. She holds her own.



# Q&A WITH KAREN GOINS



**Q:** What does home mean to you as an artist? Is there anything about stability or instability that has influenced your artwork, either physically or emotionally? And has that been affected at all by this pandemic?

**KG:** My home is my studio. It is my sanctuary. I am an extreme homebody. Leaving my space takes a lot of energy, to say the least. So, in a sense, it gets me to work.

When I accidentally stumbled onto markers, I wanted to understand the medium because it was so foreign to me. The immediacy and the portability of markers is so different from oils. What artist would ever transition from oil painting to markers? The general audience would not naturally consider markers as a fine art tool. It has a very playful and somewhat juvenile association to its use. For this reason, I was even more attracted to it and wanted to see its potential through my own understanding of color and painting.

Every single day for nearly 3 years, I practiced. I was obsessed with it and wanted to just learn. In essence, I became a student. I have a feeling the decade-long absence from working as an artist fed that mentality. If you go through my Instagram gallery, you can see a clear progression from mere novice to someone who may actually know what they are doing. It just makes sense: the more you practice, the better you become. This is anyone's story, not just mine.



**Q:** Do you see your art contributing to a wider public at all, and if so, how? What are your hopes for your viewers?

**KG:** My work is accessible and there isn't anything to it, no fine lines or interpretation that needs to happen to understand what is going on. So, with that being said, I feel it crosses a lot of categories, not just art. I have been able to connect with so many different kinds of people within the eyewear industry: fashion, make-up, music and even Hollywood. I've been fortunate to have my work shared through such platforms.

It has just been pure joy to see how something can come from nothing.

I'm just a mom who wanted to get back into being an artist. That is my story. I dropped my art career teaching at a university, exhibiting and selling my work all over the US to be a mom. I don't regret it and wouldn't rewrite anything. The biggest compliment for me is that someone bought a set of markers or created something because they were inspired by one of my posts. That's incredibly exciting, because that was me a few years ago.





REFLECT  
[ACCEPT]  
ENVISION



# SIOBHAN BARNES

Siobhan is a soulful executive coach dedicated to supporting women in remembering that they are here for a reason. Siobhan helps seekers and compassionate changemakers do their soul work without the hustle and grind of mere survival. She guides women to activate all of their unique strengths, trust their own intuition and confidently create meaningful careers that align to each woman's unique purpose and version of success.

Prior to starting her coach/training business, Siobhan worked at Goldman Sachs and Jones Lang LaSalle in corporate and commercial real estate. She is married with 3 children and passionate about supporting the next generation of global compassionate women leaders.



[@iamsiobhanbarnes](#)



# FINDING PERSONAL PEACE TO NAVIGATE AN UNCERTAIN WORLD



A practical self regulating practice to honour the emotional ups and downs and find your centre during these challenging times.

**COVID-19 has affected everyone globally.**

All of us are being called to take pause, stop and keep our distance.

The usual flurry of activities we are used to have been put on hold. The commutes, school runs, back to back meetings... exchanged for Zoom get

togethers and online working/ learning/socialising.

**For many of us, these times have been a dark night of the soul.**

None of us could have predicted that 2020 would start like this.

None of us could have predicted that a global pause button would be in the

cards.

**These times are calling us to get honest and ask ourselves deeper questions...** that perhaps we wouldn't have stopped to ask before COVID, because we were just too busy...

Everyone's experience of COVID and how it's impacted them personally has varied... from dealing with job losses/financial survival to health (be it physical, mental, emotional and spiritual) to actually losing loved ones or people we know.

**What's happening in our world has an impact on us in our nervous systems. We feel all of this deeply.**

In a world where there is so much



uncertainty, strife and divisiveness, it can feel like it's all too much.

What can happen as a result is that we can:

**Armour up to the world** by shutting down, not reading the news, not wanting to partake in the world and stay in our own bubble.

**Numb out** by reading what's happening but then letting it wash over us without emotion, because if we dare stop and feel it, it may just wipe us out.

**In this article, I want to talk about a healthier way of being in the world but not *of* the world, and how to find personal peace to navigate these current times.**

What do I mean by that?

**I want to support us to be able to:**

- + Be in the world and know what's going on
- + Feel compassion and humanity as well as our rage, anger and frustrations
- + Use our emotions to act and show up in ways that are aligned to who we really are
- + Take action and contribute to something greater than ourselves

**In a nutshell:** I want us to be able to find personal peace and a sense of safety and stability within our own bodies from which to operate in the world.

**Albert Einstein famously said, "We can't solve a problem at the same level of consciousness that created it."**



So when we're trying to decide how to show up in the world when we're stressed, irritated and tired, we're not going to come up with any great ideas.

To change our level of consciousness, we have to be able to feel what we feel and let the tension transmute. A flow is a natural state. It's from THIS space that we have the capacity to choose to enter that dark night of the

soul or deeper contemplation... and also offer our humanity to the greater collective that's also in need of some love and attention.

**As a soulful executive coach,** I love talking to my clients and community about all things work, purpose, contribution, motherhood, womanhood and life in general.



In my discussions, I've seen 2 different types of questions being asked...

On a personal level, we're asking:

- + Am I on the right path?
- + Is what I place value on really that important?
- + Am I really living a life that I want for myself + my family?

On a collective level, we're asking:

- + I want to do something more meaningful, but where do I start?
- + What's my part in the greater collective?
- + How have I been perpetuating systemic injustice, racism + inequality (consciously or unconsciously)?

+ How can I be a force for good?

In a nutshell, I believe that these times are for waking up + questioning how we are living, leading, loving and working...

So let's do this!

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To start this process, I recommend carving out 15 minutes to have some space just for you. You have 2 options:

Option 1: Download the audio version to be guided through this process.

Option 2: Find a quiet space, take 3 deep breaths and connect to the earth/floor/support beneath you, and then dive in to the steps that follow.

**Step 1: Close your eyes and get honest with how you're feeling.**

Check in with how you are really feeling in *this* moment.

If you want, you can name it out loud. You may feel just 1 thing or it may be a few. Just let yourself name it.

**Step 2: Notice where you feel in your body.**

Without getting into the story of what you're feeling, bring your awareness into the part of the body that feels whatever you named in Step 1.

You don't have to analyse what you "should" be feeling, "why" you are you feeling it or "what" set you off. None of that matters. Just simply feel.

**Step 3: Let yourself feel what you're feeling**

Unravel. You may feel like crying,



shouting, punching a pillow. Stay close to the feeling. Move as the feeling.

This can feel really weird, but the trick is to just feel the feels. Let it move through you.

Roll with the sensations and the emotions and use your movement, your breath and your sound to release what you're feeling.

**Side note for your mind:** Having a bodily reaction to these times is a natural instinctual response. If you look at animals in the wild, when the lion is going after the gazelle and the gazelle makes the narrow escape, you'll see the gazelle physically shake after that experience. You'll see it completely shake it off.

As humans, we don't do that. We've been taught to hold it in, keep it together, numb, armour. Don't show too much. Especially for women, "don't get too emotional now."

So in this step, just let yourself complete a very natural and normal response.

What you are experiencing in this exercise is a natural competition cycle of frozen tension that your body desires to release so that it can move on.

Take your time to do this. Play music if you need to really give yourself the space to be in this emotion, feeling and sensation.

When you let this complete you'll come to a place of reprieve, neutrality or pleasure. There is no right or wrong answer, you just want to find yourself in that new state.



#### **Step 4: Ask your body what to do next**

Ask yourself: *"What do I have to know here? What is it that I have to do?"*

Notice what bubbles up for you. Take note of the action.

#### **Step 5: Come back to the present moment**

As you come out of the process, bring some awareness to your fingers and your toes, gently open your eyes. Take a moment to reflect on the wisdom that your body shared with you and decide what to do with it.

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**This is a self-regulating practice that you can use time and time again so that you can find personal peace within yourself before**

#### **navigating decisions about showing up in the world.**

My hope for you is that you take the time to do this.

Give it a try, notice how it feels and how it makes a difference for you.

**I want you to know that you're not alone. If you feel called to share your experience and connect, come and find me on Instagram at [@iamsiobhanbarnes](https://www.instagram.com/iamsiobhanbarnes).**

I believe that we're all here for a reason beyond the hustle, grind and the act of merely surviving.

I hope that this practice supports you to step into more alignment, safety and joy.





# JACQUELINE SHIU

Jacqueline graduated from the University of Southern California, Los Angeles with a BA in Fine Arts. In pursuit of more technical mastery, she continued her studies in realist oil painting from the Central Academy of Fine Arts (中央美術學院) and China Academy of Oil Painting (中國油畫院) in Beijing. In between her studies, she taught art to both children and adults for over a decade.

In 2013 she came across a Tibetan Buddhist painter (Thangka painter 唐卡) in Nepal, and learned the fundamentals of the craft that summer. This was the beginning of her unique artistic development: geometric and ornate oil painting that incorporates Asian/Tibetan motifs. Jacqueline's understanding of the metaphysical aspects of this craft was deepened further by her studies under another master from Sikkim in the following years. Incorporating this mysterious and elaborate style of artmaking into her own paintings allows her to find joy, peace and meaning in her artwork.

Jacqueline started a brand name in 2016 for which wearable artworks (in the form of cashmere shawls) were created from her paintings. This idea was stemmed from the Himalayan culture of Khata offering, which is the offering of a white scarf inscribed with auspicious symbols. Such an offering is a sign of respect or any goodwill to another upon greeting. To Jacqueline, the idea of wearing a concept, a representation of a philosophy on one's body, enriches the artistic experience as the "viewer" engages the artwork through a sense of touch. On one level, wearing a piece of garment is ordinary and mundane; yet on another, the 'viewer' is literally enveloped by the artwork, the concept, making the experience complete and constant.



[@jacqueline shiu](https://www.instagram.com/jacqueline_shiu)



[www.jacquelineshiu.com](http://www.jacquelineshiu.com)

“Geometric proportions & symmetry express for  
me dignity, righteousness and order;  
organic lines & shapes embody the complexity  
and depth of human emotions;  
detail & intricacy reflect human dedication and  
perseverance;  
and flowers are symbolic of grace and  
perfection.” - Jacqueline Shiu



# KINDRED SPIRITS



OIL ON CANVAS  
150 X 150 CM

Two kindred spirits; two souls in harmony.

Kindred spirits are like the sun and moon, a lock and a key, a mother and her child, a voice and its echo, they are integral parts of a 'whole', they are the meaning of our lives. Amidst lockdowns worldwide, loved ones are separated by physical distances. In these circumstances, we have the opportunity to appreciate our kindred spirits, for what they mean to us simply by existing in our world no matter oceans apart, making us less alone. They are precious because they allow us to love unconditionally - making our existences bigger than the confines of our own selfish desires.





# BLESSING



OIL ON CANVAS  
150 X 150 CM



Enlightened beings vow to bless all sentient beings in existence. In other words, all beings capable of suffering are subjected to blessings. Blessings are cast to all regardless of spiritual/moral/biological/temporal differences; blessings do not distinguish between the worthy or not. A blessing is like oxygen, it permeates all time and space. It is up to us, as the individuals, to accept it with humility and become momentarily satisfied through the appreciation of such unconditional goodwill of another.

The white structure in the center of this painting is a stupa and its reflection in symmetry. A stupa is modeled after a Buddha sitting in lotus pose. Stupas are symbols of blessings because they always encapsulate auspicious relics within them. They are objects of veneration not because of superstition, but simply because they contain the essence of someone else's unconditional goodwill and compassion for all existence.





# SERENITY



OIL ON CANVAS  
61 X 91 CM



Removing your feelings from a situation brings peace and clarity.

Chaos surrounds us constantly. It would be presumptuous to think that peace could be achieved by sorting out the external world. Just like waves in the ocean, problems appear one after another; battling waves in the ocean will eventually overwhelm and drown you. Instead, peace is more achievable when we strengthen our immunity to disturbances and chaos.

The flowers in this painting are arranged in Padmasana (lotus position), representing balance and calm abiding when one meditates. An empty, luminous path is at the center.

Like the centerline meridian of a human body, this channel grounds us to the earth (the mother of our physical existence) and connects us to the sky (the ideal of our divine destination). This grounding and inspiring channel divides the floral patterns symmetrically, maintaining a sense of balance and equanimity as our physical world (the flowers) manifests from our senses.



## OIL ON CANVAS 80 X 140 CM

A desire to seek meaning beyond our physical existence; to make sense of our purpose with respect to the cosmos.

Buddhists believe that human lives are the most blessed in that through suffering, we strive to find peace and liberation. No matter the religion, offerings are made at altars to God/gods/deities/Buddha, not for recognition, nor for exchanges, not even for the assertion that such entities exist, but in the giving of himself. Each man knows he must find his own way in the pursuit of liberation. Only by giving up the ego (hence the nakedness of the figures) will he truly be receptive to all that befalls him; to live through adversities with grace.







# ELFREDA CHAN

Elfreda, affectionately known as Elfie to those close to her, is a Hong Kong born Canadian creative currently living and working in the San Francisco Bay Area as a leader in workplace strategy. A little over a decade ago - during the last recession - she started a food magazine from scratch. In the process, she picked up a few useful skills that she's currently putting to good use as content strategist and contributor to this zine.

As a working mom to a young toddler in a profession that is currently in high demand to resolve the issues of workplace re-entry, she has struggled to find balance between work, self care and family during the lockdown. In the brief moments of reprieve, she has been able to document her experience, and has also found time to bake - a pastime she has always found therapeutic.

In the following pages, Elfreda shares observations of the world around her from the comfort of her dining room table and a couple of recipes she had been playing with, to keep herself sane.



[/in/elfredachan](#)

# OBSERVATIONS

## From the Dining Room Table

**Day 1:** The tip of my middle finger is a little sore from the overuse of my trackpad. It's probably a good idea to start using my mouse.

In normal working conditions, I can get a break from my laptop during meetings, where I can close it and focus on the people in the room, or switch over to a pen. In WFH mode, my laptop is my source for everything.

People seem to be collaborating and connecting without much issue. Technology so far hasn't failed us. GIFs keep the humor and lightheartedness going. We still feel connected and, in some ways, I feel like we're over-connected.

Fellow parents are sharing the challenges of trying to juggle work,

it's 2:00am.

**Day 3:** The days have merged. I can't tell whether something I did was earlier today or yesterday.

Device fatigue is a thing. Being in front of my laptop for everything is exhausting. My family and I had to leave the house to go for a walk, just to get away from the repetition.

I find myself, yet again, feeling like there is too much communication and need some very deliberate introversion time.

Video conferencing connections are starting to suffer. Either our home internet is breaking, or the video conferencing servers are breaking. A few too many meetings end up sounding robotic or cutting out

to catch up on deadlines, while I tried to keep a distance from my laptop (apart from a few brief moments when my willpower failed and the lure of *"let's just get this one thing out, while we can"* took hold). I'm finding that I need to be very diligent about creating boundaries and sticking to them. So far, not so good.

That said, I did use my laptop to attend a few coffee dates that I would have otherwise had to decline in non-WFH mode. It was great! I didn't need to find childcare or drive for 45 minutes to get to a mutually beneficial location to meet. And coffee didn't cost me \$10.

On Saturday, coffee was with people in Sausalito and the Marina via Zoom. And then I had a FaceTime coffee on Sunday with people in Vancouver BC, Calgary AB, Toronto ON, and somewhere in North Carolina. Suddenly, because connecting remotely has become a necessity, having coffee with people who aren't even in my city is becoming socially acceptable. I wonder if this will stick.

The usual weekend chores were not impacted, and my husband was able to venture out into the wild (otherwise known as Safeway) to pick up groceries without a hitch.

**Day 11:** We made it through another week. COVID-19 is teaching us a lot about what's important: Patience. Compassion. Understanding. And in the words of one of my former employers, the need to assume positive intent. *(continued on page 52)*

**“I’m beginning to see just how much I rely on simple acts like changing location, changing clothes, changing posture, etc. to help me shift my mindset.”**

meetings and our children's demands at the same time, in the same space.

Our family members are becoming our new coworkers. Learning to share space with them and respecting their schedules means we are required to be more considerate than (possibly) with our real coworkers.

Time is blurring, though. Work and life are merging. Focus time is only available to me after everyone goes offline, meetings have stopped and my toddler is asleep. Needless to say, I get into a flow and before I know it,

altogether, during the most inopportune moments. I've had to switch over to LTE hotspot a few times, which made my phone heat up. And even then, the connection wasn't the best.

The lack of physical changes within the day are starting to confuse my brain. I'm beginning to see just how much I rely on simple acts like changing location, changing clothes, changing posture, etc. to help me shift my mindset.

**Day 6:** My husband used the weekend





Calphalon

B5006

“ I managed to bake some muffins over the weekend. I have no idea where people are getting all this ‘spare time’ - it definitely seems to be a concept that eludes me.”



*(continued from page 50)* Some tension has been building up on my end, and part of the reason is the confinement and lack of movement. This reminds me, I should probably start figuring out how to get some exercise into my routine. I've been bad about that in general over the past few years, but maybe I'll finally get into gear. Fingers crossed.

**Day 14:** I managed to bake some muffins over the weekend. I have no idea where people are getting all this 'spare time' - it definitely seems to be a concept that eludes me. I call it a win that I was able to fit in something extra-curricular. But in truth, I'm extremely grateful that I am busy, especially with the lay-offs that I'm hearing about.

This week kicks off with more clarity and awareness of what's happening, and with all the commotion of trying to figure out how to WFH settling down a little, feelings are starting to rise to the surface.

I read an article explaining that these feelings are about grief, and suddenly I realize that we're all in mourning.

My focus this week will be a lot more about the people around me and the people that I lead.

**Week 3:** There comes a point when you can (and should) no longer count in days, to stay sane. A bit like how, at some point in your child's life, you have to stop counting how many weeks old, or months old they are, and graduate to the next level of measurement.

Week 3 is proving to be a bit more comfortable. Some of the WFH practices are starting to normalize. It's

becoming a bit more clear to me how to get work done throughout the week without resorting to staying up past midnight every night. We're still hitting midnight, but that's the nature of WFH parenting life.

A group of us have discovered the joys of Snap Camera in our Teams meetings. I've also just tested a drop-in coffee session, which was well received by people who needed a quick 30 min break and wanted another type of coworker interaction.

My husband has figured out a pattern in how to venture out to get our groceries. Our fridge, freezer, pantry and snack bench are now well stocked enough to keep us thriving indoors for a solid few weeks.

Our toddler might run out of diapers at some point, and we're not ready to potty train, so we'll likely need to get out there again soon.

**Week 5:** The conversation topics have started to move toward the future. Lots of people are now planning for re-entry into the workplace. The novelty (both positive and negative) of WFH is starting to wear off. It just is what it is now, and we're back to figuring out the usual kinks that businesses have, along with the impacts of the recession now coming into plain view.

I read an article a few nights ago illustrating German Chancellor Angela Merkel's explanation of how COVID-19 transmission works, and it made me think about how delicate the situation is going to remain. The notion of 'suppression and lift' is likely going to be a part of our lifestyles for a while.

Meanwhile, back inside, Wednesday was my first day since lockdown started that I felt completely overwhelmed by everything I was trying to deal with and the late nights that I've had to endure. It didn't help that our toddler was in constant meltdown mode. But later in the week, some hojicha tea leaves that I ordered arrived, and now I'm enjoying learning how to make comforting hojicha lattes to soothe the soul.

*Read more of Elfreda's observations on LinkedIn [#elfiestuckathome](#).*



# LOCKDOWN MUFFINS

*Adapted from King Arthur Flour's Baked Doughnuts Three Ways recipe*

This recipe works with fresh blueberries, frozen mixed berries, Oreo crumbs, black sesame paste or whatever you want to experiment with that you have access to in your pantry or fridge.

## INGREDIENTS

1 ½ cup all-purpose flour  
¾ cup granulated sugar  
½ tsp salt  
2 tsp baking powder  
⅓ cup vegetable oil  
1 egg  
⅓ cup milk, or more as needed  
1 cup whatever ingredient you want to experiment with

TIP: for a fluffier muffin, add more fat!

PREP TIME: 15 mins  
BAKE TIME: 25 mins  
TOTAL TIME: 40 mins  
YIELDS: 6 muffins

## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Grease muffin cups or line with muffin liners.
2. Combine flour, sugar, salt and baking powder.
3. Place vegetable oil into a 1 cup measuring cup; add the egg and enough milk to reach the 1 cup mark.
4. Mix the wet ingredients with the dry ingredients.
5. Fold in the ingredient that you're experimenting with.
6. Fill muffin cups right to the top.
7. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes.



## TRY ELFIE'S BLACK SESAME PASTE

This is usually for filling in tang yuan (a Chinese dessert that is a ball of glutinous rice flour - like mochi), but can equally be used with waffle mixture, pancake mixture, or even with this muffin recipe. Note that the fat content in this paste makes the muffins so fluffy that they could be difficult to get out of the muffin tray. It's highly recommended to use muffin liners or reduce the amount of oil in the muffin mixture if you want to avoid detaching the muffin tops unintentionally.

## INGREDIENTS

½ cup black sesame seeds  
½ cup granulated sugar  
¼ cup lard

## DIRECTIONS

1. Toast the black sesame seeds in a small pan on low heat. Stir frequently to make sure they don't burn. You'll know they're ready when you hear popping sounds, and you get a nice aroma.
2. Transfer the toasted black sesame seeds into a bowl to cool.
3. In a food processor or blender, finely grind the sesame seeds.
4. Add the granulated sugar and use a spatula to mix together.
5. Place the lard on the small pan that was used to heat the black sesame (it should still have some latent heat, which will be sufficient to melt the lard).
6. Add the melted lard to the sesame and sugar mixture, and stir until well combined.
7. Transfer the combined mixture into a bowl and put in the refrigerator for about 30 minutes to harden the mixture slightly for easier handling.





“ On Mother’s Day, my husband gifted me with donut baking trays, as a nod to my donut obsession during pregnancy. It gave me an excuse to try my hand at making donuts.”



# LOCKDOWN DONUTS

*Adapted from a "To Die For" recipe on allrecipes*

On Mother's Day, my husband gifted me with donut baking trays, as a nod to my donut obsession during pregnancy. It gave me an excuse to try my hand at making donuts. Below is the second recipe I tried, which led to a slightly fluffier donut than the first batch I attempted (recipe not shared here). It could still do with a bit more fat, but give it a go and let me know your thoughts!

## INGREDIENTS

2 tbsp unsalted butter  
1/8 cup vegetable oil  
1/4 cup granulated sugar  
1/6 cup brown sugar  
1 large egg  
3/4 tsp baking powder  
1/8 tsp baking soda  
3/8 tsp salt  
1/2 tsp vanilla extract  
1 1/3 cup all-purpose flour  
1/2 cup milk

PREP TIME: 15 mins

BAKE TIME: 10 mins

TOTAL TIME: 25 mins

YIELDS: 9 small donuts

## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Lightly grease the donut pans.
2. In a medium-sized mixing bowl, beat together the butter, vegetable oil, and sugars until smooth.
3. Add the eggs, beating to combine.
4. Stir in the baking powder, baking soda, salt, and vanilla extract.
5. Stir the flour into the butter mixture alternating with the milk, beginning and ending with the flour, and making sure everything is thoroughly combined. The batter will be fairly thick.
6. Spoon the batter into a piping bag, or use a Ziplock bag and cut a hole in the corner, and pipe the batter into the donut pan, filling the wells to about 1/4 inch shy of the rim.
7. Bake the donuts for 10 minutes.
8. Remove them from the oven and wait 5 minutes before turning them out of the pans onto a rack.



## TO FROST THE DONUTS, TRY ELFIE'S CHOPPED-KITCHEN CHOCOLATE GLAZE

Find some dark chocolate in your pantry. The lower the sugar content, the better. You will need about 1/2 cup.

## OTHER INGREDIENTS

2 tbsp unsalted butter  
2 tsp honey  
2 tsp water

## DIRECTIONS

1. Place chocolate into a microwave safe bowl.
2. Add butter, honey, and water.
3. Melt in the microwave in 20 second increments, stirring each time, until completely melted and smooth.
4. Dip the tops of the donuts into the chocolate glaze, and then cover with sprinkles as desired.

Let cool for 20 minutes until the glaze is set, and enjoy.



# PATRICIA NG

Born and raised in Hong Kong, Patricia is a British Hongkonger who spent two decades in the UK before relocating to Singapore 4 years ago.

She is an Art & Design Media Creative graduate who is currently in commodities specializing in marketing intelligence for a European steel producer. As her job requires no creative skills, she enjoys injecting her creativity during her leisure activities such as cooking, latte art and gardening.

The indoor Patricia is a pianist by avocation, and though she loves mastering her creative cooking in the kitchen, her true passion is being outdoors and engaging in active sports. She is a keen cyclist, triathlete, an avid underwater photographer and a divemaster. Patricia is also an ardent globetrotter who travels frequently for work and leisure in pre-COVID times.



# LOCKDOWN CARNIVAL



I first heard about COVID-19 in late December while I was on a 2 month “bleisure” trip in Europe and Central America. I didn’t quite comprehend the seriousness of the outbreak then, even though Singapore was one of the first countries affected by the pandemic outside China.

The first Singapore case was confirmed on January 23<sup>rd</sup>. When the news reached me, I was in London for a weekend stopover. I initially extended my stay in London, thinking it would be safer. But as the virus started erupting globally, I realised there would be no way of avoiding it, and flew back to Singapore the first week of February.

With cases increasing in Singapore, many started to work from home and all business meetings were cancelled. All my business trips to China previously scheduled till mid-April were cancelled and HR told me to stay put and work from home.



Looks like half a leg but I am fine. Whole leg still intact!

date, I was hit by a car while cycling. Though the injury was not severe, my movement was limited for 2 weeks.

The accident officially put me on lockdown life 1 month ahead. With lockdown in place until further notice, I found myself with an abundance of time. It felt nice to spend more time at home, doing things I wouldn’t have

found some tennis balls I purchased previously. Along with the freshly delivered new toilet rolls, I thought to myself, *“What can I do to keep myself entertained and remain in good spirits? Let’s have fun! Let’s make a Lockdown Carnival”*.

The idea was to make use of objects found at home, use my imagination and recreate fun and easy childhood games. Some might think, *“Oh that’s very sad, you live alone and have no one to play with”*. But it was just as enjoyable playing on my own. When social gatherings are acceptable again, these games can still continue.



Make it fun. Lockdown High Tea with a 3D Latte.

**What can I do to keep myself entertained and remain in good spirits? Let’s have fun! Let’s make a Lockdown Carnival.”**

Suddenly, I could foresee life was about to be very different from what I experienced in the last four years. Pre-COVID-19, I would rarely stay longer than 3 weeks in Singapore without travelling elsewhere.

As an avid triathlete, my only consolation was the freedom to still be able to go outdoors to exercise. And yet on one fateful day, exactly one month before the official lockdown

otherwise. Pre-COVID-19 life was always so busy, I never got to enjoy the apartment. So in the mornings I started creating 3D latte art and monitoring my urban garden. In the evenings I would cook and make cocktails. Other times, I played the piano, organised photos and did some light recovery workouts. Shockingly, 24 hours a day wasn’t enough.

As I was tidying my storage one day, I

I had such an amazing start to the year, and though COVID-19 changed it all, I realized lockdown needn’t be boring. Even in solitude, you can still spice it up. If you’re living with company, these games are even more fun because there’s competition. It also keeps everyone active.

Time does go by faster during lockdown when you’re enjoying life, even in isolation.



# LOCKDOWN KNOCK DOWN



“I always like a challenge in just about anything in life, because I want to improve and do better each time. COVID-19 has me locked down but isn’t going to knock me down.”

Tin toss game is one of my favourites at carnivals. To transform it to a lockdown home edition, just stack toilet rolls in a pyramid formation like the photo here. Then you’re ready to go. It’s a perfect quick-setup game. If you don’t have any tennis balls at home, you can use a toilet roll. That also works.

I set myself some ground rules, just like any other sport (I take them seriously when it comes to competition). No cheating, and do not make it easy for myself either. Only 2 shots are allowed to clear the toilet rolls off the surface from 3m/10ft away. After a few rounds, I thought, why not make it even more interesting? Or let’s say I was more lazy at having to fetch the balls and re-stack the toilet rolls so quickly. Let’s do 2 sets, 4 balls.

This is a fun game you can play and practice your tossing skills at home. Before you know it, you might be taking home the big prize from the real carnival. I can totally see this as a home drinking game when I can have friends over. Loser of the round drinks. Fun!





# LOCKDOWN KNOCK DOWN

## *Level Up*



### Let's spice it up and make it harder.

As I have a hammock chair, I made use of the hanging frame by adding 2 extra toilet rolls to each side and gave myself 2 extra shots.

I know not everyone has a hammock at home, but think outside the box, look around your home - chair, ladder, boxes, whatever you can use as props. You'll be surprised.

Finally, the new addition - the **Roller**. Here, to make it even more fun like the carnival, I even swing the hammock chair before I start throwing so the toilet roll on the roller is constantly moving.

Whether you're playing this at home alone or with your housemates or family, this game can be very addictive. The constant movements of fetching and picking up the toilet rolls to restack can get quite exhausting. You're basically burning calories at home and keeping yourself entertained at the same time.

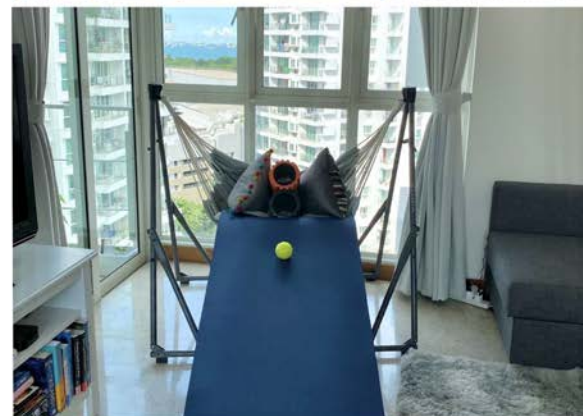
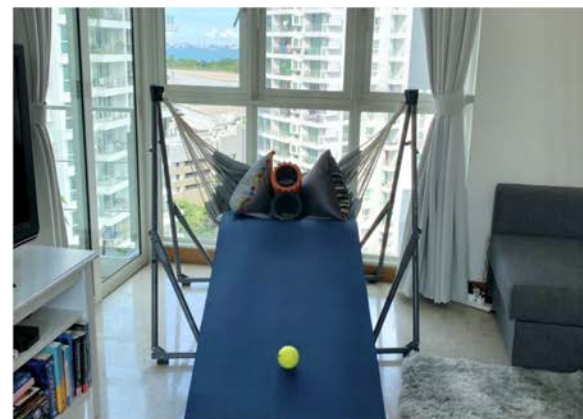
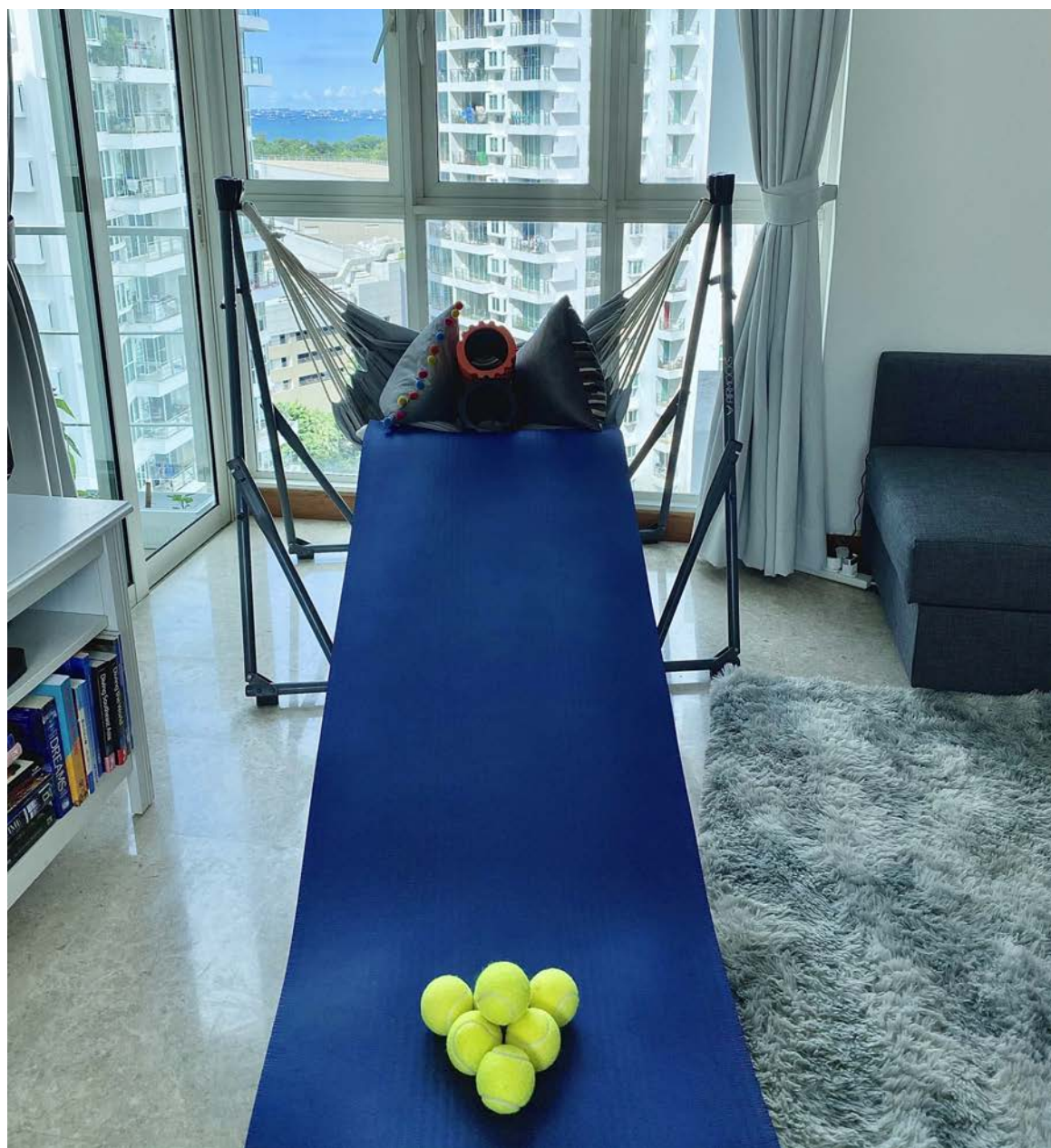
### It's a win-win situation!

Tip: Put on your favourite party tunes to create that fun vibe to max.





# LOCKDOWN SKEE-BALL



Another one of my favourite games at carnivals and arcades since childhood. Remember the times you attempted to win that big prize by trying to get all your balls into the holes for the best possible highest score? Luckily I had some good props at home to help me build the lockdown home version of Skee-Ball. If it wasn't COVID-19, I don't think I would have ever used my yoga mat and exercise massage rollers for any other purposes.

## RUNWAY BUILDING

Building the runway is probably the hardest task here.

Use a mixture of cushions, books, boxes, chairs, anything you can find at home to create the base runway underneath the mat. Something solid and easy to make a smooth surface would be more ideal for a concrete inclined runway to lay your mat over.

## BULLSEYE RINGS

I have 2 rollers here used as the bullseye rings to aim for. Obviously not everyone has an empty inner structural roller at home or even 2, but it's a good investment to have one if you don't. They're very affordable, and a great exercise recovery and massage tool. Especially at times like lockdown when you can't have a real massage, these massage rollers provide an effective deep tissue massage. It helps to release painful knots and stimulates blood flow. Now you can even do more with them as a home carnival prop.

If you don't have a roller, you can easily use alternatives like a pot or a jug you find in your kitchen.

You can even recycle old plastic bottles. Just DIY and cut off the top to create the same effect.





10 recycling bottles.  
2 toilet rolls.  
4m+/13ft+ of empty floor space.  
Now you have 10-pin bowling at home 24/7.





# LOCKDOWN BOWLING



## Marking the floor

To make the game easier, mark the floor with some tape or stickers. This will prevent you having to spend more time aligning the bottles every time when you need to reform the pins.

I personally think making circles as pinsetter marks will be better than crosses. However, that requires more time if you don't have any circle paper or stickers. I've only done crosses here. If you have circle Post-it tags similar size to the bottles or cut out paper circles and stick them down, that will also work.

## Lane

You don't want to be too close to the pins. Best is to find a long stretch of floor space. I've set my bowling foul line to 4.7m/15ft. I think this is a good proportional distance for home considering the size of the pins and the size of the balls aka toilet rolls.



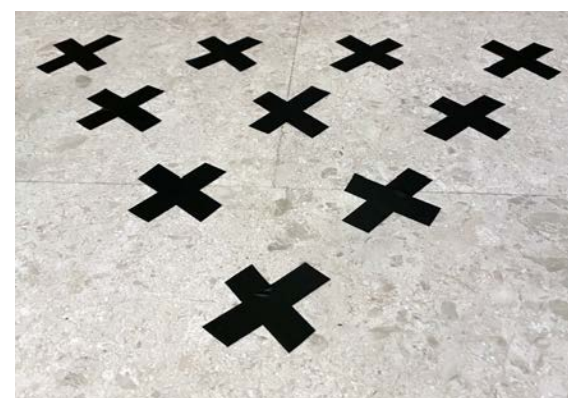
Step 1: Fill each bottle evenly with a small amount of water so they have a bit of weight.



Step 2: You can achieve alignment by measuring the space, or just eyeball it, which was what I did.



Step 3: Finally, mark the floor for easier re-alignment after each round.







# AMNA BASHEER

Originally hailing from Kerala in South India, Amna Basheer lived in Los Angeles for 8 years and currently resides in Dubai. She grew up in a devout Muslim family and moved to LA at 18 to pursue her passion of art. Amna now works at Art Painting LAB, a studio in the United Arab Emirates that specializes in murals. She paints surreal representations of the female psyche.

She did not write this bio. If she did, it would just say, “I draw women.”



[@amnabasheer](#)

# Q&A WITH AMNA BASHEER



**Q:** What about your pandemic experiences were memorable for you? How did it differ for you where you are now, compared with any news you may have heard about the pandemic here in LA (where you used to live)?

**AB:** Well, things were pretty strict in Dubai as far as regulations. There was [a] period of three weeks where we needed to apply for a permit on the government police website in order to leave the house - and had to enter locations and time and reason. And then when people abused this, we were only allowed to apply for a permit every three days. Couldn't even take the dog out, we were only allowed to take them out for ten minutes tops - to go to the bathroom right outside the house.

**Q:** When did this all start to ease up? How was being indoors?

**AB:** Curfew was till 8 pm for about six weeks and now it's been extended to 11. Huge fines of up to \$2,000 for people caught outside after curfew!

Things started easing up a couple of weeks ago when restaurants and beaches were allowed to open back

up. I'm a huge walk-around-and-swim-in-the-ocean-and-go-the-to-the-beach-a-couple-times-a-week sort of person, so being indoors was a tad depressing, but my dog kept me sane for sure.

Also ate a lot more ice cream than I ever have before, haha.

**Q:** Were you able to do any art? (I see you do a lot of outdoor art.)

**AB:** Well my job has a pretty extensive design phase, so we'd been designing art without executing until things opened back up. Been working full time still during quarantine but only digitally, no murals until a week ago.

**Q:** That's fortunate that you were able to keep working digitally from home! It sounds like a lot of preparation goes into the art that goes on display. Can you talk a little about the process of bringing clients' requests to life?

**AB:** Honestly, I was so busy with work, and working from home had blurred work boundaries so extensively - I barely made any art of my own.

It's a team of 12 artists, but we only have three of them in design. The rest are business development or executors, etc. It's challenging designing for clients because the art is really commercial and neutral and can't be provocative because of Dubai's cultural restrictions.

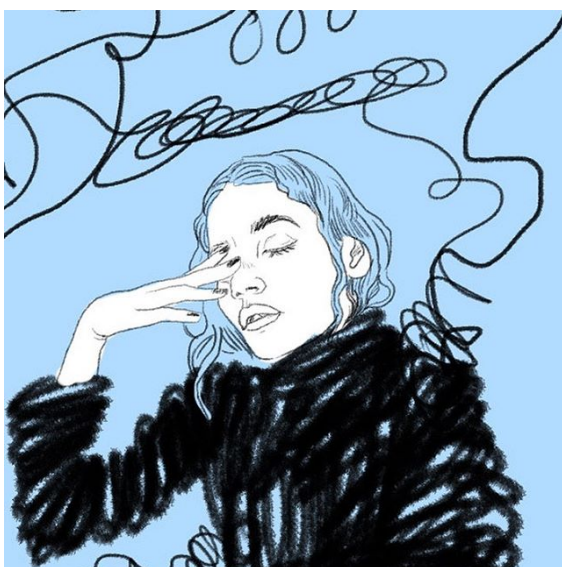
**Q:** Did you develop other routines during quarantine, such as cooking or gathering friends/family online? How has quarantine changed you?

**AB:** Spent a lot more time reading and honestly got closer to my dog during this time. I started fostering her in January and she's 2, so it took a while to get used to me. I've lead a pretty chaotic life with almost no routine but having a dog during quarantine definitely put time in perspective. It also brought me closer to family because we were all on different continents when quarantine hit and have been having daily Zoom calls for at least 15 minutes since.

I never realized I needed external stimuli to create until quarantine hit. Every day kind of being the same and not allowed to travel or try random new stuff on a regular [basis] really



Rejected poster concept I was pretty into.



Unraveling #anxietymonster #perpetualnaptime



Spiraling #brainworm #alwaystired #thingy



# Q&A WITH AMNA BASHEER



took a hit on creativity.

**Q:** What does home mean to you as an artist and how does your art affect people?

**AB:** I'm not a homebody at all; I kind of use it as a space to sleep and store my stuff. It's probably why I've never been much of a decorator. Also, I really enjoy up and moving to places and not staying rooted in one spot. Most of my art deals with a lot of state-of-mind topics, and as long as people can relate to what I'm thinking, I'll have an audience.



LOVING / #inktober #RIP #birdistheword



Portrait commission of my homie @happywithasecret



Five storey fisher lady I designed and executed with the team [@artpaintinglab](#)



LIVE BAIT / Commission piece for @gregwillcutyou



# REFLECT ACCEPT [ENVISION]





# ADA KO

Ada is a designer and self-described creative generalist, currently living in San Francisco by way of Hong Kong, Chicago, Providence and Cincinnati.

After 14 years of experience leading design teams and managing product and experience initiatives for companies like P&G (Febreze, Swiffer, Pampers) and Clorox (Burt's Bees, Brita), and leading the creative team at the iconic design brand Heath Ceramics, Ada started her own creative studio in 2019. Inspired by the way systems in nature operate in vital, elegant and symbiotic ways, Ada reimagines how we think about and interact with the objects around us. By thoughtfully examining our beliefs, habits, knowledge and learned behaviors, we can perhaps live more fulfilling, connected and creative lives.

Her current projects reframe how we hold and store things (via a collection of multifunctional vessels); how we capture and express ideas (via a system of notebooks); and how we nurture creative potential within ourselves (exploring new approaches to coaching and mentorship). Her piece, "A calm space in a drawn circle," contemplates the powerfully grounding effect of simple creative rituals.



[@tiffinstudio](#)

# SIMPLE CREATIVE RITUALS



In the first few weeks after the shelter in place order was enacted, I was a mess. I consider myself reasonably competent in life, and on a ‘normal’ day, can be a productive, creative, contributing member of society. But suddenly, like so many of us, I didn’t know what to do with myself – where to direct my energy, how to spend my time, how to keep myself and my loved ones safe, figuring out what information was true, what wasn’t, weighing risks.

I recognize that I’m in a very fortunate position – I don’t have to worry about basic survival, my health is good, I work from home, I don’t have kids – but the feeling of helplessness and lack of control was really debilitating. I feel a strong moral obligation to give back to others (my love language is Acts of Service!), so I directed my mental capacity and resources outwards: making sure our household was safe and fed, donating what money I could, making face shields, checking on friends and neighbors, reading every piece of news and report I could find, shipping supplies to my parents. It was invigorating and satisfying, but (you can guess where this goes...) one night around the 4-week mark I found myself sobbing for an hour in a fetal position, stuck on the Big Feelings train of despair, confused about the state of the world, and for some reason mourning people and animals I’d cared about who had passed away nearly a decade ago.

Through tears, I tried in a rational way to explain to my patient and concerned boyfriend what was going on in my head, which consisted of alternating between laughing at the weird magnitude of my feelings and crying under the weight of remorse. We ran out of Kleenex. I thought about the stories I’d heard from my friends about their emotional toddlers, and suddenly felt a lot of empathy for the toddlers.

That emotional episode ended up mentally moving a lot of stuff that needed moving, and being a really helpful cathartic release. But it was a stark reminder that, yet again, I had to put my own mask on before helping others with theirs, literally.

I needed an anchor, something that was easy to grab onto, to steady me in a tumultuous sea of Scary New World. Practice self care, they told me. But later, as I sat in a bath of tepid water, candle smoking on the ledge beside me, something didn’t feel right, and I found myself worrying about all of the water I was wasting. I tried doing yoga but my energy and mindspace weren’t there. I was too fidgety and distracted to meditate. Watching TV shows made my brain feel dull, cooking was not as joyful as it once was, and focusing on work (though I do love my work) didn’t give me a break from the mental load I desperately wanted to get away from. I needed something else.



# HOW IT STARTED



## *Enter: Art therapy, stage right*

A quick note before we dive in: I've always been – and probably always will be – an art school kid, so using my hands and senses has always been second nature for me. However, I strongly believe that everyone has the capacity to tap into – and benefit deeply from – the parts of your mind that fuel and are fueled by creative activity. I'm not going to go into the reasons why this is the case, because there are a lot of legitimate studies that show that art therapy and creative activity are beneficial, but anecdotally I can say that it has been hugely helpful for me, especially over the past couple months.

This realization began by accident, when my good friend Ellen (@ellenkyle), who I went to college with, started hosting weekly art classes on Instagram Live. She loves plants, so channeled that interest into a 1-hour, very casual, botany-inspired drawing and coloring session. Every week, she introduces a new illustration and takes the class through a quick tutorial, interspersed with interesting plant facts and friendly commentary. I started joining the classes to support her new outlet, along with a diverse group of her friends and family: the youngest participant is 9 years old, the oldest is in her 70s!

I started really looking forward to Ellen's Sunday morning art classes and noticed that the same people showed up consistently, every single week. *Something* was working for us.

This weekly class grew into a self-driven, almost-daily habit for me.



I started doodling and painting in my own time, using the principles that I felt made her class work so well: keeping it really simple and low-investment, focusing on the process and not the outcomes, and just having fun with it. To me, figuring out a simple creative ritual that works for you is very different from other positive rituals or habits, like having tea in the morning, doing yoga, going for a walk, or meditating – though there can be a meditative quality to it. There's something magical about reinforcing the visual-physical connection in a focused, expressive and non-goal-oriented way that lights up the brain in a healing way. Putting marks on paper and drawing lines and circles pulls your psyche out of stressful survival mode and into something that feels light and optimistic. You don't have to babysit a timer, there's no science, no performance review.

# A RECIPE FOR A CREATIVE RITUAL



## Ada's Notes

Graphite pencil, black  
colored pencil

Travel watercolor set  
that I haven't used in  
10 years, colored  
markers in 2 colors

6x9 watercolor paper

## TIME NEEDED

Under 1 hour, or while you're talking on the phone

## INGREDIENTS

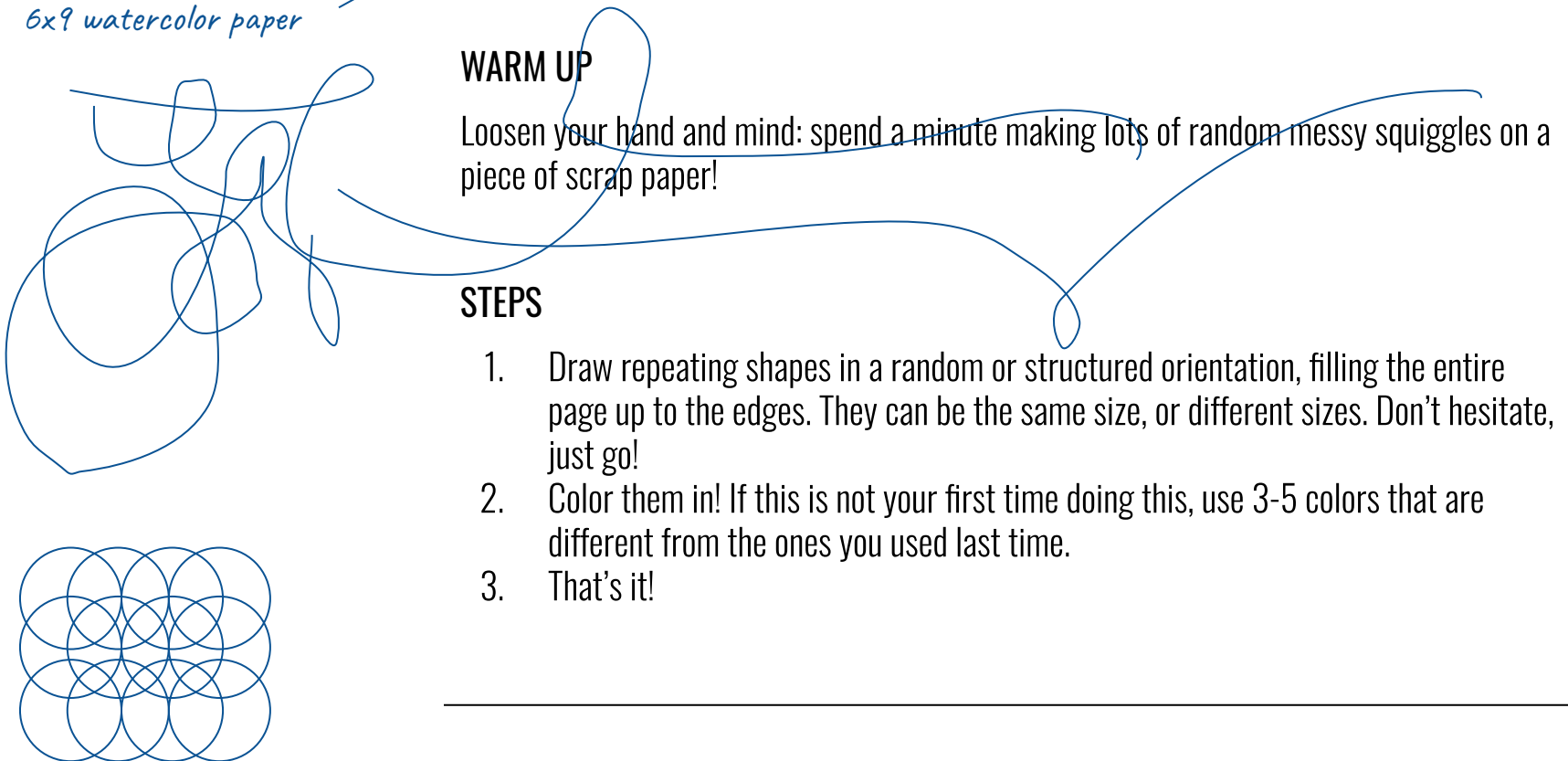
- \_ Something that draws lines, e.g. permanent pen/pencil
- \_ Something that applies color, e.g. markers/watercolor paints
- \_ Something you can draw on, e.g. copier paper/watercolor paper/a notebook

## WARM UP

Loosen your hand and mind: spend a minute making lots of random messy squiggles on a piece of scrap paper!

## STEPS

1. Draw repeating shapes in a random or structured orientation, filling the entire page up to the edges. They can be the same size, or different sizes. Don't hesitate, just go!
2. Color them in! If this is not your first time doing this, use 3-5 colors that are different from the ones you used last time.
3. That's it!



As with all recipes, this is very open to interpretation and just one of many ways you can explore. There is no 'right' recipe; this is just where I am with it right now. The nuances may evolve but the basic ingredients are the same. Kudos to my friend [@ellenkyle](#) for the inspiration!

This activity - through the simple act of mark-making - offers a semblance of control and visible progress, but is unburdened by specific expectations or needs.

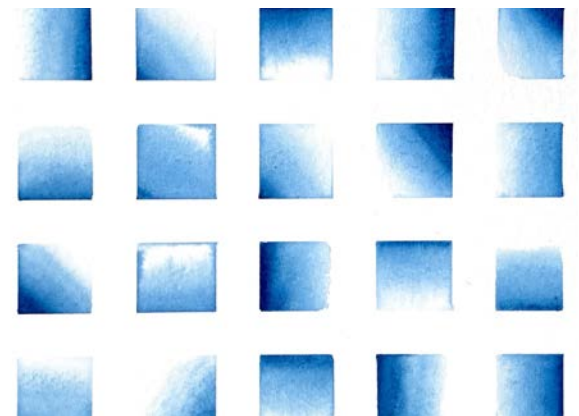
## Don't worry about creating a masterpiece, just be present.

For me, using watercolor paint forces the right level of unpredictability (the flow of the water and the way the color spreads has a mind of its own), but the results are inherently interesting and beautiful in their own way.

Pro tip: If you stick to a small-ish canvas, you can fill it up quickly and get a nice feeling of accomplishment!




# PRACTICE, PRACTICE!





These are actually just repeating heart shapes!




Gold makes everything better.

I literally worked on only squares and rectangles for 3 weeks.

From one of the art class challenges: to draw leaves with a single line, not allowed to lift the pen from the paper.

Stumbled upon this color in my paint palette and have decided to only use this color for a while, and see what happens. Constraints are good!



# SOME TIPS



## Don't invest *too* much

Sometimes, investing in brand new gear when embarking on a new hobby or practice sets some weirdly unrealistic expectations for what progress or success should look like. It can turn it into a burden, and increases the risk for potential disappointment. Does this sound familiar? “I bought a new (object) for a new (hobby) and I’m kind of bummed that I didn’t get better at the (hobby).” Or, “I spent money on this (object/hobby) so really I hope I’ll like it.”

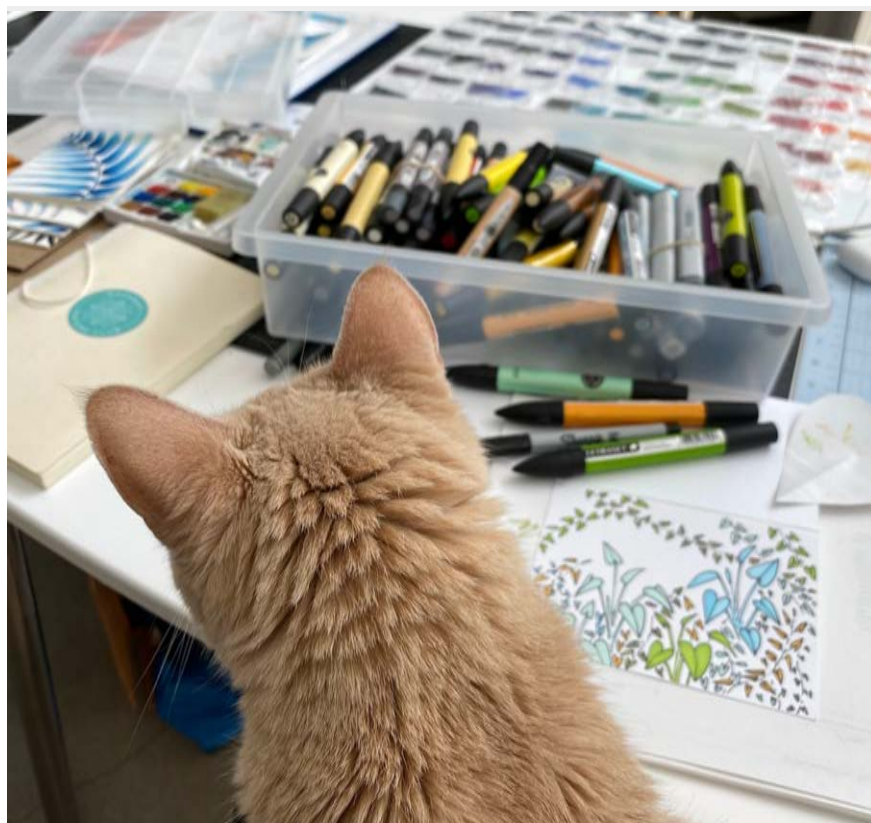
Go in with no expectations, don’t buy anything new, just keep it simple. Your time, your focus, and your commitment are enough. Use a pencil, a ballpoint pen, your kids’ markers. Find some scrap paper, use the back of an envelope, old business cards, copier paper.

## Give yourself constraints

Constraints keep things from spiraling out of control, avoid analysis paralysis, and eliminate the fear of the blank white canvas and not knowing where to start. They reduce mental load and let you focus on just taking action. Choose a medium (pen? pencil?), a motif or theme (plants? squares? squiggles?), a format (2x2” squares of paper? A4?), a time of day (morning, evening, before bed, with coffee?), an amount of time (5 minutes? An hour?), a limited palette (just green, or black and white?) and run with it!

## Tune in to what you’re feeling in the moment

A simple creative ritual can help connect your thoughts to your feelings to your body to the pen to the paper. What are you thinking about? How are you feeling? Can you connect that to a color, a shape, a word?



## Just show up

The goal is to have a consistent activity to come back to, an anchor if you will, that can perhaps become a reliable ritual that helps exercise the creative side of your being and offer a sense of balance or control in an otherwise unpredictable world. Unlike so many other things that require our time and attention, this practice requires no judgement, has no audience but yourself, serves no one’s needs but your own, has no expected deliverable, sets no quality bar to meet. There is no way you can suck at it; just by showing up and being present, you’ve won.

## Have fun!

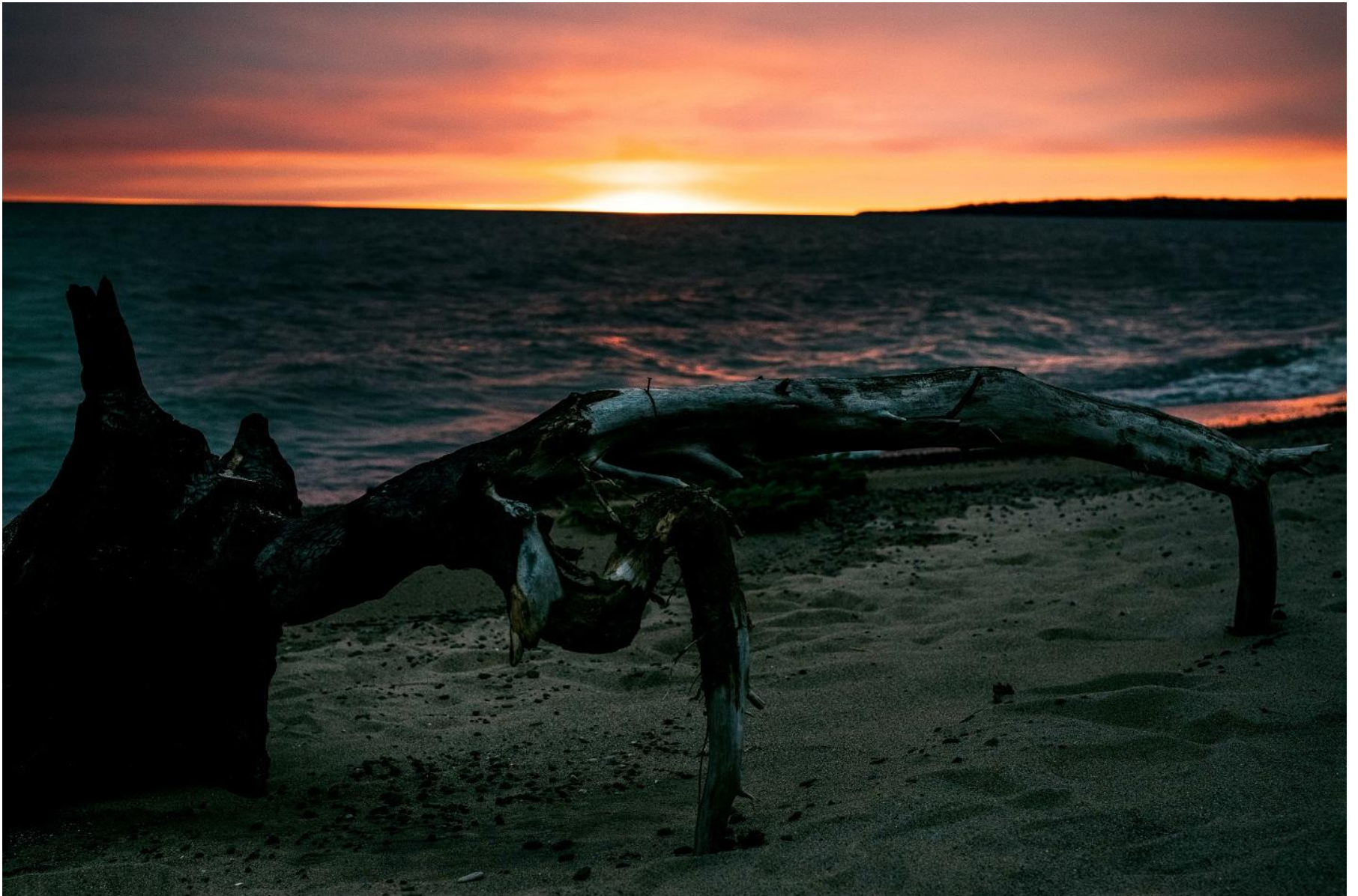
Give it a try. You might start to daydream, you might feel nothing, you might notice a sense of calm afterwards. But – as with any habit – if you look back you’ll start to see the interesting path you’ve left behind you; a chronicle of where you’ve been, of good days and bad. But most importantly, a simple creative ritual can be a stabilizing walking stick that is always with you, supporting you in your journey forward.



# SIOBHAN FISHER

Siobhan Fisher is an award winning international portrait photographer from Hong Kong, currently residing in Rochester, New York, where she lives with her two daughters. A believer in legacies and the importance of history, Siobhan's work is rooted in the idea that portraiture links generations and roots families.





Change doesn't need an audience.

We find ourselves in lockdown with a bubble of thoughts and memories, and so much more time for self reflection than has ever previously been possible – I think it's good. We are razing our lives to the ground and rebuilding. We are having insane moments of revelation while smiling, and making yet more pancakes, and doing yet another round of dishes. We're remembering skills we had and hobbies we loved – who we were, where we came from - we're examining a concept of what home means – we get home safe, work from home, are safe at home.

But what does that mean for a girl like me?

I was born in Hong Kong. I was raised in Hong Kong. When I close my eyes, I can smell its streets and hear the cars and the language, and see the lights. Taxis should be red. Escalators up mountains are normal. Curry fish balls are life.

But when I tell people I'm from Hong Kong, they look at me sideways. With my freckles. And my accent. And my hair. My parents told me every year that we'd be moving "home" soon.

Ireland is not my home.

Hong Kong is in my bones – and when I think "home," that is my country. Even now, at this crossroads of my life, with COVID-19 raging and divorce imminent, Hong Kong is where I want to be.





I have now also realised that it's possible to have a completely life transforming experience with another person, without them even knowing it's happening. I was 11 when I fell in love with Henry, over a borrowed game of *Day of The Tentacle* and Hong Kong's free phone calls that allowed him to talk me through 10 hours of gameplay in a single day. It was the day that I understood what it was to connect with another human, to not force a conversation, or fall into awkward silence.

I discovered when I was 27 that he had no recollection of this – but it didn't matter, because at 37, without doubt or hesitation, without fear of judgement, he was still the first person I called when I left my husband. It made me realise that roots, for a person like me, don't have to be places – they can be people.

(He still doesn't love me - just in case you were hoping for a Hallmark-style ending to this little story.)



Now, I look at my all-American, blonde-haired, blue-eyed girls – with their snowmen in winter and sprinklers in summer, High School of The Arts and pledge of allegiance, and I wonder, do they feel home in their bones? Do they feel that understood? Creek wading, sledding, fireworks, hot dogs and s'mores. The stuff of *Babysitters Club* and *Sweet Valley High*.

I want so very badly for them to have the roots I wasn't allowed.

This time has been a gift not to work from home. To take my camera out with me for my enjoyment, not my job. To load up the car with no set time that we have to be back. To pull out the bird book, and hunt for fossils in the creek beds. To find feathers and collect shells. To fall in love with new friends, and reconnect with old ones.

A time undefined by bank balances, or bookings.

A time to change without the world watching.









# HUI-YING TSAI

Hui-Ying Tsai is a Taiwanese/American interdisciplinary artist based in Brooklyn. She received a BFA from National Kaohsiung Normal University and an MFA from San Francisco Art Institute. Her work is held in public collections including the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts and Taitung Art Museum. She has received residencies, fellowships and grants from MacDowell Colony, Joan Mitchell Foundation, The Millay Colony, I-Park Foundation, MASS MoCA Studio, Anderson Ranch Arts Center, Cheng Long Wetlands International Art Project, Pier-2 Art Center, and Red Bull Arts Detroit, to name a few. In 2018, she received the Austronesian International Arts Award from Taitung Art Museum.

Her work is featured in the books *An Illustrated History of Taiwan Art* and *History of Fine Art in Postwar Taiwan* for her pioneer contribution to printmaking in the digital age. She is the founder of Project Habitation and the co-founder of the new media art collective, Circuladium.

Tsai's inspiration comes from literature, symbolism and human relation with nature. She reflects on the symbolism of objects and artifacts holding the cultural or historical significance that underline the perceptions and values of the community.





# RESTLESS TIDES

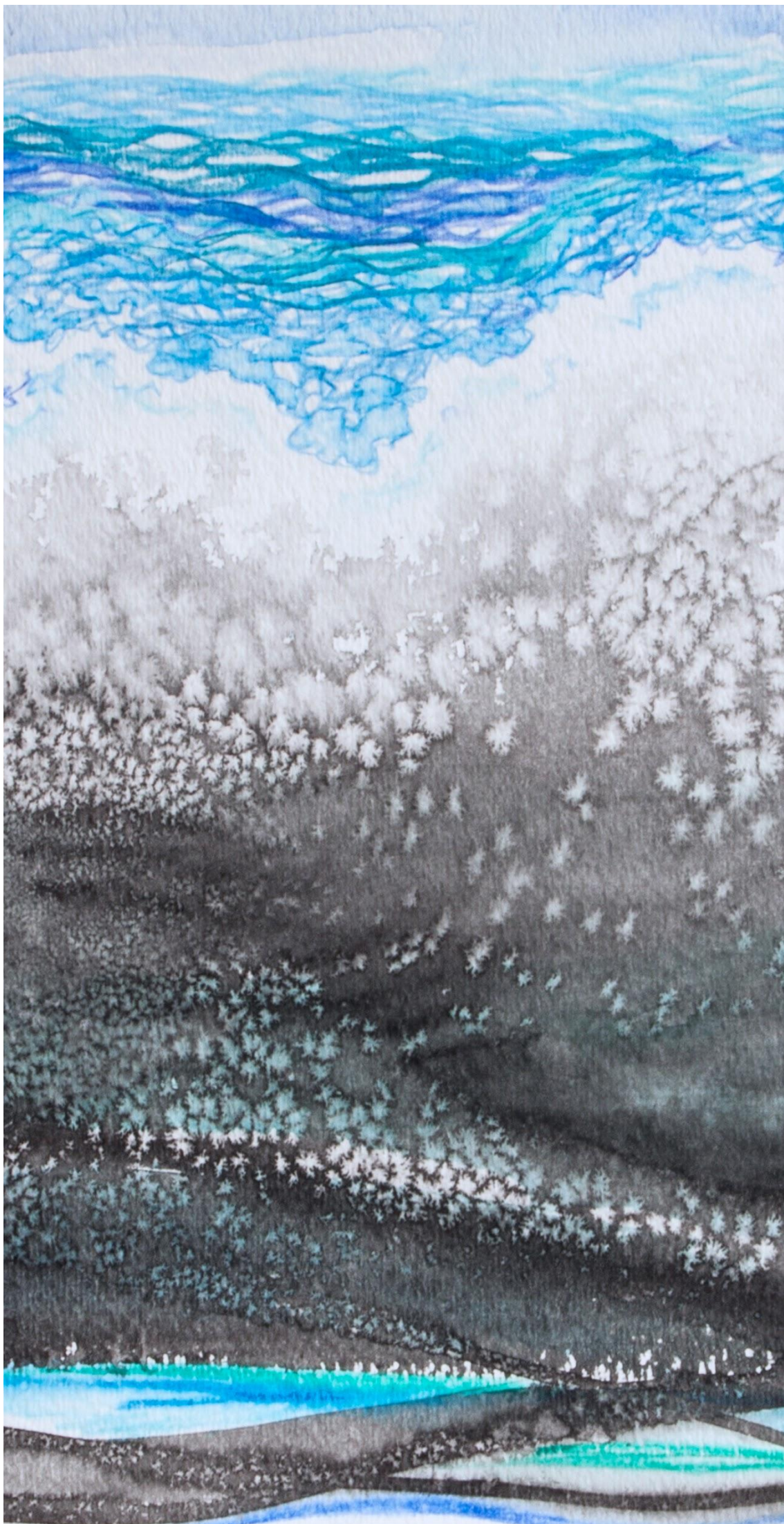


Restless Tides is the title of an interactive installation project utilizing the conductivity of body, water, and salt to trigger sounds and light. It was scheduled to be realized during my residency at Joan Mitchell Center from March to May. It is postponed to next year due to the impact of COVID-19. Without the large studio space and the community I planned to engage in New Orleans, I am forced to work on the concept on paper at home in the kitchen. This experience led me to rethink the process of my work and reimagine a new normal to which I might need to adapt my practice.

The “restless tides” refer to the condition of mind, the blood and water rushing through the body, and the tidal force. These are the drawings and small pieces I made at home reflecting on the same subject of exploration, mortality, and spirituality. Here I attempt to share my process and experiment through the expression of the zine.

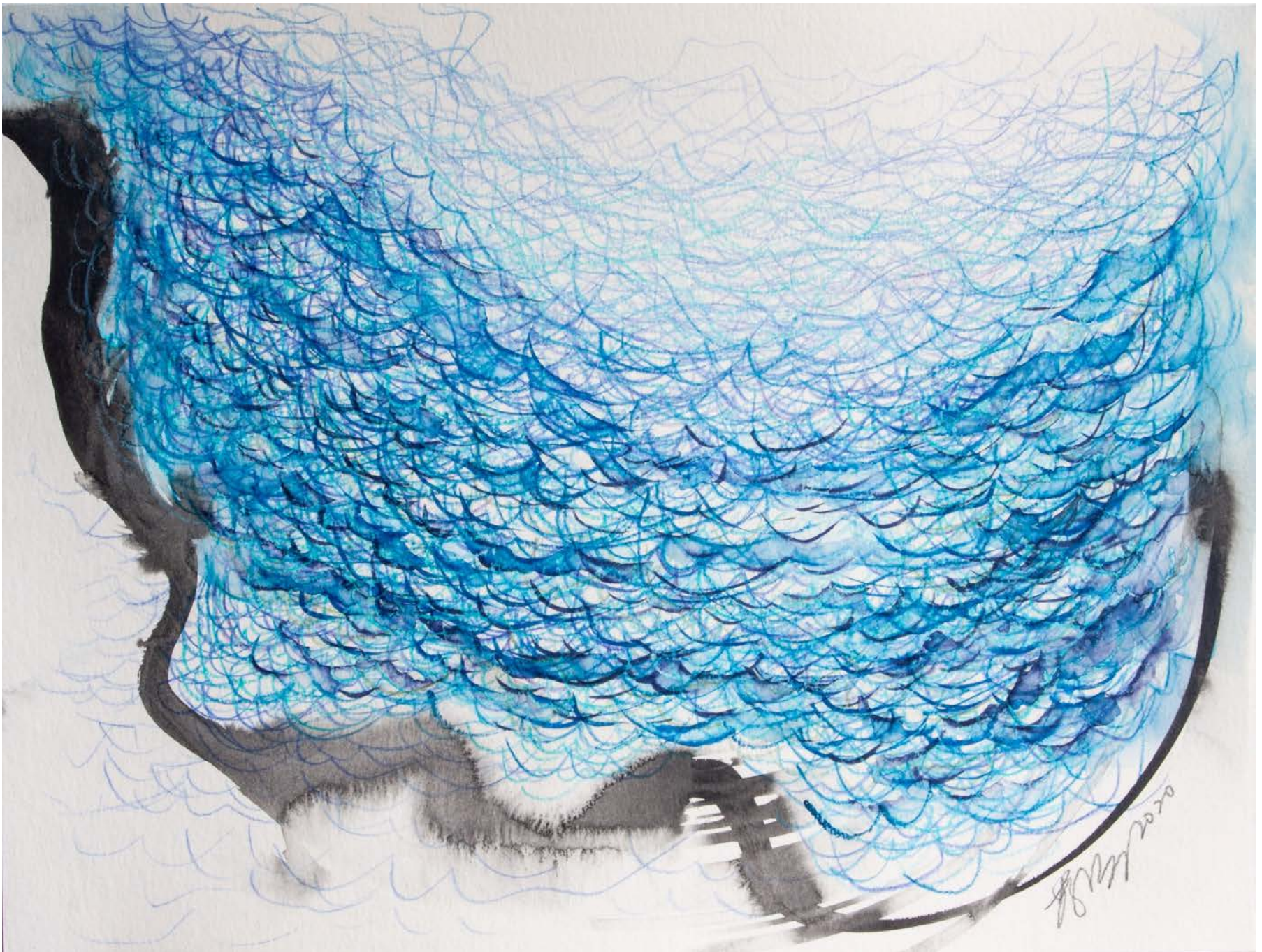
Now, my artistic challenges are the limited space to create, the tight budget and supplies, and how to exhibit.

But the most relevant challenge is how to self-care for mental wellness during this globally accelerated unrest while fighting to stem the pandemic. How to truly dwell in our hearts might take an equal amount of effort. I hope staying creative and resourceful can shine a light on the future.





**WATER.** The unknown is the place afar, and the place after death. Many ancient beliefs have overlapped stories about the “other side”, the “underworld”, and shared the beliefs of reincarnation and rebirth. Our ancestors ventured out to the massive ocean, to the unknown, observed the constellations, and used them as a guide to fill our minds with wonder. Humans first began to travel fast by sailing on the surface of the water, yet today, when we look into the darkness of the ocean, our knowledge of it is still less than our understanding of outer space.



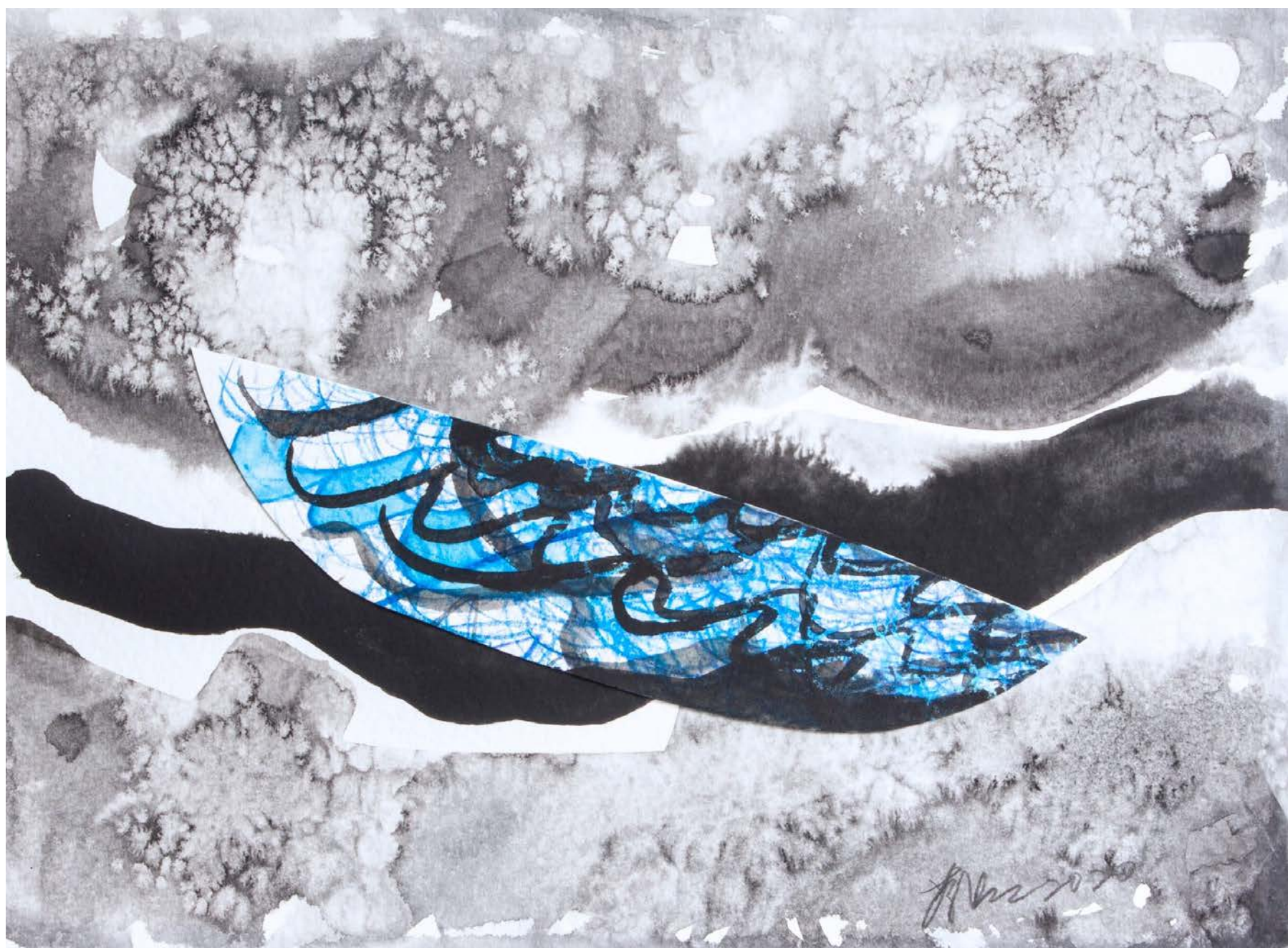


**SHELL.** The self-contained universe. The first person who picked one up must have been astounded by such a thing, emerging from the mysterious mass of water. This delicate ritual instrument seems able to communicate with the unknown. It was once alive. Its molecules circulated between life and death and traveled between living and inanimate forms while I was looking the other way.





**VESSEL.** The ancient forms of human wonder. The mud encounters fire and concludes human creativity. The ancestors came from the clay vessel, and inside the vessel is where the soul dwells after the flesh is withered away. Was it a beautiful accident that god was created?



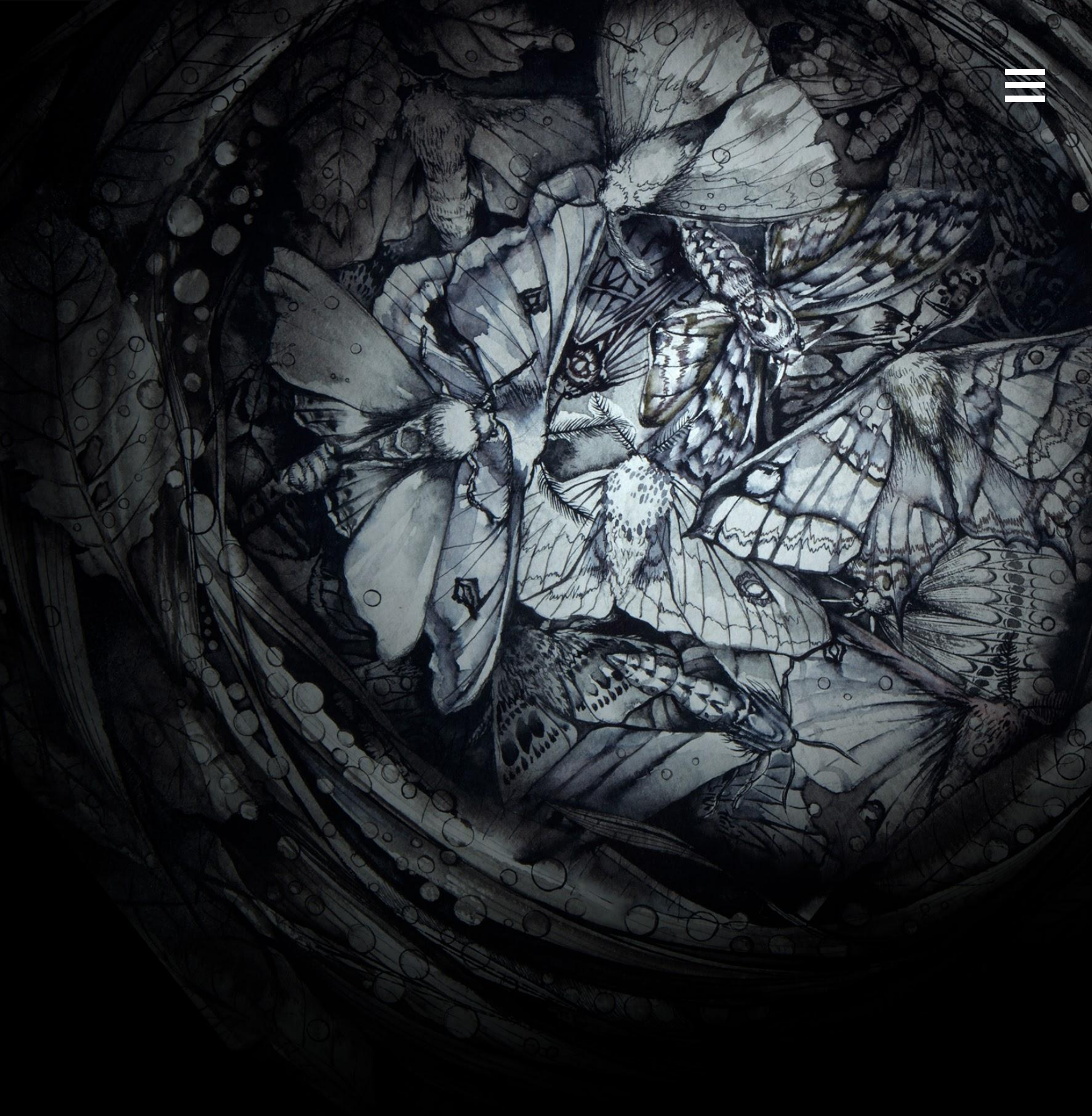












## MOTH.

A fragile Appearance of Aura after the drastic internal storm. Their bodies knock on the windows toward the misshaped moons in every home. The caterpillar does not know if it will ever emerge with wings, yet it begins to break itself when the time comes.





# JESSICA LO

Jessica Lo currently resides in Los Angeles. After receiving a bachelor's degree in Economics at the University of California Santa Cruz, she has worked in the production and product planning departments of several retail apparel companies. On nights and weekends outside of work, she enjoys sketching as a pastime.

Ethnically Chinese (but largely illiterate in that language), Jessica was born in New York and educated entirely in English as a result of splitting her childhood between the United States and colonial Hong Kong. Seeing as she does not feel completely at home in either the Chinese or English languages, she intends to someday write a book for adults that would contain a greater ratio of pictures to words, akin to the illustrated stories she discovered working in a comic book store during college, in the style of what are popularly known as graphic novels.

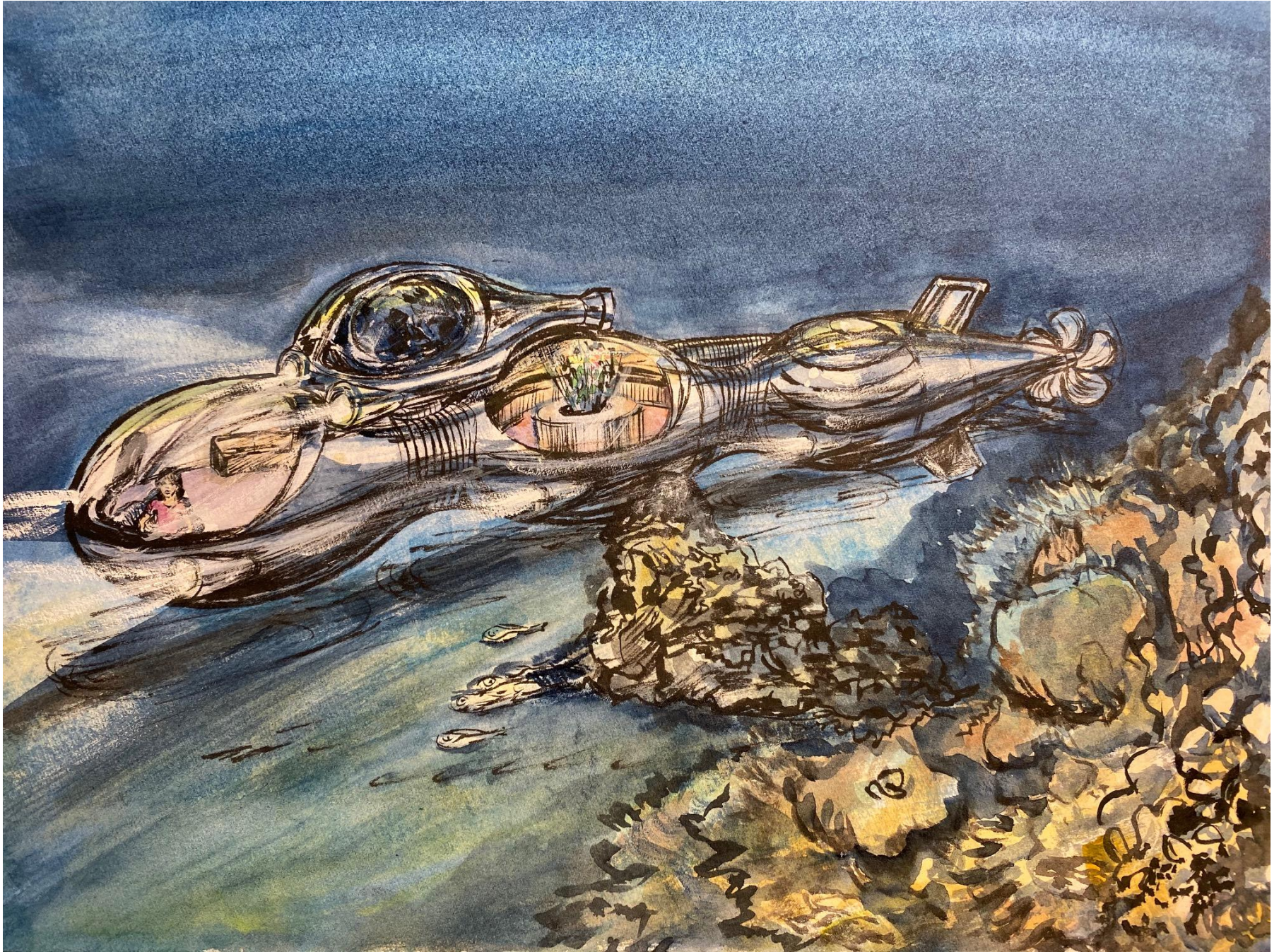
She feels simple illustrations serve as a language to supplant writing systems at times when expression through language alone is not enough. To this end, she continually pursues visual communication in her spare time, using traditional media. She has attended non-matriculated art classes at various institutions, but mostly explores mixed media quick sketching methods on her own.



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# 2050 ATLANTIS PROJECT

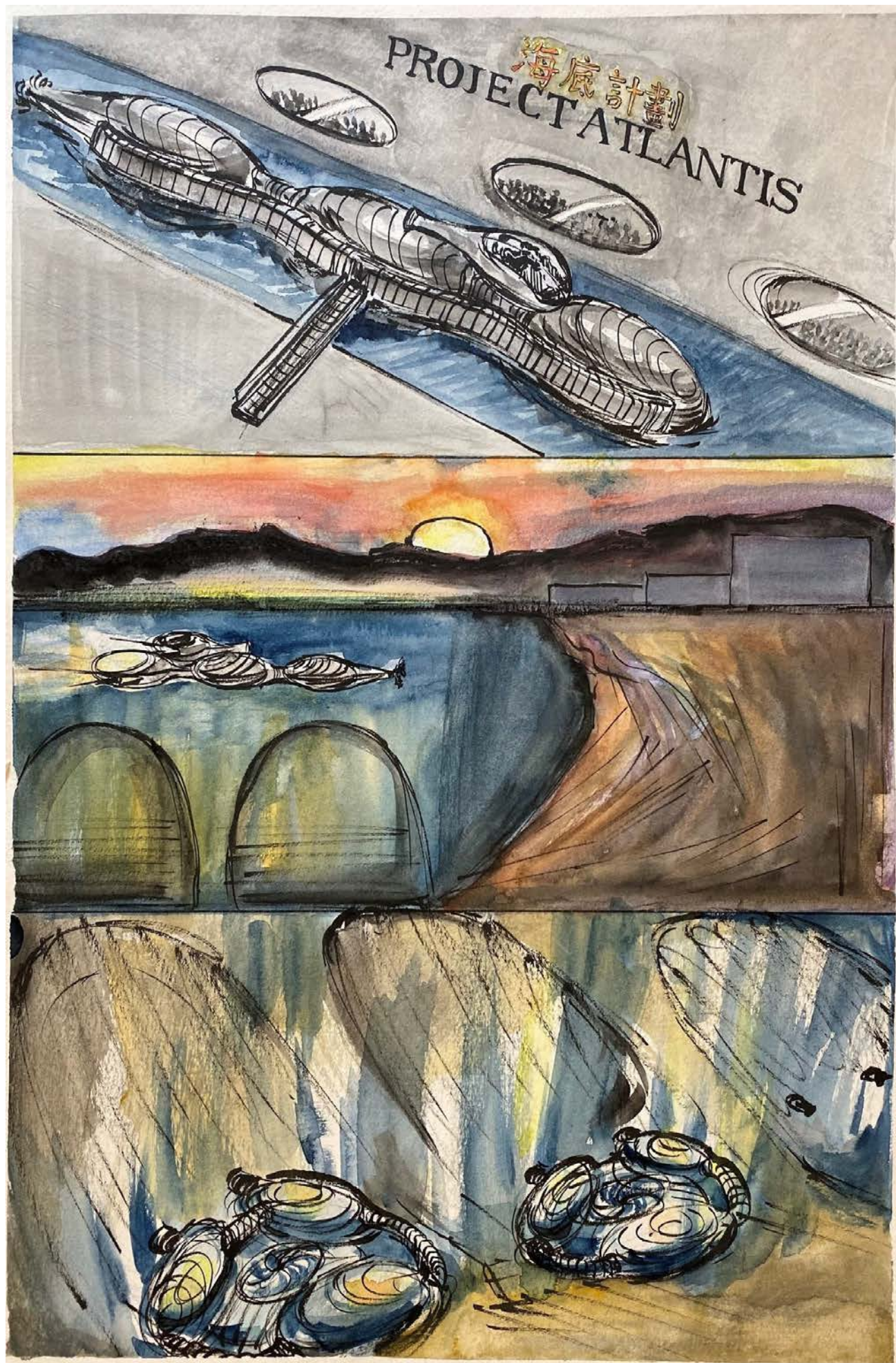


## A Reprise Below Sea Level

This illustrated story is in part a reaction to the books *Lost Girls* by Alan Moore and *Kabuki* by David Mack. These graphic novels were what initially drove my desire to write my own someday (hasn't happened yet!). It wasn't until quarantine that I had the chance to write this illustrated short - my first. Even while the novels cited are beautifully crafted, I'd like to dispel the notion that age is painful for women, like *Lost Girls* tells us, or that trauma turns a woman into a cold-blooded assassin, like in *Kabuki*. Instead, my character approaches her (now-relatable) isolation with calm. In fact, another inspiration I drew on is the soothing and simple illustrated tales of Richard Scarry. Just like in Scarry's world, my character does mundane things and discovers that isolation can be very bearable, sometimes even cheerful.



# RELOCATION



In the year 2050, a tiny percentage of the population who survived the earliest iterations of COVID become vulnerable to a new and deadlier airborne strain of the virus. Those affected are mostly elderly citizens, ineligible for the vaccine discovered in 2025, which is only effective on children younger than three.

The atmosphere above sea level is no longer safe for those at risk, mostly retirees who will rely on their pensions to pay for utilities needed to run their underwater homes (oxygen, solar power, battery, generator, sewer hookups and filtration devices). Quarantined citizens in the final years of their careers can collaborate remotely with their employers from the ocean floor.

Ahn-Wie has just turned 66, the 2050 federal age of retirement. She boards a standard issue residential submarine for her mandatory relocation. It is made of a cheaply manufactured, ultra-hard material available in varying degrees of opacity. A detachable travelpod sits atop the main vessel, strapped into a frame like a bike rack. It will transform into a residential unit once anchored to the bottom of the ocean, along the Florida coastline.



# SETTLING IN



Ahn-Wie spends her first day of retirement watching the auto-navigation system guide her to the destination that will be her new home. As the huge vehicle cuts through increasingly deep waters, she sees some occupied residences through the system monitors. Approaching an empty spot, the vehicle extends, curls upon itself to form a circle, locks onto its target position, and descends, as though pulled by a magnet.

Curious about functionality, Ahn-Wie wants to know what all the buttons in her new residence's control panels are for. (She only half understood the quarantine officials' instructions before they initiated auto-navigation to send her off.) Luckily, a how-to video starts playing the moment her home snaps into place on the seafloor.

The first segment of the submarine's body (that she initially thought was just a navigation room) turns into her bedroom! There are commands she can enter into the control panel to reveal a bed hidden beneath the floor. A trapdoor (currently disguised as a bright rug) slides over the bed cavity to cover it. This is good because the room will double as a home office.







She has recently joined the Association of Freelance Graphic Novel Makers and is waiting to hear back from them about new work. Upon waking the next day, she sees a virtual meeting alert flash on the projection monitor above her touchscreen desk. She is waiting for this call from the association! She recalls the voice commands that she preset to open the shutters and retract her bed into the cabinet below the floor to take the call.

The association wants her to collaborate on a new book! With the deadline a month away, she has her work cut out for her. Ahn-Wie is still exploring the vessel's equipment. As she walks into the kitchen to think about meals for the week, she realizes she needs to freeze or dehydrate all the squash, melons, and tomatoes in the vertical hydroponics greenhouse for food rations.

It feels like the twilight zone after working in the kitchen. Disoriented, her sense of time is informed only by her internet feed and dwindling natural light when she looks out into the dense water. While her laundry spins in the background, Ahn-Wie heads over to her toothbrush and muses at how grateful she is for new work. Thinking about this lessens the anxiety her unfamiliar underwater environment brings up.



# FIELD TRIP



2 months later...

COVID is contained on land! Underwater travel pods are permitted to go out on fishing expeditions but not dock on dry land. For emergencies, there are intake centers every few miles along the coast. So far, ordering ahead has ensured biweekly food deliveries to submerged residences. Motivated by the fact there has been very little fresh seafood in her diet recently, Ahn-Wie fires up her expedition pod and casts a fishing net as she steers toward the water's surface. After months of only refracted and artificial sunlight in her home, she is enthralled by a view of the surface.

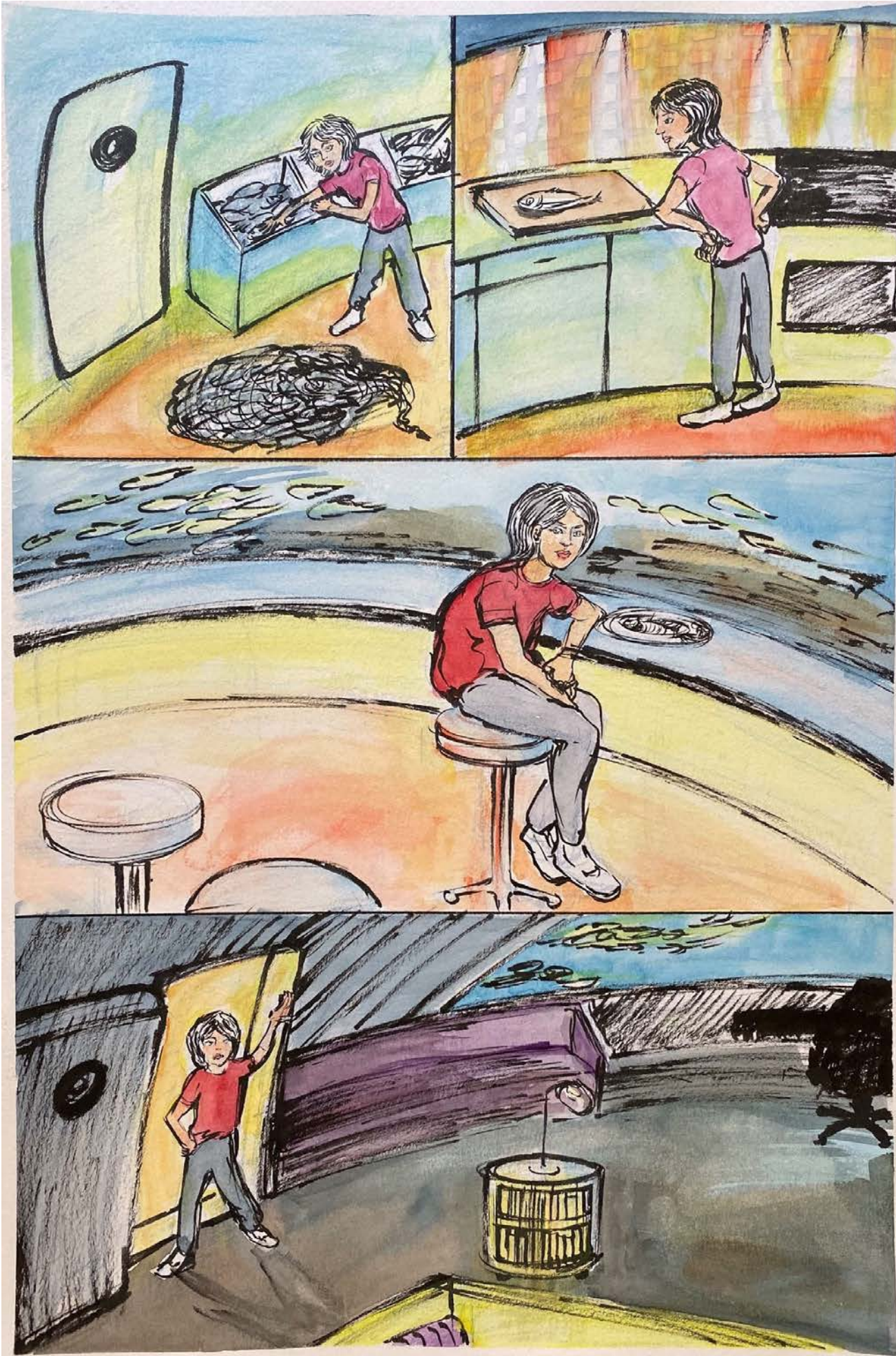
Ahn-Wie pops open the lid to her amphibious vehicle, dives into the ocean and hauls out the fish. After dumping her bounty in the back compartment, she floats for a moment before doing some light swimming nearby. When her fingers grow pruney, she climbs back in and heads home.

A garage unit in the center of her residence opens for the travelpod to enter, before it closes and drains out excess water. When the airlock is secure, Ahn-Wie is finally able to exit her pod. Looking down at her inventory of food for the next few weeks, she is ready to make dinner.





# TIME TO REST



There are several food freezers that come with Ahn-Wie's underwater kitchen. Apparently, a few of her former colleagues who are also quarantined have the same set up in their homes. These freezers are dedicated to harvest from residents' vertical gardens and fishing trips like this one. Ahn-Wie loads the fish into her freezer and thinks about how she'll be able to purchase less food for a while. She hopes she does not tire of eating fish.

While she looks forward to a simple steamed fish, she realizes that she normally buys fish involving extra steps, prepared by a professional behind the shop counter. She pulls up some how-to tutorials. It will probably take her a few tries. The meal preparation turns out to be difficult, but she is satisfied with the delicious result. In all her time here, today has been the absolute best - fresh air, sun and even swimming, all in a day!

She wonders when she will ever return to dry land, but Ahn-Wie is too full and too tired to think more about it. As she leans on the doorway leading to her living quarters, she is very glad to see her bed slowly rise out of its storage cavity, at its programmed time (each day at dusk). The shutters begin to close, and the seafloor slowly disappears behind them. Now she can settle in to read the next chapter of her book.





# STACY LEUNG

Stacy is a sunshine kid raised in Florida, Hong Kong and California. Her form of creativity is in creating and executing plans, as well as troubleshooting all the random issues that happen in between. Prior to becoming a parent, she was moonlighting as a wedding coordinator, small business owner and web consultant.

Currently she is a program manager and mother of one based in the San Francisco Bay Area. She has spent the past 12 years managing teams that produce ecommerce designs and UX interactions for startups, major retailers and tech companies.

Her primary goal during shelter-in-place is to juggle the roles of work, home and family, while creating meaningful, memorable moments at home.



# CRAFTING A MIXED FUTURE



As a parent, even during pregnancy, I would read books all about how to parent. However, the best advice I received was from my mom, which was: Trust your gut.

Parenting has changed dramatically over the past months while we shelter-in-place. Like many people around us, my husband and I both work full-time, and we do not have family nearby who can physically help us. Every day we have to make split second decisions about whether to focus on work or on our daughter, and it is about trusting our gut to help us set boundaries.

Our daughter just turned 4 years old in May. If you read any parenting book, it will mention the importance of allowing your child to socialize for development. And while we agree with this, we are opting to shelter-in-place even as our daycare opens. It is our call to do this, as we have relatives who have compromised health issues that need our support.

While I cannot say that this has been a walk in the park, the COVID-19 experience has allowed our family to get creative with what we have. While we may not be able to be her peers, we are constantly finding ways to engage with our daughter and help develop her social skills. Being at home has allowed my husband and I to think further about what we want to teach our daughter beyond the weekend. It's now about teaching something new every day and learning how to engage more.

My husband is a very structured and booksmart guy. He took on teaching her math, we tag-teamed on reading



and writing, and I took on the arts and crafts. We started off with simple sessions of finger painting and from there, my ideas began to grow.

One night, as we were reading one of my daughter's favorite books, *Mixed* by Arree Chung, I came to the realization that we could do more than just read it. *Mixed* is a love story about Blue and Yellow finding each other in a community segregated by color, which was once mixed. They come together to make Green. Green is part Blue, part Yellow, and also her own self. Her birth shows the world the possibilities of traits all coming together to make something new. The themes of the book are obvious to an adult, but I wanted to find a different way to convey the message to a toddler.

I decided to break down her favorite book into a series of crafts that would

challenge her creativity as well as teach her the importance of diversity. Each craft was also focused on framing the story to show a new perspective.



# BREAKING IT DOWN



*Mixed* is made up of a central community of characters and groups of colors. My goal with each activity was to help my daughter see each of these components on its own and form her own opinion about the premise of the book.

First, my daughter and I read through the book, and I asked her to list out all the important characters.

With this list, we created water paint outlines of each character. In our case, the main characters were simple little circle people. As my daughter was drawing, we talked about the number of people in the family (number of circles), their different sizes (mom, dad, brother), different skin tones (mixing colors), and how each person is a little different and special in their own way.



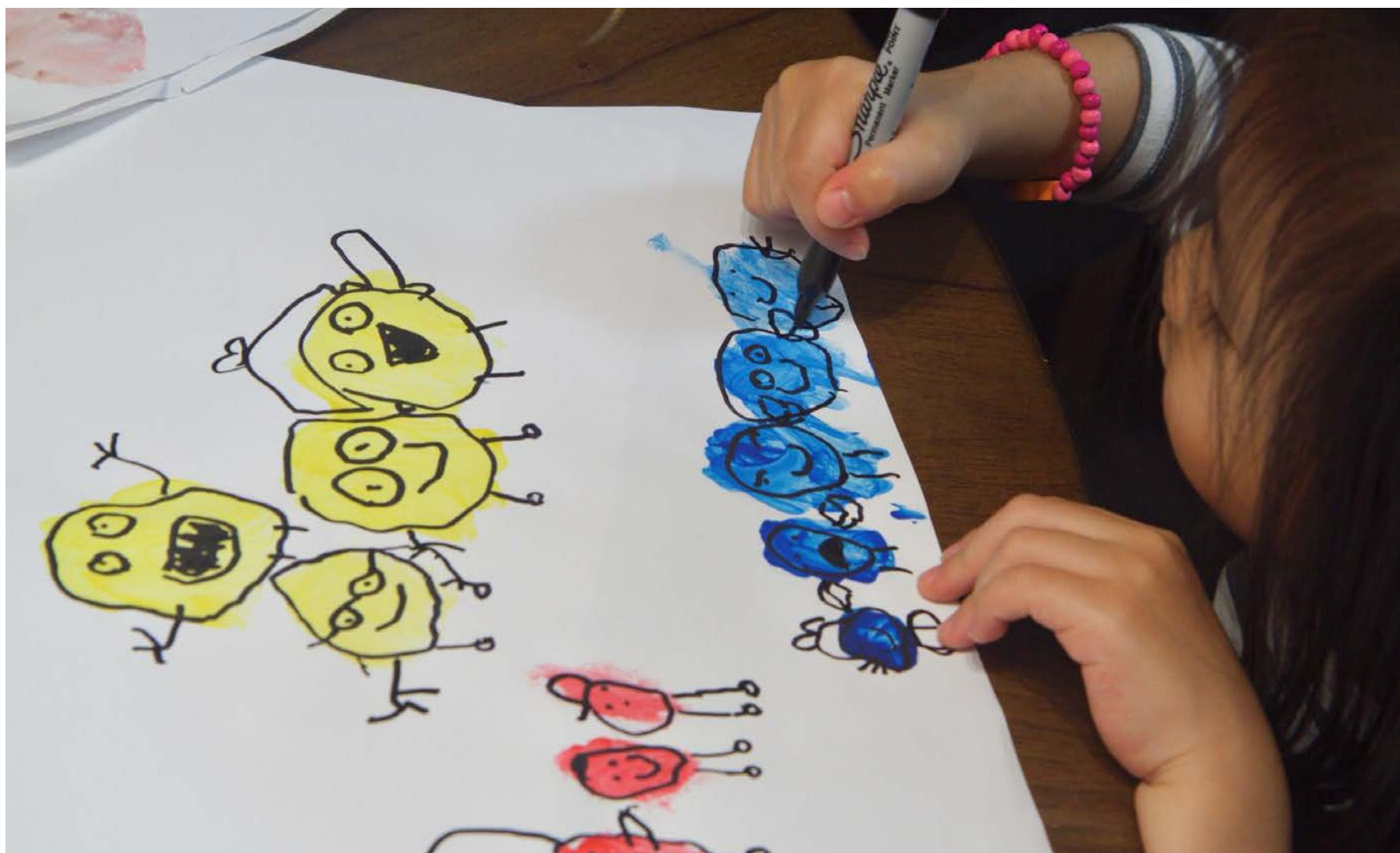


# SEEING THE EMOTION

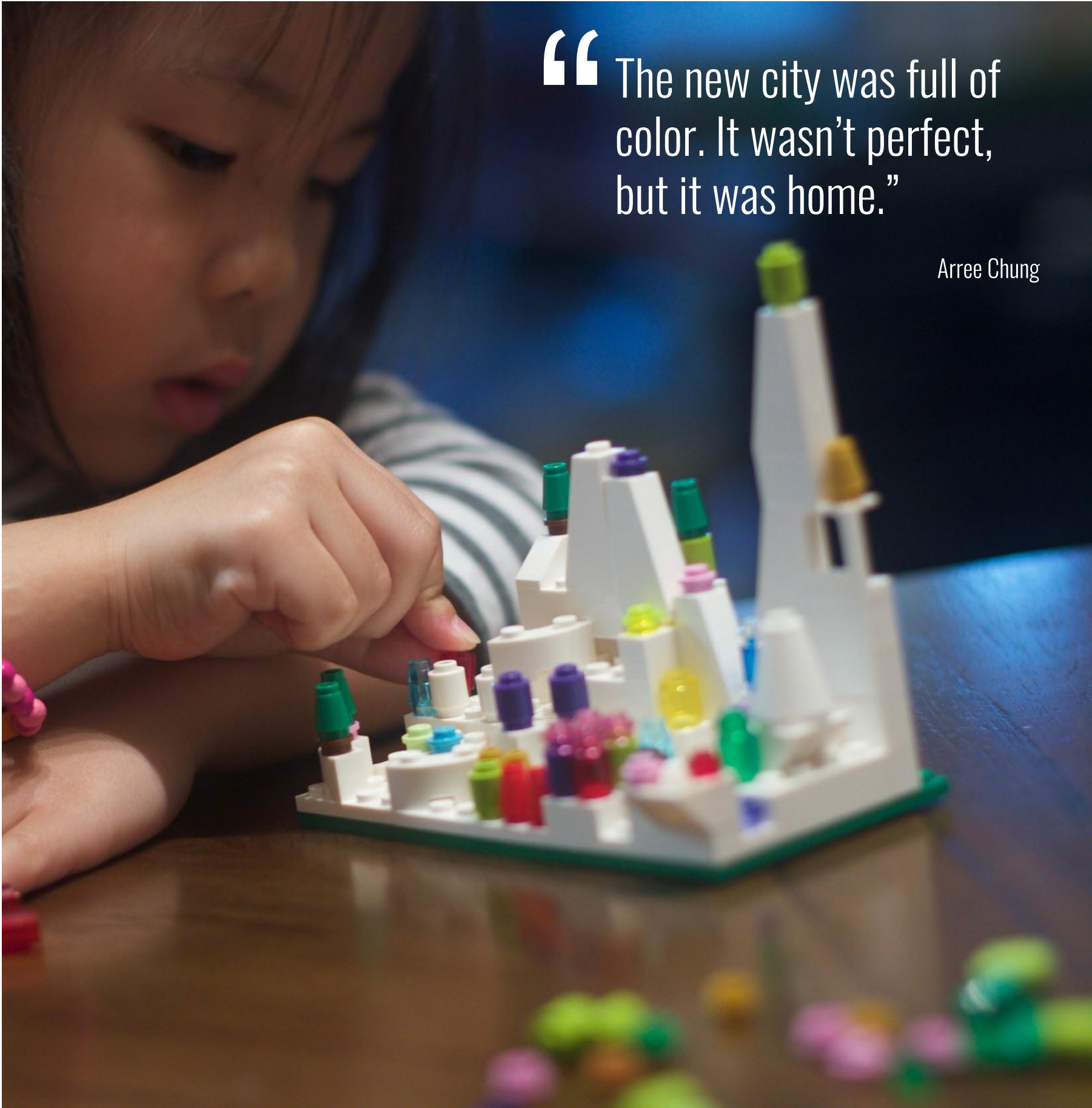


Once the paint dried, I had her use a Sharpie to draw the face, arms and legs of the characters. As she drew, we talked about each person's emotion. Red was very loud and angry; Yellow was bright and cheerful; Blue was calm and cool.

The facial features she drew gave me insight into how she saw each character. She would express why she thought someone was upset and even gave her opinion about whether the behavior was right or wrong. It helped me explain that many people can have different emotions in the same situation because they each see things differently.







“ The new city was full of color. It wasn't perfect, but it was home.”

Arree Chung

There is a section in the book that shows how a community becomes segregated, and later becomes diverse. As a family, we used Lego to represent and build our versions of the town.

This time, we talked about the community as a whole and how it looked. The segregated communities were rigid, walls erected separating the different colors, while the mixed communities were vibrant and

elaborate. My daughter of course liked the beauty of the mixed town best, which helped to emphasize our message of embracing diversity.



# USING YOUR OWN WORDS



Finally, we cut the characters out and added chopsticks to the backs, essentially turning them into puppets. Then my daughter talked about the story in her own words. It was our chance to see what she had internalized.

She took these crafts and made a show for her grandparents during a virtual call. She also took to calling herself Green, and recognized that she was part Daddy and part Mommy. She would also call out how everyone looks different and has different feelings, but they are all from the same community.

COVID-19 is tough; times are tough. In our efforts to stretch our creative juices, our daughter was able to grasp one important lesson: “Together, we can make a rainbow, and it is very beautiful.”

“ Together we can  
make a rainbow, and  
it is very beautiful.”

Eloise (age 4)











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