Invent Yourself
Zach Folzenlogen worked as a graphic artist before joining us in the class of 2013. His work was all created on a computer, and the images are astounding. As we continue forward with forming who we are as physicians, teachers and students, ours is the opportunity to invent what we can become. You can see more of his work on the HEAL website. (See left and below)

Birth
Cortney Whittington
Class of 2010

It was my first day of my very first clinical rotation of third year. I was sure that OB/GYN would be amazing. I had never witnessed a live birth and was more than thrilled to be assisting in the process. My first day was also my day of being on call and spending the night at the hospital. Of course a whole new world of unknown adventure lay in front of me. I was excited, frightened and curious. We hit the ground running with a 7:00am scheduled caesarean section.

I couldn't believe that I was assisting in this incredible procedure. The parents were elated and baby was perfect! The day continued to be very busy as we checked on all of the women currently in labor. I was learning so much about fetal monitoring and labor progression. At around 11:00pm I was exhausted. I had barely eaten and felt completely drained. My attending told me that one of our patients would probably be delivering in the next 2 hours and to go back to my call room and get some rest.

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He gowned up and was ready to go in under a minute flat. In a world wind of chaotic chants and maternal screams a new voice was heard. An 8 lb 3 oz baby boy made his appearance crying his lungs out. It was the most beautiful sound. A feeling of relief filled the air. Goose bumps bombardered my skin. I didn’t even realize that I had been crying before my attending came over to me and asked if I was okay. I replied, I am more than okay!

That was amazing!

Screams of agony echoed
Words of encouragement to mellow
Push and breathe
So hard in deed
Soon a cry, a baby’s cry
Another cry, a mama’s cry
The sensation of elation
Unprecedented joy
For this baby boy

Thank you!
The HEAL executive editors are grateful to all of you who gave your time and your opinions to the selection of pieces for the book.
So much confusion, 
my soul needs to rest. 
Pain radiates from my chest 
as I sit back and contemplate the fate 
of the many men and women seen 
suffering from a disease called 
Unfulfilled Dreams. 
A family torn apart by a stigma, 
an apparently uncontrollable enigma. 
A little girl with the world in her eyes 
stares at me as if I were more, 
I just wish I could whisper in her ear and tell 
her I found the cure. 
Children with outstretched arms reach for me, 
not truly understanding that in a moment’s time 
they won’t be able to see. 

Every life lost in this place is a defeat, 
not to an economy 
but to a family, 
just think of what that person was suppose to be. 
Now he or she is just another example in 
a never ending tragedy.

Although death and loneliness surrounds us 
like a blanket on a frigid night around us 
we can’t help but to notice the smiling faces, 
relieved, happy even, to see us. 
I think to myself, why are we worth such a fuss? 
but it is because just maybe there is a savior among us. 
Someone who can change their world 
and remove the blinding clouds of dust.

In my heart I know they just need someone 
they can trust. 

In this place, Eastern culture and Western knowledge 
engage in a boxing match where there will be no winner. 
For accepting one, means truly abandoning another. 
Leaving one more child without 
a sister or brother 
father or mother. 
Left to roam the street 
with no money 
and no shoes on his feet. 
Or sell your soul 
and become cold and cultureless. 
For a person without culture 
is a person without skin 
desperate to find a place in this world we live in. 
All this while people pretend 
to fight wars that are meaningless. 
Unwilling to feed the desolate deserving masses of 
human beings 
Trapped; or so it seems 
in the black holes of poverty and hypocrisy, 
with blindfolds over their eyes so they can’t see. 
This can’t be.

Journey 1: Lost

Jason Boothe, Class of 2013
There is a story about the people of Israel and their leader, Moses. The people were attacked by venomous snakes. Moses made a serpent of brass and he attached it to a pole. Everyone who looked at the pole with the snake survived. When I first heard the story, I was astounded that simply looking at the pole with the snake healed people! Healing comes in many forms. Medicine, however, plays a very small role in the healing that takes place in the medical encounter. Healing comes from the emotional connection that individual physicians have with their patients—listening, validating, and helping people feel better. When medical professionals and patients emotionally invest in each other, they each become a “brass serpent.” Perhaps, patients, family members and friends will see us and feel healed.
Amanda Pearcy: To love is to HEAL. To listen is to HEAL. Doctors, dentists, nurses, and health workers HEAL. Physicians, medical students, and friends HEAL. Life, art, music, and love HEAL. Physicians, medical students, nurses, and health workers HEAL. To touch is to HEAL. To listen is to HEAL. To share is to HEAL. To love is to HEAL.

Try Not to Forget

Alok Pandya, Class of 2012

Everyone has a story to tell. I know that as an absolute certainty, even though it's a statement which is indistinct at best. Most of them never get published, come hardcover or paperback, or even, if you can believe it, without a book tour to promote them. I think for the most part they are told haltingly, over a long stretch of time. Sometimes you tell them to a group of people, to someone special, to yourself, or to no one in particular. Don’t they always seem to change, just slightly, from telling to telling? The lines can blur between what actually happened and what is an embellishment. In the end though, it’s still your story, part of it anyways. For what it’s worth, this is some of mine.

I had some ideas of what I wanted to do before I started all of this, but in the end I was still clueless. I did my research, as any dutiful student does, by reading brochures, pamphlets, talking to students, family, and friends. What ended up happening was that I got filled with other people’s preconceived notions of what it would be like for me and, if it were the case, what their experiences were like. In all honesty, there was little else that could have happened; you really can’t know what it’s like until you’ve done it yourself.

So what hit me first? It wasn’t the workload, oddly enough. The material was and continues to be challenging, with an ever increasing volume. Everyone experiences that shock initially. I think it was one of the riddles that bound us; a universal, if individually distinct, volume. Everyone experiences that shock initially. I don’t want to make generalities, but I believe that you’ll eventually find that what is given to you, what is expected out of you, to be manageable. It wasn’t the workload. No one did, or could have in retrospect, prepare me for the emotional impact that this would all be. No matter how hard I had worked or the stress I had been put under compared to this because for the first time in many years, this was a singularly unique educational experience. Again, I cannot speak for others, but I can imagine that, eventually, it will hit everyone. Sometimes it won’t hit at once, maybe a step at a time, for some even immediately. When it does hit, it’s a real jolt of your own experiences, fears, weaknesses and even the strengths and joys in your life. I was exhausted by the end of the first semester. I had never taken anatomy before, the lecture I had

Eron Manusov M.D.

Interested in adding your art, photography, writing, poem, or other artistic expression to this collaboration?

How to Submit to HEAL

Interested in adding your art, photography, writing, poem, or other artistic expression to this collaboration? Please note, pieces selected for the HEAL newsletter may be reprinted in our annual book publication. Revision of artistic works to fill space allotment are at the discretion of the editorial staff. Thank you and we look forward to your excellent submissions.

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View from Above

Shannon Scott, Class of 2013