

Asano Humanities & Health Certificate

Reflection Examples

Make a Creative Piece: Make a creative piece inspired by an event. This prompt requires you to create a new piece rather than use existing works. May include: drawing, painting, poem, creative essay, short story, photograph, song, video, dance, recipe with picture, advertising brochure, etc. Please write a short description (100-150 words) of your inspiration and creative process. **These creative pieces were selected from Asano participants from the years 2019-2020 and 2022-2023.**

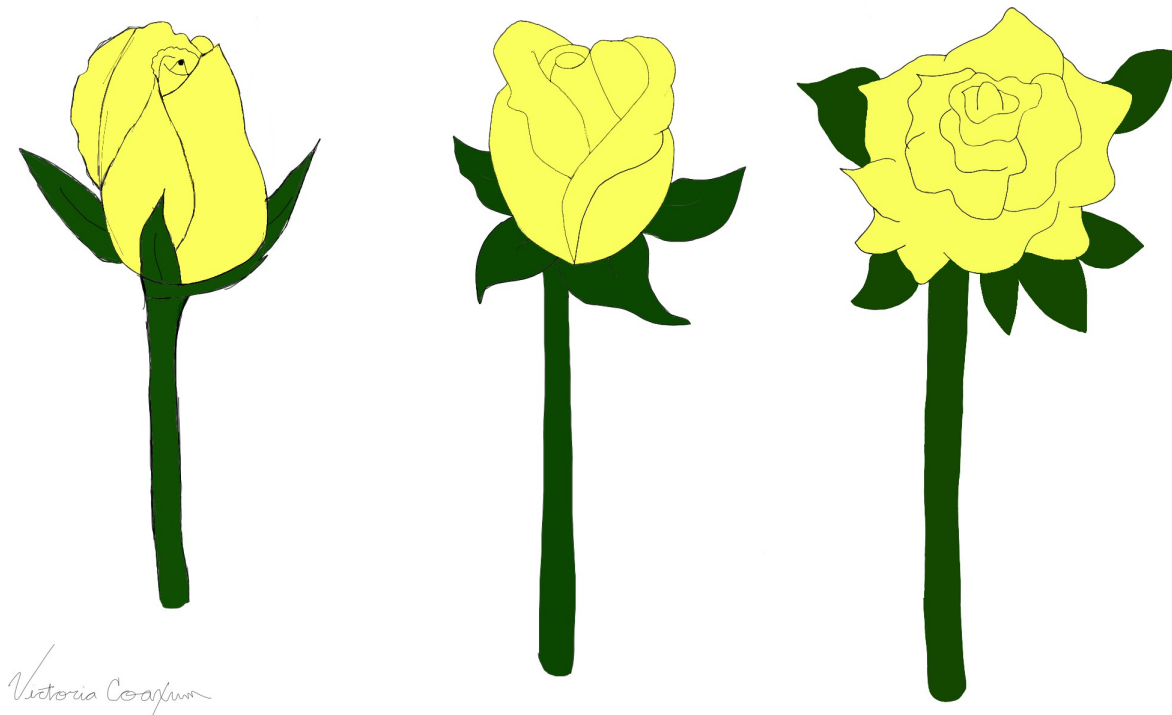
Ayano Endo
Event: The Vicissitudes of Travel



During this event, Jennifer Blaine performed a multi-character piece that explored the complexity of memories, as well as how the concepts of disease and mortality can impact people differently. This thought-provoking intersection of memories, disease, and mortality, is what served as my inspiration for making this 42-piece “kusudama” origami structure. With this kusudama, I hoped to create a visual representation of how different memories (the individual origami pieces) come together to form the overall perception (the kusudama structure) that one can have of someone else. On a similar note, the existence of a person is acknowledged within the various memories that friends and family harbor within their minds. When someone passes away due to an illness or disease, it is in the nature of people to share memories that they have of that person, and by doing so, in a way, they are breathing life back into that person.

Victoria Coaxum

Event: Liliana Velásquez: Dreams and Nightmares / Sueños y Pesadillas



Reflection

As Liliana Velásquez spoke during her event, I thought of the similarities between her story and a blooming flower. In my drawing, the three stages of the blooming rose symbolize three stages of Liliana's life. The rose bud represents her life in Guatemala and the fact that, although it is where she was born, it only marked the beginning of her becoming the person she is meant to be. As the rose starts to bloom, it signifies Liliana's journey to the United States and the way that it allowed her to take steps toward becoming who she wanted to be, strengthening her despite the many hardships that she faced. Finally, the rose in full bloom symbolizes Liliana's time with her second foster family, which she called the family of her dreams, and her time in college as she finally begins to live the life that she has always dreamed.

Iman Soliman

Event: Dean's Concert Series: David's Harp

Manti (Traditional Turkish Dumplings)



- 2 cups of flour
 - 2 eggs
 - $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of water
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ pound of ground beef
 - Salt, pepper, and garlic powder to taste
 - 1 cup of yogurt
 - 1 clove of garlic
 - 2 tablespoons of butter
 - Paprika to taste
1. Combine the flour, eggs, and water, mixing well with your hands to form a soft dough. Set aside.
 2. In a separate bowl, season the raw ground beef with salt, pepper, and garlic powder.
 3. Roll the dough as thin as you can on a lightly floured work surface.
 4. Use a 2-inch round cookie cutter to cut the dough.
 5. Add 1-2 teaspoons of beef in the center of each cutout.
 6. Seal the dumplings by gathering the edges of the dough and pinching them together at the top to form a bundle.
 7. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over medium-high heat, and cook the manti until the dough is tender, 20 to 25 minutes. Drain well.
 8. While the manti is cooking, mince the garlic and add it to the yogurt in a small bowl.
 9. In a separate pan, melt the butter and sprinkle with some paprika.
 10. Combine the yogurt mixture with the drained manti. Place on serving plates.
 11. Top with the butter mixture and serve.

During the summer after my junior year in college, I traveled to Turkey with my older sister and one of my best friends. As I sat at the David's Harp concert and listened to *Uskudar'a Gideriken*, memories of our trip came rushing back to me. I remember checking the menu at every restaurant for my favorite Turkish meal - *manti* (traditional Turkish dumplings). Growing up, my mother used to make *manti* on long weekends when we had time to help roll them in the kitchen. Because medical school is completely online now, I thought, what better time to practice my cooking skills. My *manti* did not come out quite as good as my mother's and was nowhere near the quality we enjoyed in Turkey, but I think I am off to a great start.

Lauren Thaete
Event: Moment to Moment Film Screening

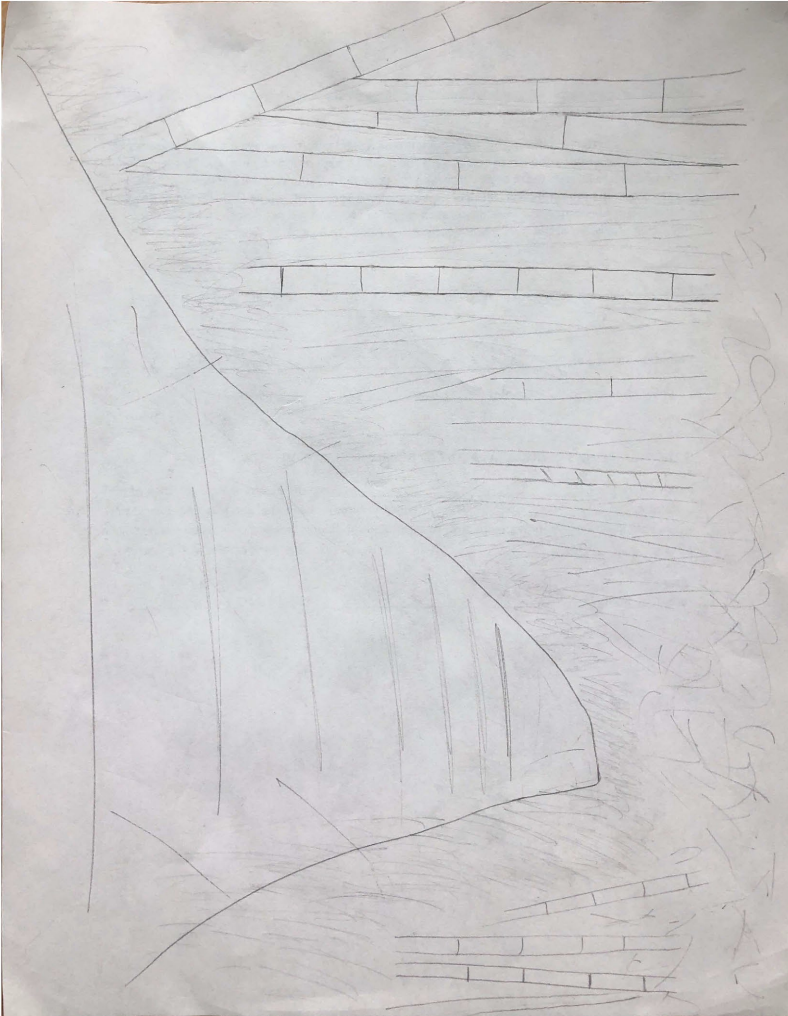


My inspiration for this piece came from the warmth that I felt from the relationship that not only was shared between the couple, but also between the documentary creators. I made this piece based off of the introductory picture with the dancing couple but placed it in a hilly, Pittsburgh setting - which resonates more with me since Pittsburgh is my own home. I believe that the ending scene with the community congregating together at the art gallery is embodied in

this work through the close proximity of one house to another, as well as through the changing colors of the leaves on the trees, which symbolize the constant ebb and flow of members within a community.

Stanley Szeto

Event: Story Slam – Resilience in Healthcare



The stories from this session inspired me to reflect upon my own cultural upbringing. I thought to myself: is there something in my culture that represents resilience and the person I am today? That's when I decided to draw a picture of a bamboo forest. The bamboo plant is not only one of the strongest plants grown in China but also one of the most versatile. Its tensile strength is put into use for hours of martial arts training. Its pulp is also a delicious snack, although it will

require patience to properly squeeze out all of its juice. Finally, it provides the perfect scaffolding material used by construction workers in my childhood home of Hong Kong. The creative process of drawing this picture was an enjoyable one, as it included many relaxing post-study sessions of drawing each bamboo shoot one by one.

Mallika Kodavitganti, SKMC '26

2/21/23 Alice Sheppard Moving Architecture:: Architecting Movement,

Prompt: Make a Creative Piece

Architecting movement.

Learning the labor of the terrain, the grass, the concrete, the gravel

I know this city. The bend of the land; it's an emotional topography

Our first partner is the floor

Push with a confident stroke; disability is an aesthetic value

a critical consciousness of how some bodies make other bodies feel.

Movement is not about moving from A to B, but about the intensity and pleasure of speed and movement.

In a wheelchair, there is tension between me and the world,

in my house, there is wheeled joy.

Bouncing off the furniture, finding disabled movement in a place where wheelchaired people shouldn't be-

Not tricks, but inherent disabled movements.

Not an attempt to mimic,

but to just be.

To not have to explain my existence, over and over again.

"Disability is to be hidden, disability is a shame"

There is freedom in the sculpted ramp ring:

I let go and flew into the joy of descent

The inhibitive and prohibitive design of the access ramp is deeply political, a design disaster--

Would you kiss your lover on that ramp?

Somewhere in the mix, the idea the a slope and wheels produce movement together was forgotten.

You can never explain yourself enough to undo the systems of oppression.

A critical consciousness of how some bodies make other bodies feel.

Disability is an aesthetic value

Dance on the ramp

Change the world's notions of disabled movement.

Description: I wrote this poem about Alice Sheppard's Moving Architecture:: Architecting Movement session. Majority (at least 95%) of the lines in the poem are direct quotes from Alice Sheppard or people who were engaging in the chat feature on Zoom. I made this choice because I wanted to keep the poem as true as possible to the session. I felt that as someone who is not in a wheelchair, nor do I have someone in my life who uses a wheelchair, I did not want to speak on behalf of anyone who has experience with disability. Rather, I just wanted to collage their words together into this poem, and this was my way of trying to evoke the various thoughts and emotions that were shared during this session. Alice really made me think about the inequity of design in our modern day world and how movement in a wheelchair is an artform that stretches our abilities as humans. It should not be thought of as an attempt to try to be able-bodied, but it is its own unique movement that should be cherished, celebrated, and respected. Alice's experiences made me think about my previous work with design equity with co-living homes for elderly community members. In order to truly foster community, our physical spaces need to be accessible, and accessible spaces can and should be just as aesthetically beautiful as the rest of our spaces.

Jesse Delaney, JCN '23

Soundtrack to Your Life
Make a Creative Piece

I regret only being able to attend 3 of the required 4 events for the Anti-Racism in Health Care certificate but completing the Asano certification program has been an incredible experience this year. Soundtrack to Your Life was a fun and powerful experience listening to music with others, and hearing stories. Learning about each other through music can connect us and reveal our vulnerabilities and bring us closer. Everyone on the Zoom call shared meaningful songs and the personal stories behind them. We listened to the songs and stories while reflecting, journaling, and creating original works. I shared the story from song #3 below. Music has played an incredible part of my life; these 5 songs are a slice of the musical pie that is the soundtrack of my life.

1. “Wasted Words,” The Allman Brothers Band, *Brothers and Sisters*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YTcJe9J-uB8>

Family lore says that when I was an infant my parents would put me in a baby swing, turn on *Brothers and Sisters* and let me joyfully kick myself to sleep. Apparently, it worked every time. I have no memory of this, but I like this song.

2. “Fight The Power,” Public Enemy, *Fear Of A Black Planet*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mmo3HF2vjg>

Public Enemy changed my life. There is so much history, wisdom, and teaching in 5 minutes of this song; it opened my eyes and mind through lyrics and references profound and pointed.

Chuck D speaks truth to power and slams accepted notions of right and wrong. In the days before the internet, I would visit the library to research Chuck’s lyrics in encyclopedias and the green-covered Readers’ Guide to Periodical Literature and have my consciousness expanded.

“Fight the Power” was voted class song for my graduating class in high school, but the principal refused to allow it to be played at graduation. Instead, the official class song is listed as “Winds of Change” by Scorpions. Terrible. It was later discovered that the principal was having an affair with the married superintendent of the school district, and they fled the state together, but that was years after she canceled “Fight the Power.”

3. “Shake It Off,” Taylor Swift, 1989

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nfWlot6h_JM

I was grocery shopping after a difficult breakup and in the frozen food aisle I heard these words playing over the public address speakers, “Just think, while you’ve been gettin’ down and out about all the liars and the dirty, dirty cheats of the world, you could’ve been getting’ down to this sick beat.” And I burst out laughing! I had never heard “Shake It Off” or Taylor Swift before (Shocking, I know!), but I became an instant Swiftie!

4. “Blackened,” Metallica, ...*And Justice For All*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUZVXtDVrc0>

A heavy metal song about environmentalism! YES! I thought about this song when I attended Dr. Britt Wray’s presentation on finding hopefulness in an era of climate change. This song is not particularly hopeful, but it is absolutely powerful!

I discovered Metallica late. In high school I only listened to hip-hop (see #2 above) and eschewed heavy metal. I’ve been playing catch-up ever since. “Blackened” has a special place in the Metallica catalog for me because knowing this song was the key to winning Metallica tickets. Using a landline at my first job after college, I called the local rock radio station (94.1 WYSP) and asked, “What do I have to do to get Metallica tickets?” They could have told me to

go buy tickets, they could have said, “You have to be the X caller,” or they could have simply hung up. They didn’t. The DJ asked, “How big of a Metallica fan are you?” I told them, “Huge.” They said, “If you can name this song, we’ll give you tickets.” The DJ read lyrics, and I yelled, “Blackened!” and won tickets to see Metallica.

“Blackened is the end.”

5. “This Year,” The Mountain Goats, *The Sunset Tree*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ii6kJaGiRaI>

It’s impossible to separate my educational program from my life and my life from its soundtrack. “This Year” has played in my head many, many times during this fast-paced one-year FACT-1 nursing program. Every exam, every clinical, every medication administration, every wound dressing change, every catheter bag measured and emptied has brought me closer to my goals and graduation in May 2023.

The facilitator urged us to “be intentional with the music in your life.” Nine days after graduation I am seeing The Mountain Goats in concert. “I am going to make it through this year if it kills me.”

Event: Dec. 7, 2022 Empathy M&M with the Gold Humanism Honor Society
Creative Prompt
Lily Zhang, SKMC '26

YOU SEE

A reckless teen,

A grieving grandchild,

Irresponsible child old enough

Turned too young into an adult

To know better.

To know better

He sits,

He., us,

Behind closed doors

Behind closed doors

Callous, curt, clumsy.

Afraid. abandoned. alone.

When his body hits the floor with a *thud*,

You see

An unconscious patient,

An unfortunate victim.

A nuisance in need

A sufferer in need

Of being propped up.

Of being supported

but do

you See?

“You See” was inspired by the December M&M event, specifically Eva’s story about a teenage patient she worked with while on rotations. She spoke about how she didn’t realize the extent of need her patient was experiencing until he fainted in the middle of the exam room as she was leaving. The patient was in the office for what she called “a classic STD presentation” – the diagnosis was quickly made, and the appropriate shots prescribed. However, what Eva thought was a fast visit turned out to reveal a tragic backstory. After receiving his shot, the patient passed out, causing the staff to discover that he was also suffering from malnutrition. Having lost his parents recently, he was now the new caretaker of his elderly grandmother; as a result, he had dropped out of high school to work in the fast food industry and was under incredible stress. This poem seeks to use the juxtaposition of white and black to show what may seem obvious in the light and how physicians may impose judgement unfairly based on these observations, contrasting the true story hidden in the shadows. Parallels in lines were made deliberately to show how one presentation may actually represent a different scenario (ie. “closed doors” refers to both the physical doors of the room as well as the teenager’s mental guard). Overall, the poem seeks to remind physicians to see beyond their biases, placing an emphasis on “See” rather than “You.” Note that the left stanza ends in a period while the right doesn’t – only when considering the possibility of the scenario in the shadows can one truly see their patient.

December Empathy M&M

The Rehearsal

Entering the emergency department as a first-year medical student is a practice in selective deafness.

From stumbling into the path of nurses and doctors at every turn, to wincing at the clumsy words we use to screen our weary patients, the ED is a resounding reminder of how little we know. I find myself falling frequently into performance—of competency, false confidence, and most often of nonchalance—almost like there's a praiseworthiness in not being fazed by human pain. It's the illusion of experience, of "oh this is no big deal, I've seen worse before," that I imagine one day becomes reality. In these moments, of carrying on with business in the face of undeniable suffering, I begin a conscious filtering-out of the cries around me.

Today, I apologize profusely to a patient begging desperately for pain medication as I screen him for social determinants. I begin asking questions rapidly: insurance blends into food stamps, while transportation and housing needs become an afterthought. I tell him I'll speed things up as he winces and curls up—but whether I'm making this faster for me or for him, I'm not sure. The dissonance of attempting to help in a way that does not address his imminent pain sets a deep discomfort in my chest. I block out his cries for help in an attempt to finish my job, even as his distress overwhelms me and I attempt to flee. Empathy for his pain—the very characteristic I feel I must have to have to be a "good doctor"—becomes a deterrent to proper care.

The moment reminds me of a fourth-year medical student sharing her story at an M&M event about patient outcomes, in which she describes a woman in long term inpatient care suffering from extreme chronic pain. The patient would scream and moan, hiding under the

blankets when the sensations became overwhelming. Over time, the patient's pain became too much for the student to bear. When she encountered the patient on rounds, she would rush in and out, avoiding her whenever possible. Despite feelings of immense feelings of guilt, the student couldn't bring herself to face the patient—her empathy had not directed her to acts of compassion, but instead trapped her in feelings of isolation and the need to escape.

What struck me the most was her final takeaway: the irony that her empathy for the patient's agony had compromised her acknowledgement of the patient's humanity. For all that empathy seemed to prevent the student from facing the patient, this had been empathy for the patient's *condition* without any regard for *whom* the patient was. What were the patient's concerns and hopes? What and who did she love? Who was she, outside of her hospital gown? In her visceral reaction to the patient's pain, the student had lost sight of her patient's personhood. The student's story poignantly parsed out the nuance between empathy for the patient's suffering and the patient's identity, and how one but not the other may hinder our care. Our instinctive human response can counterintuitively dehumanize our patients.

Ending my time in the ED today, a young woman wailed in the wheelchair behind me, sobbing and whimpering in a way that made my presence feel intrusive. To hear someone cry so desperately and so vulnerably is a moment of indescribable intimacy. Once again, I felt that selective deafness overtake me: I continued to focus on filling out a chart for another patient to receive financial assistance for food and medication. My confirmations of the patient's needs with another student were interspersed with the woman's wet, choking cries. The dissonance of providing care even as we ignored the pain immediately before us was once again a jarring juxtaposition.

Sometimes I wonder if this feeling ever goes away, or if to be a physician is to exist constantly in a paradox of too much and too little empathy at once: between pain and healing, between helplessness and action—between what you can do, what you should do, and what you must. I wonder if one day, my selective deafness will become not a rehearsed performance but a reality of my day-to-day life—or if, like today, the pained cries of those I cannot help will follow me far beyond the hospital doors.