

2024 MFA THESIS EXHIBITION

5th Floor Student Center May 6–28, 2024

The 2024 MFA Thesis Exhibition features the thesis works of the MFA candidates in Columbia College Chicago's Art I Design and Photography Departments. The exhibition, which includes paintings, prints, drawings, photography, sound, and installation, captures the extensive research, exploration, critical analysis, creative inquiry, productivity, practice, and achievement these emerging artists have maintained throughout their time in the programs. With varied approaches to subject matter, distinct methods of creation, and a unique blending of personal, political, and historical narratives, the artists in this show weave together the nuanced strands of the contemporary moment.

Participating Artists: Andre Barker Jr, Nora Benjamin, Callie Clark Wiren, Noah Fodor, Eli Giclas, Ash Huse, Hillary Irene Johnson, Adam MacArthur, Giselle Mira-Diaz, Grace Papineau-Couture, Arrietta van der Voort, and andrew vogelpohl

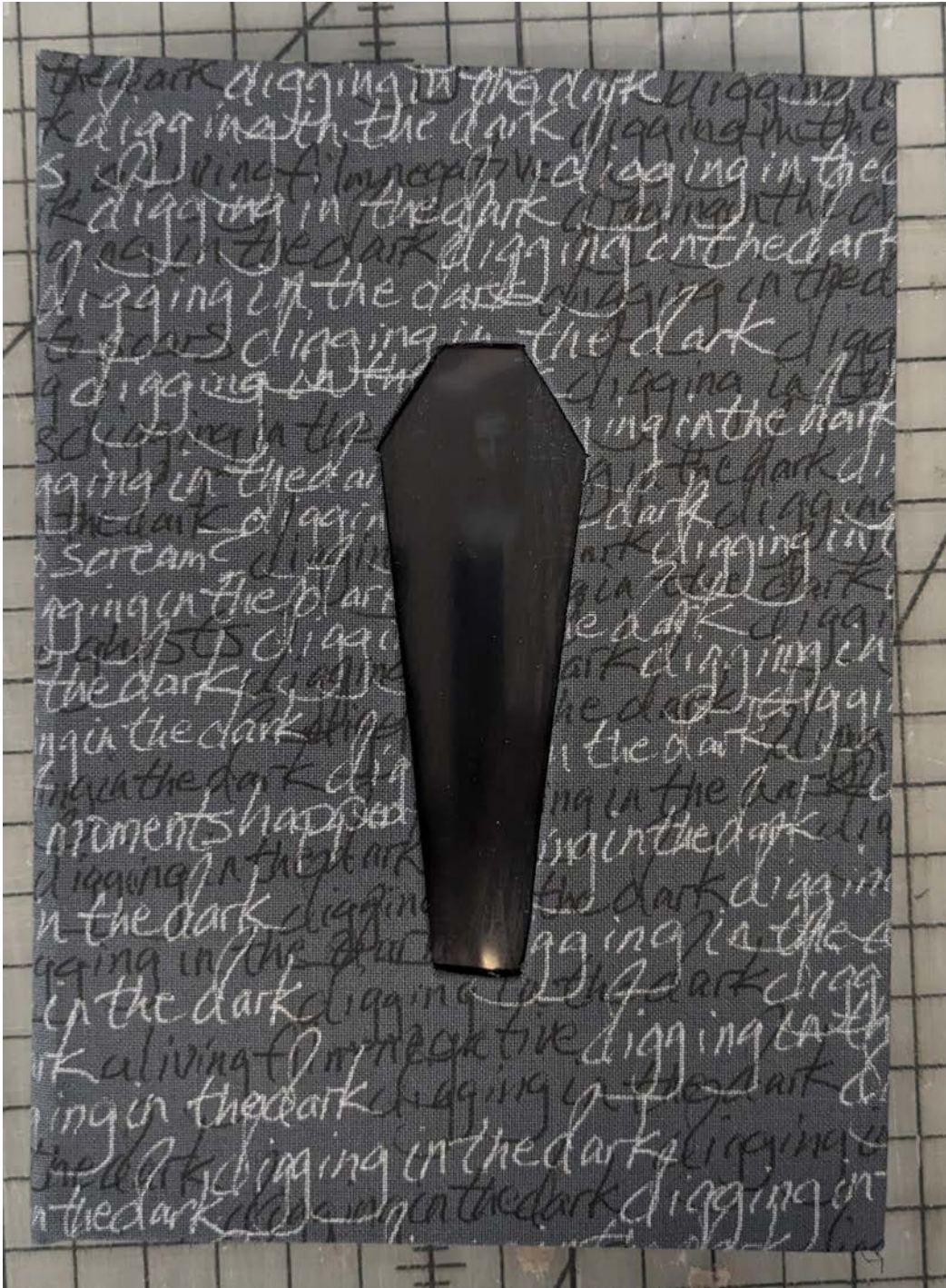
The 2024 MFA Thesis Exhibition is presented in conjunction with the Department of Exhibitions, Performance, and Student Spaces (DEPS), the Art I Design Department, and the Photography Department.

ANDREW VOGELPOHL

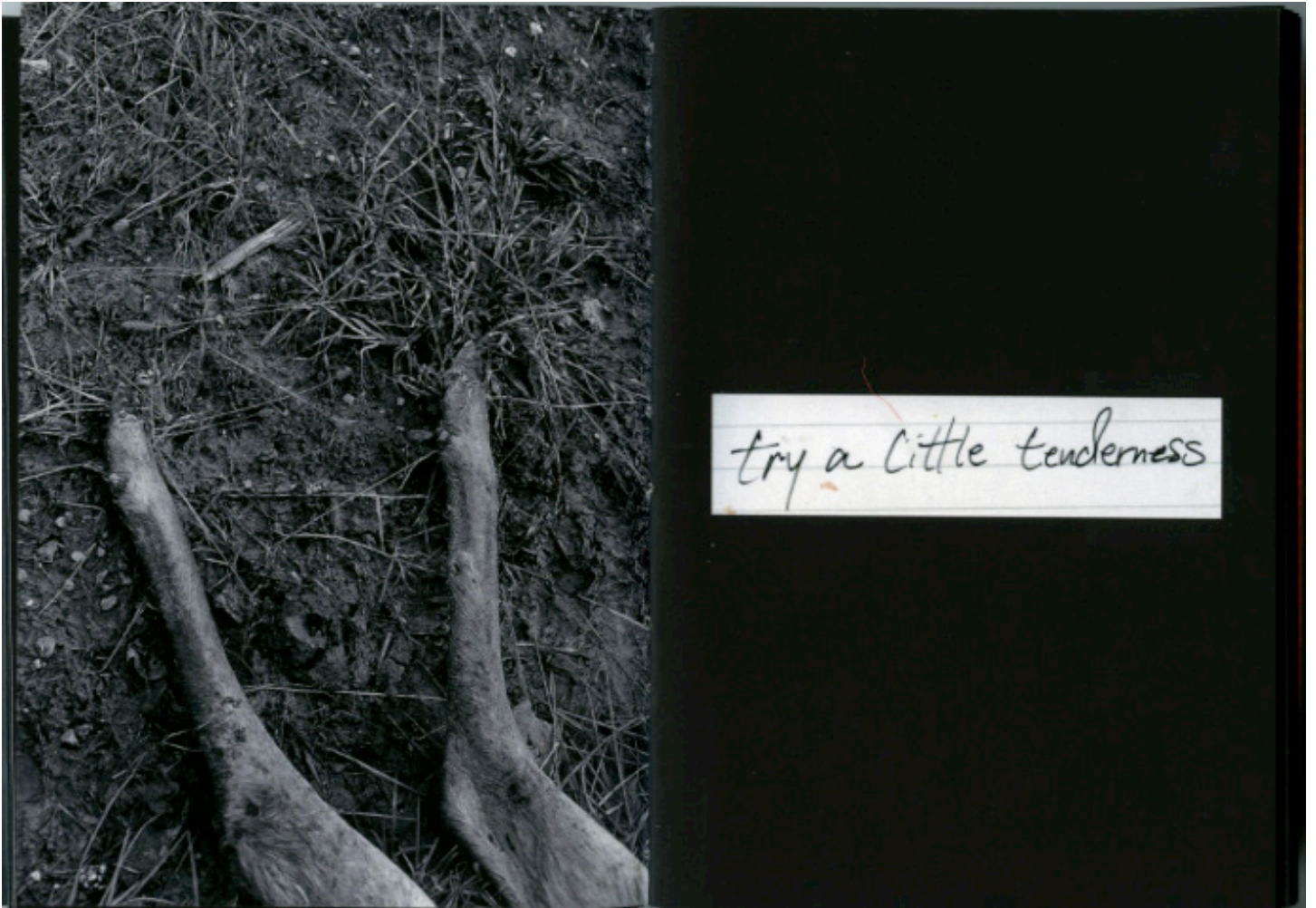
andrew vogelpohl is a photographer and darkroom junkie who comes from a place called Ohio, and the images he makes have become a therapeutic way to grapple with health, pain, and mortality. They enjoy working with their hands to write, make photographs, bind books, print on silver gelatin, and repurpose it all in collage. Others witness a dark and honest human experience through his eyes and thoughts, and that story allows them to consider loved ones, close to them, who are suffering as well as their own health situations.

andrew vogelpohl is a photographic negative, effected, that makes pictures. What the mind forgets, the body remembers. What does a body hold? Photographs and words of his body memories are a dull roar that comes from a place, shut inside, surgeons cannot find in search of something more wrong. Scars are connected to the art of survival. They are a breathing record of past suffering; reminders; maps of what a body can endure as it travels through life. Is there a correct way to navigate shock that echoes still? his growth in pain has a purpose if only one person feels less alone in their own experience.

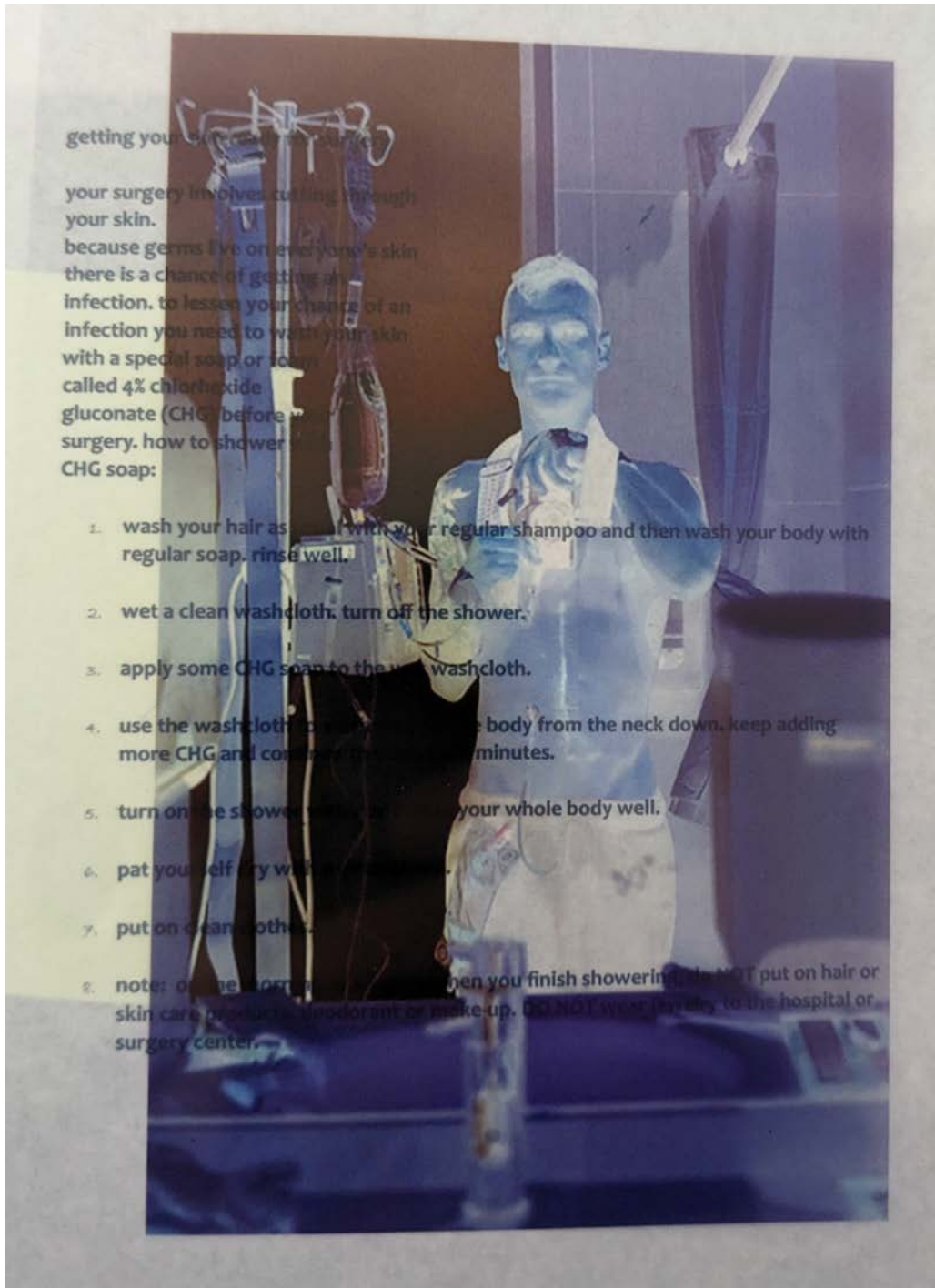
Instagram: [@boovogey](#)



digging in the dark (Cover), 2023, book board and cloth, handwritten text in ink, transparency film,
7 5/16" x 5 1/4" x 1"



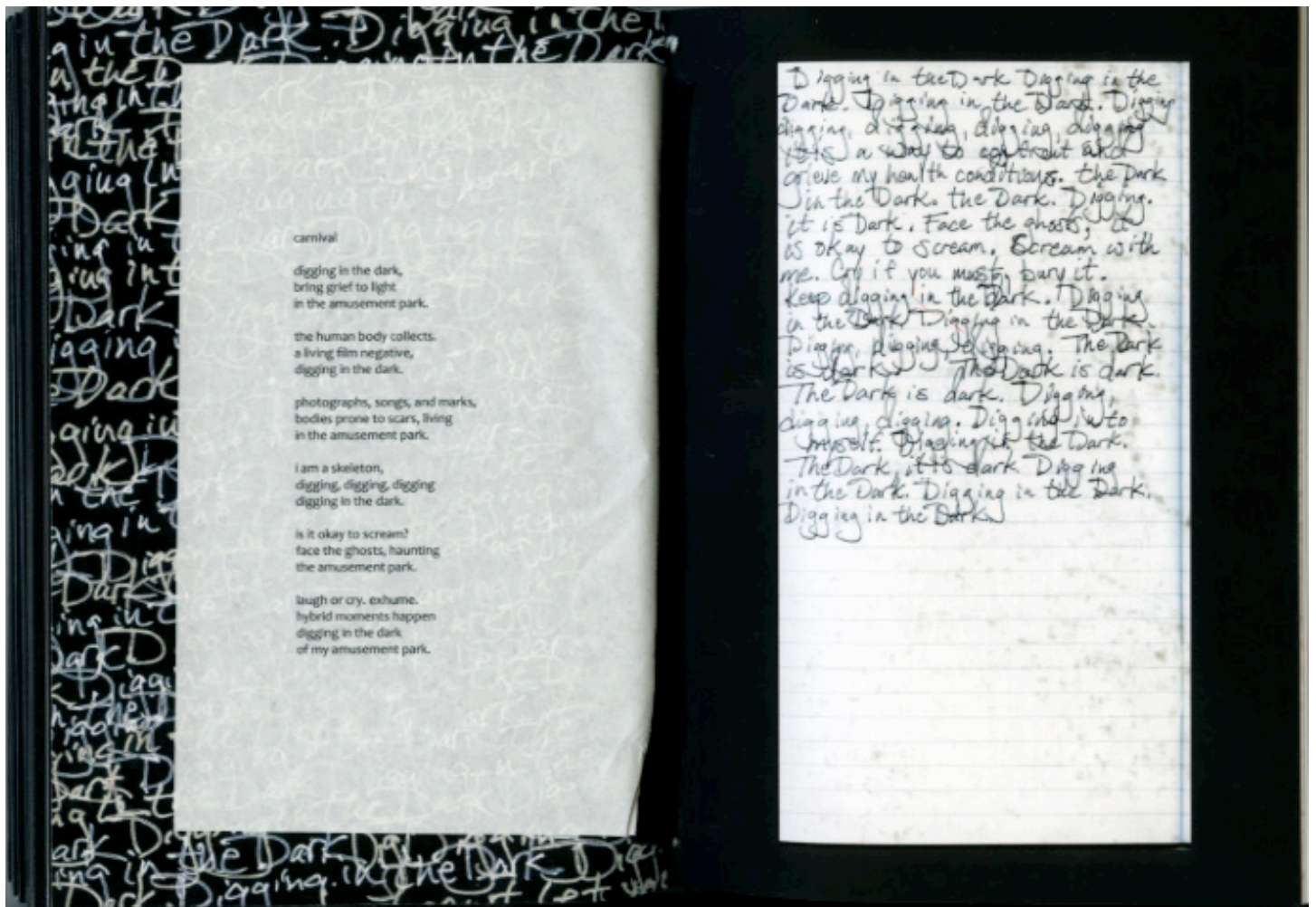
Pages 50-51 of *digging in the dark*, 2023, black and white 4 x 5 film exposure, handwritten text, scan of paper text block, 6 3/4" x 9 1/2"



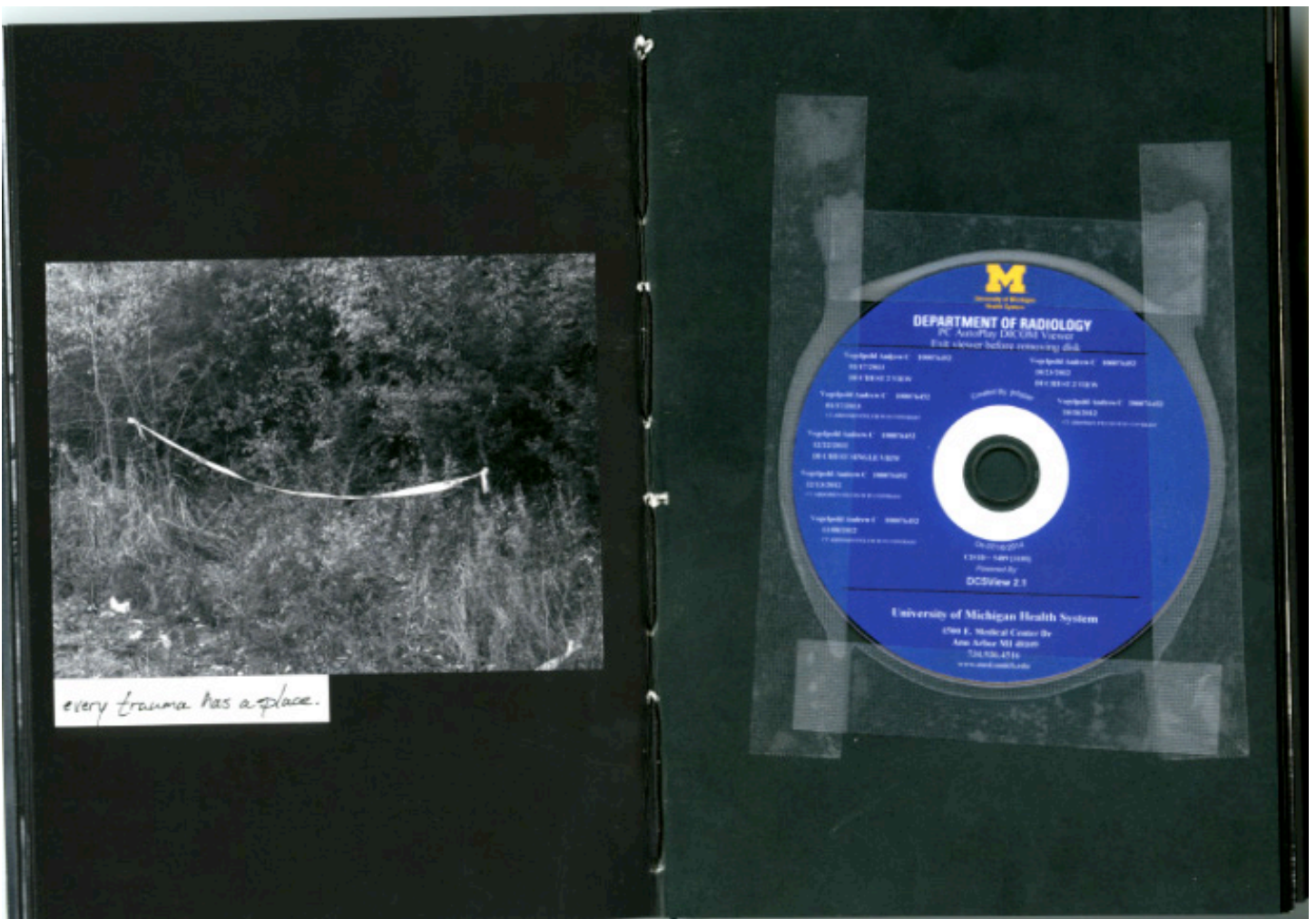
getting your skin ready for surgery. If your surgery involves cutting through your skin, because germs live on everyone's skin there is a chance of getting an infection. To lessen your chance of an infection you need to wash your skin with a special soap or foam called 4% chlorhexidine gluconate (CHG) before surgery. Here's how to shower with CHG soap:

1. wash your hair as usual with your regular shampoo and then wash your body with regular soap. rinse well.
2. wet a clean washcloth. turn off the shower.
3. apply some CHG soap to the wet washcloth.
4. use the washcloth to wash your body from the neck down. keep adding more CHG and continue for 3-5 minutes.
5. turn on the shower to rinse your whole body well.
6. pat yourself dry with a clean towel.
7. put on clean clothes.
8. note: do not use lotion, perfume, or hair products when you finish showering. Do NOT put on hair or skin care products, deodorant or make-up. Do NOT wear jewelry to the hospital or surgery center.

Page 82 of *digging in the dark* (black edition), 2024, poem printed on tissue paper, 35mm color film exposure printed on transparency film, 6 3/4" x 4 3/4"



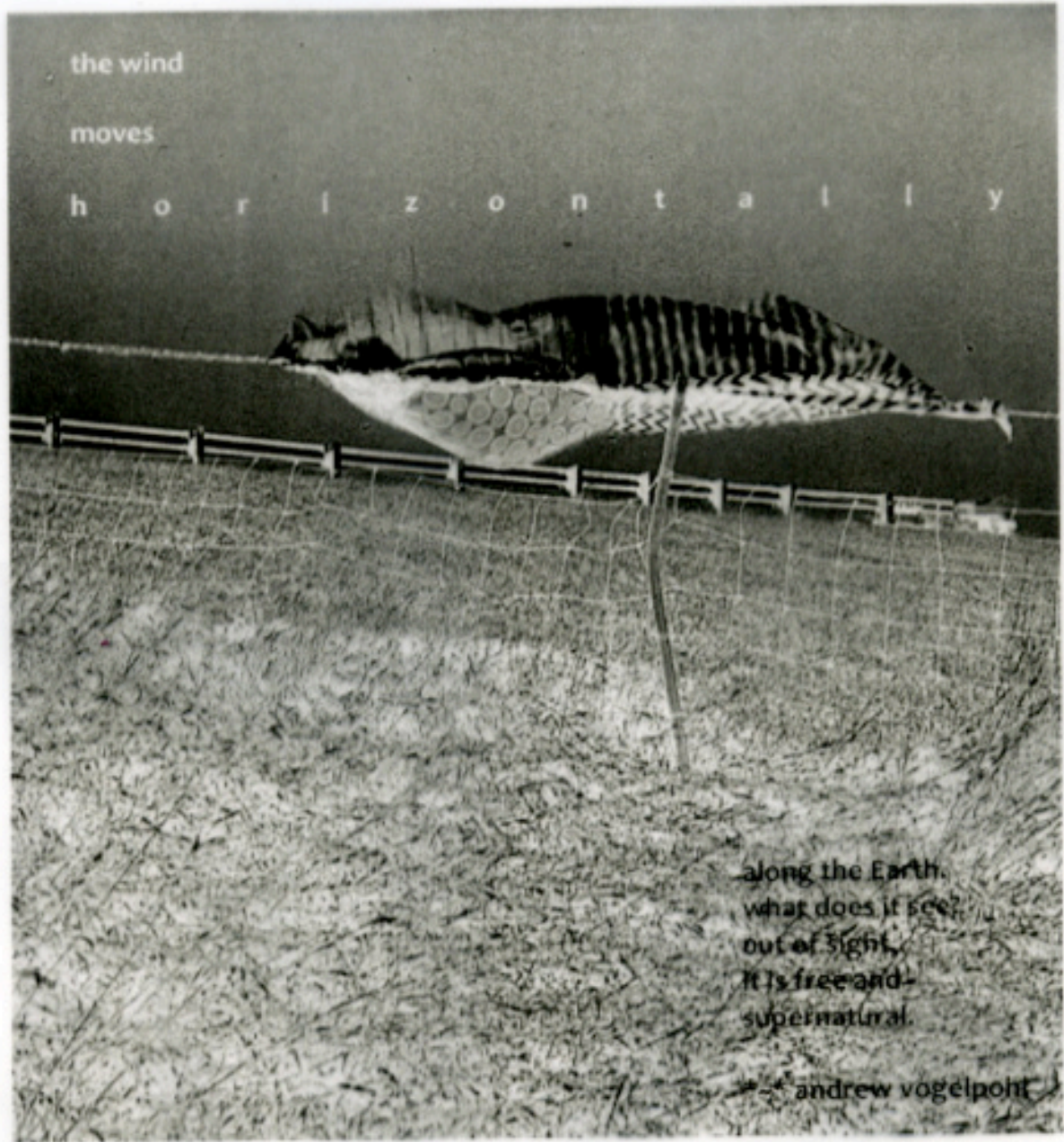
Pages 104-105 of *digging in the dark* (black edition), 2024, poem, handwritten text, tissue paper, scan of paper text block. 6 3/4" x 9 1/2"



Pages 40-41 of *digging in the dark*, 2023, 4 x 5 film, plastic CD disc, medical tape, scan of paper text block, 6 3/4" x 9 1/2"



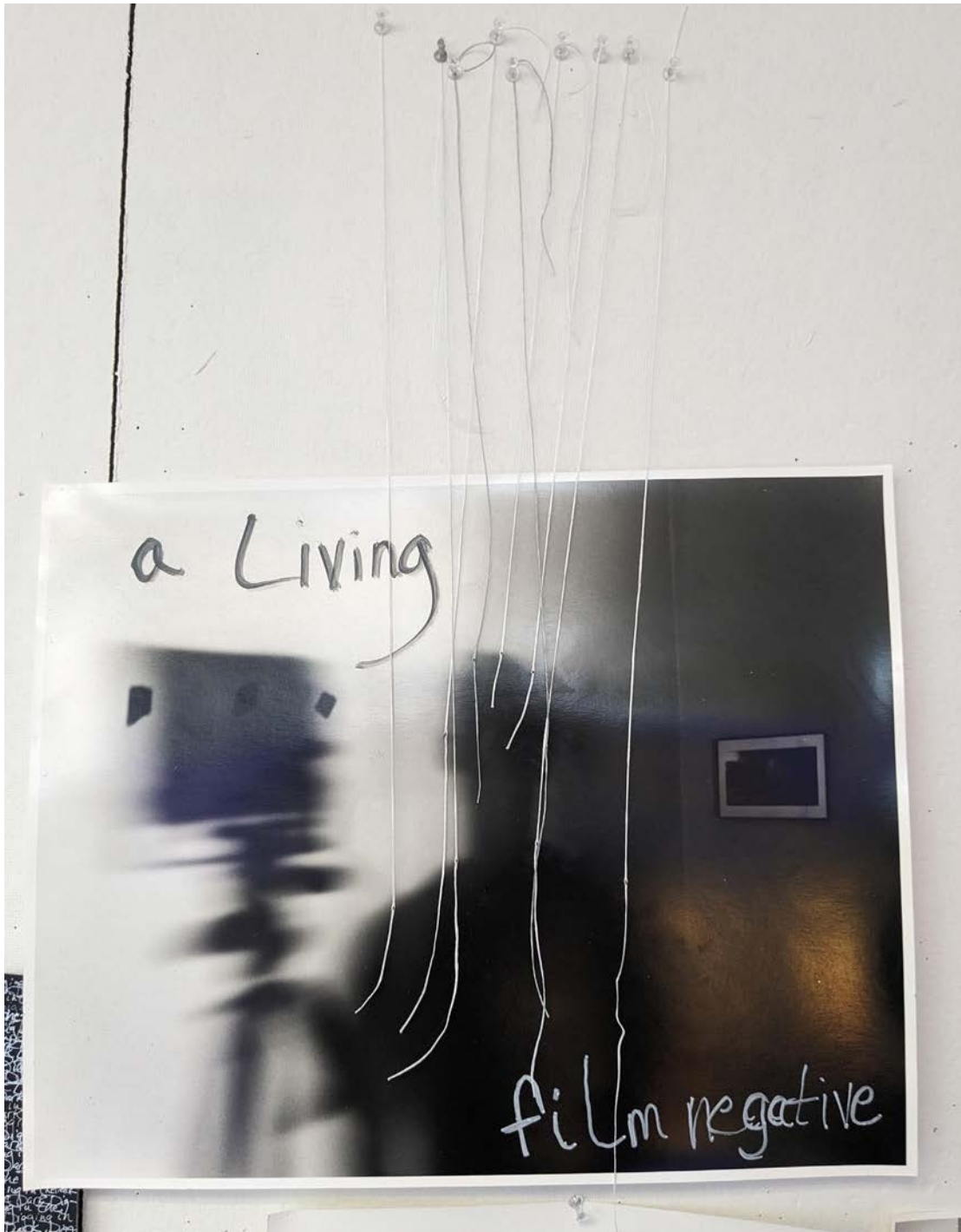
Pages 68-69 of *digging in the dark*, 2023, 35mm black and white film exposure, scan of paper text block, 6 3/4" x 9 1/2"



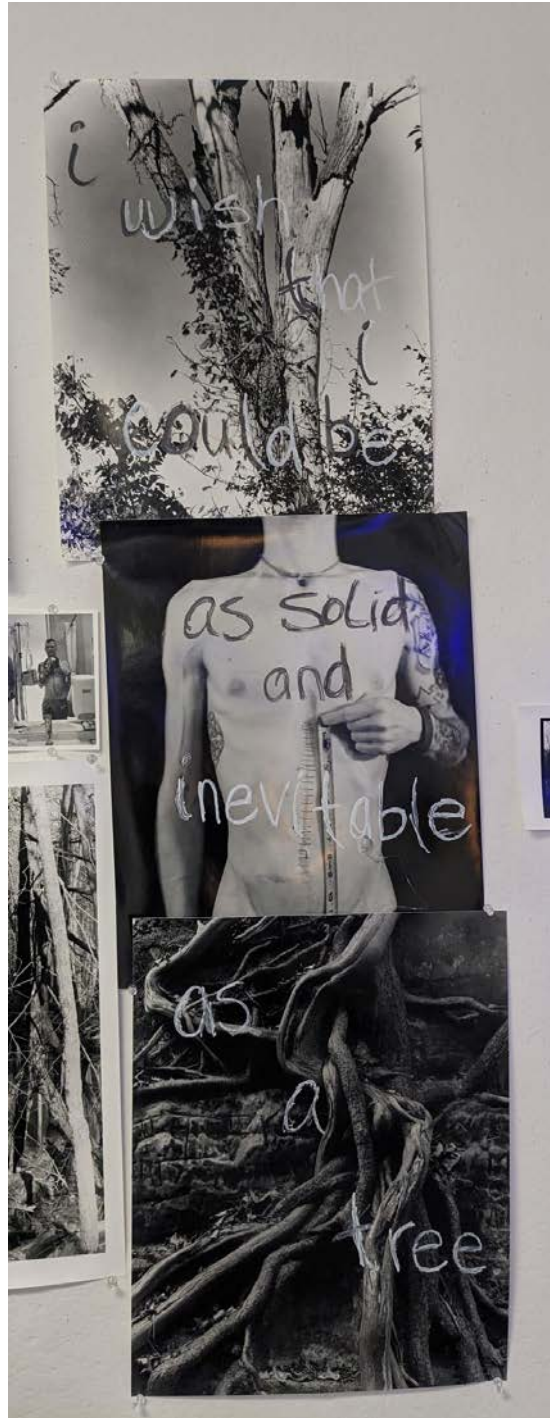
the wind, 2024, inverted black and white 6 x 6cm film exposure with typed poem printed on transparency film, tissue paper. 6" x 6"



bring grief to light, 2024, 4 x 5 film exposure printed on 11 x 14 silver gelatin, black paint, 4 x 5 silver gelatin print, tape, thumbtacks, white string, 11" x 14"



a living film negative, 2024, 4 x 5 film exposure printed on 16 x 20 silver gelatin, thumbtacks, white string, black paint marker, 16" x 20"



tree, 2023, 4 x 5 film, three 16 x 20 silver gelatin prints collaged together, tape, staples, black paint marker, 50" x 18"

INTERVIEW WITH **andrew vogelpohl**

Conducted by Rachel Manlubatan

Rachel Manlubatan: How do the alignment, repetition, and color of your text/handwritten elements provide context to your pieces, while also making them even more expansive? Where do you get the bodies of text that often accompany your work?

andrew vogelpohl: The handwritten text, the repetition of it, i think helps to create an experience that is overwhelming in some ways. They help give depth in thought and in looking, depending on how you look at it, by helping the images to come off the wall and page a bit, or to grow into the background. In the book the journal style writings operate as a timeline and my hope is that they help to ground the viewer a little bit as they turn the pages. They are a way to turn space into place. All the writings were placed inside the book near photographs where those thoughts and experiences happened. i retraced all of the routes i traveled to receive medical care and relived moments in my head to create the photographs and writings. They inspire each other; some photographs were made in response to the writing and vice versa. Photography helps me to write. It is an organic process, photos inspire a writing which could inspire more photographs and another writing, and it grows on; into editing a book together and building a visual exhibition. Much of my memory is tied up in music and lyrics written by artists, and i will spin some of my own thoughts from those to make something new. Peter Gabriel's tune "Digging In The Dirt" became a big inspiration for the thought of "digging in the dark", it is a fantastic and dark tune but if you think about it the act of digging in the dirt can be too. It became an easy thing to hang onto and the more and more i listened to the lyrics written and sang by Mr. Gabriel, the stronger the connection became. He sings, "I'm digging in the dirt/To find places I got hurt/Open up the places I got hurt", and it helped me to realize what i was doing with

my photo making and writing. i was digging into myself, sharing dark and honest moments that we usually keep to ourselves. Rewriting the phrase "digging in the dark" over and over became an outlet and that act helped to build a poem. Since then, it has been a therapeutic and organic process. And then songs like "Try a Little Tenderness" by Otis Redding and "Do You Know the Way to San Jose" by Dionne Warwick were ways to tie in history and experiences, but they also became ways to apply a little bit of thought and care to a pretty rough experience. Mom and i, whenever we travelled to hospitals, we could never escape "Do You Know the Way to San Jose" on the 60s on 6 XM Radio station. It became an inside joke and a way to escape; a question i wanted to ask my mom often. A way to say, "can we go there?" instead of going to this place (a hospital) where some pain is going to be involved. And "Try a Little Tenderness" is a plea to people to show each other love and care. This song is in my bones. There isn't much time to look around and access situations for long when you are trying to stay alive and while listening to Otis Redding sing in medical care and in the art making process, "try a little tenderness" has become a reminder to take a breath. It is a way to be kind to oneself.

RM: How do you compare your photos to determine what pieces will work in a collage together? What elements do you find yourself changing to make a collage feel more harmonious?

av: Working with my negatives, scanning, printing in the darkroom, and editing on my phone with the Lightroom app all allow me to spend time with my photographs. Some ideas strike like a lightning bolt and happen in the moment, and others i have to try and make to see if the elements will work together. Mistakes always help. Lately i have been enjoying cutting the collages out of the rectangular paper or print. It helps to make the

INTERVIEW CONTINUED

collage more organic or real and not blocky without borders.

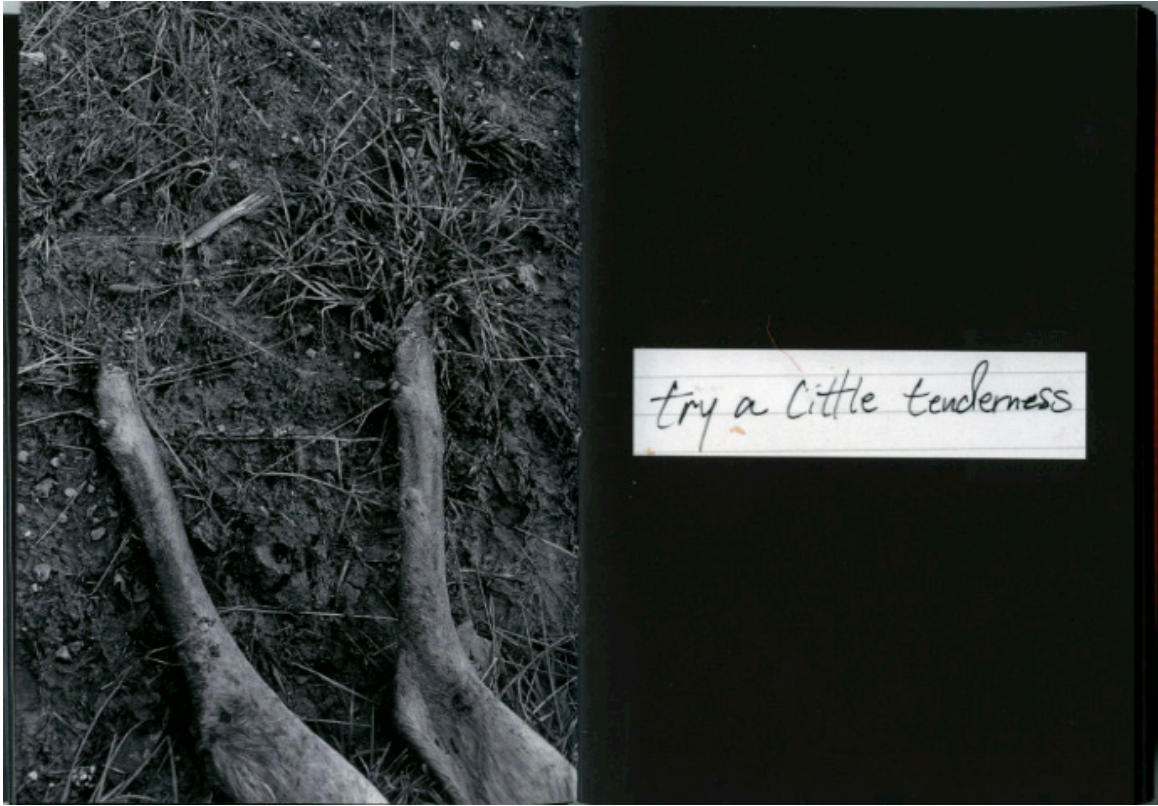
RM: By playing with unconventional coloring techniques and editing styles, how do you exhibit pain and mortality in your artwork? What elements do you think audiences will recognize in your pieces and relate with?

av: Mistakes are going to happen when making with your hands, and what we make is not going to last forever. i could try to make things perfect, but it may take a while. When is it good enough? At some point there has to be time and care for yourself. i do not want to speculate about which elements a viewer is going to connect with more because i have never been here before and that thought kind of ruins the mystery for me. i like wondering and not knowing which photographs or writings are more powerful to another person. The maker/viewer relationship is delicate and what a person feels when seeing is none of my business.

RM: How does your process of handwriting, photographing, bookbinding, and printing allow you to connect imagery of bodies and nature? Why do you center around more focused shots of both of these subjects rather than photographing the whole?

av: i think each process helps to bring elements together to connect the body with the Earth. The presence of a camera, making a photograph, is a sign of life when there is no human presence inside the frame. That's where written memory, or words, along with self-portraits come in to help give context that a human is moving through space as this is happening. Editing, printing, and bookbinding are opportunities for me to be surgical in decision making and with my hands. All of these practices help me to create a new body that can be held by another body anywhere

in the world. Bringing the "whole", nature and bodies, together too often would again ruin the mystery i can create by giving crumbs here and there for a viewer to chew on. When is too much blood too much blood on the page? The separation of the two allows an individual to travel, or live, the experience in an attempt to connect dots and build a story of their own. Wearing a hospital gown outside in a wooded area to make a self-portrait seems a little too over the head but it is also like a woman in a white dress in the woods, "what are we doing here?", kind of thing. There are moments of wholeness in the image of myself inside of the tree and the photograph of the IV stand in the landscape on its own.



THE DEPS ARTIST PROFILE SERIES

The DEPS Artist Profile Series presented by Columbia College Chicago's Department of Exhibitions, Performance and Student Spaces (DEPS), is a virtual publication on select artists involved with the DEPS Galleries and the Columbia College Chicago community. Our goal with this series is to connect artist and viewer on a deeper level, and to highlight the amazing works and thoughts of our featured artists through interviews, artist biographies, and catalogs of work. Art has always been a way to connect with others, no matter where one may physically be. We hope by presenting the creativity and insights of the people involved in the DEPS Artist Profile Series that viewers may have one more way to stay in touch with and support the arts community. The DEPS Artist Profile Series and graphic design is managed by DEPS Exhibitions Assistant Rachel Manlubatan. This program is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency.

Learn more at: colum.edu/deps

Contact information: Mark Porter, mporter@colum.edu / 312.369.6643

Follow us on [Instagram!](#)

Like us on [Facebook!](#)

Columbia College Chicago Student Center
754 S. Wabash Ave., Fifth Floor, Chicago, IL 60605
Gallery hours: Monday–Saturday 9 a.m.–5 p.m.