

Program II Newsletter

Spring 2023, Edititon 1.0

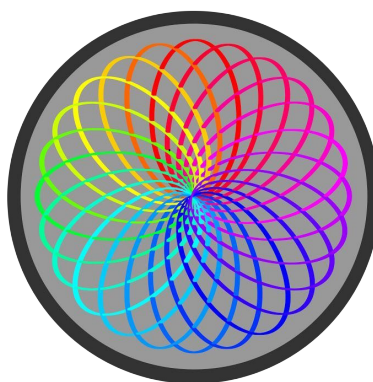
July 25, 2023



A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Program II has garnered some of the most interesting and interdisciplinary students of Trinity College of Arts and Sciences at Duke since its formation in 1968. Various cohorts have explored an expansive array of subjects with topics leading to the expansion of curricular boundaries. This newsletter will highlight and the accomplishments, interests, and other exciting news that relates to PII. In this inaugural edition, we highlight our new cohort, share interviews with two seniors, and explore programs put on by our students. Whether you are a student in Program II, a Duke faculty or staff

member, a family member of a student, or just interested in learning about the unique nature of Program II, we welcome you to read further! A special thanks is in order to all those that made the creation of this newsletter possible.



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“[Program II] is the best thing I’ve done for myself at Duke. So, if you have an idea, keep expanding on it and asking questions”

- Fatima (pg. 5)

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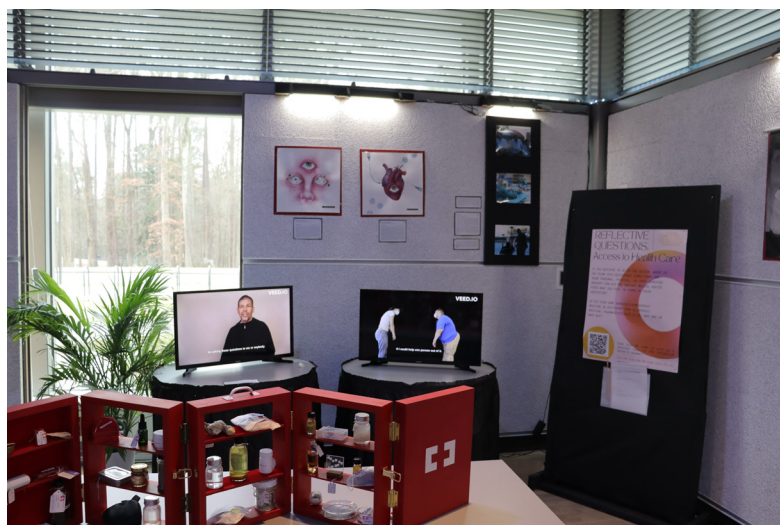
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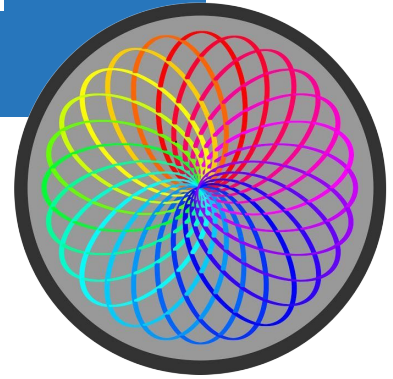
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At right: photos from Massare Somers thesis exhibition (more on page 6)



A Brief History of Program II

1968 - 2023



Program II was founded in 1968 with the acknowledgement that the University needed to support students whose interests fell outside the traditional departmental system (Program I) and whose interests focused on a single relevant social question that could only be answered with an interdisciplinary approach. In the early days of Program II, students applied directly to departmental programs with a sponsoring faculty member. Our earliest Program II students pursued questions forecasting the development of fields like women's studies, environmental studies, and those fully integrated into the Trinity College curriculum today.

In 1980, Program II fell under the direction of a single Academic Dean and many of the traditional Program I requirements were adopted by Program II. Such changes brought about greater academic and structural support for PII.. Since 1980, students began submitting their proposals for review by Program II committee members, rather than their sponsoring academic department, leading to greater identification with and excitement for Program II. Over 500 students have utilized Program II since its implementation in Trinity College over 55 years that it has been available. In this time period, we have garnered a diverse, intellectually diverse group of students who understand that Program II offers them the ability to ask difficult questions, explore interdisciplinary solutions, and take control over the narrative of their undergraduate experience at Duke University. This past May, there were 24 graduating seniors in diverse interest areas from Urban Planning to Disability Studies to Fashion and Globalization. There are currently 69 students in all of Program II and we look forward to seeing this group grow.

Today, we are also delighted to announce the release of Program II's own Alumni Group, a site where students and alumni may grow relationships, share updates, and strengthen the bond of Program II members, both present and past. You can join by visiting: <https://alumni.duke.edu/groups> and searching for Program II. Join us in fostering community and excitement!



At Left: photo from the Senior Program II Graduation!!

New Program II Cohort

Chawfar

Bowornwattanangkoon

International Investment and Urban Development

Sofia Chodri

Revolutionizing Women's Healthcare: Disparities, Innovation, and Implementation

Nia Cross

Broadcasting while Black: Gender & Race in the 21st Century Newsroom and the Impact of Digital Media

Hanny Echeverria-Navarro

Health Disparities in Black/Latinx Communities: Health Policy and Activism

Aiden Fox

Food and Agricultural Studies: How Science and Technology, Culture, and Policy affect the Production of Food

Beatrice Kleeger

Art, Body, Image, Object: Perceptions and Perspectives

Olivia Ares

Bones, Dirt, and Culture

Eleanor Mackey

The Racialization of White Youth in America

Carina Lei

Toward Culturally Competent Care: Holistic Mental Health in Asian/American Diasporic Communities

Carlos Montes

Cognitive Musicology: Sociocultural Influences on Musical Perception

Ashna Sai

Health Policy and Racial Disparities in Healthcare

Lina Sinsheimer

Women in Business and Sports

Durga Sreenivasan

Development Studies

Andrew Sun

Mathematics, Decision Making and Democracy

Maya Todd

Cultural Neuroeconomics

Liel Ezroni

Education Advocacy, Policy, & Transformation

Michelle Ling

An Integrative Multimedia Approach to Environmental Advocacy & Justice

An Interview With:

FATIMA MASSARE SOMERS

'23

Interviewed and written by Ben Sperber

Program Title: *Art, Fear & Healing Medicine: Exploring Health Literacy through Visual Arts Narratives*

Hometown: *Longview, TX*

When asked for an elevator pitch of her program, Fatima describes her course of study as sitting at the intersection of arts and STEM, a means to utilize the arts effectively in order to uplift and inform the patient experience in healthcare. As a pre-med student, and a senior currently applying to medical schools, Fatima has tapped into a sentiment many seem to share: the doctor's office can be a scary space. Through her self-designed course of study, she seeks to understand and illustrate how this space—so often lacking comfort, narrative, and conversation—can be transformed through the use of visual art, translating these non-verbal mediums into the experience in order to generate greater self-efficacy and self-confidence. As she says, “a patient shouldn't feel like they are waiting in line at a fast-food restaurant when they're at the doctor.”

Program II is a unique course of study here at Duke, so one of the most important questions that we often face is why? Why did you choose a major so different from your peers? For Fatima, her experiences within the medical realm, coupled with her own identity as an artist and creative combined during Covid-19 to pique her interest in this topic. The turning point, however, came through taking an art class with William Flick here at Duke. During the course, the students were asked to tell a story through their work. Fatima chose to document her own experience with mental health and the pandemic, feeling as though—through the creation and sharing of visual art—she was able to create a safe space open to discussing fears, hesitancy, medicine, and more. This ability to create a safe space created a sense of comfort for her that she sought to share with others and offer up in their own experiences in the medical realm. It is with these ideas in mind that she shares her own favorite—and most interesting—part of her program: the capstone.

Fatima's capstone has two parts. This past fall, she held screenings of *The (In)visible Organ* as well as post-film discussions about issues surrounding cervical cancer diagnosis and stigma which has led many to die undignified deaths. Initially encountered in her Bass Connections (*Empowering the Prevention of Cervical Cancers in Peru*), Fatima thought that the film was a perfect way to combine the arts and engagement with medicine in order to effectively spur conversation and understanding about a topic that rarely has a spotlight. These conversations reminded her that talking about healthcare doesn't have to be negative or scary. Instead, she hopes to empower others to take control of their health and celebrate the patient taking an active role in their experience of the medical system. For the latter half of her capstone, this semester Fatima worked with both professional and student artists to create an exhibition showcasing experiences of and within medicine and health. Alongside this exhibition, she asked her attendees to fill out surveys reacting to the pieces, how the works may have changed their perceptions, and more.



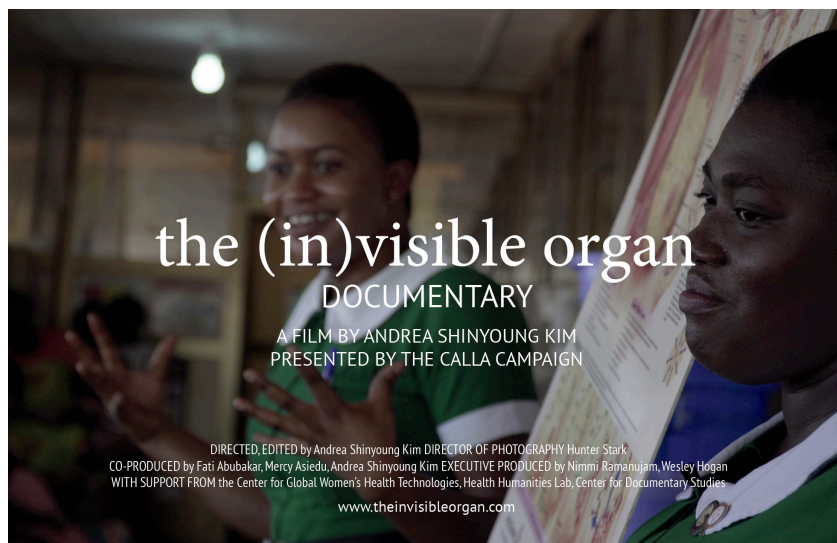
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Throughout her program, it is clear that Fatima has been interested in how a rapport may undermine the “white coat complex” that is so pervasive in the medical system today, and the ways in which we can create a dialectic rather than an authoritative practice of medicine. Through her own experiences, and the courses that she has pursued in her program, Fatima feels strongly that mediums which don’t use words are highly effective in reflecting experiences where words may fail.

To those who are considering Program II, Fatima has these words:

It is the best thing I’ve done for myself at Duke. So, if you have an idea, keep expanding on it and asking questions. Then, get over the hump of the application and follow your passion!

If you are interested in learning more about Fatima’s area of study, she suggests both a film and a book: “The (In)visible Organ” from Andrea Shinyoung Kim and “Breast and Eggs” by Mieko Kawakami



The (In)visible Organ

“The cervix is an organ that brings about life. So why is it so often a source of shame, of disease, and unspoken pain? Distraught by premature deaths of women worldwide due to cervical cancer, a team of nurses, engineers, and activists pioneer a new way to see the cervix, and the future of preventative health. Directed by Andrea Shinyoung Kim in association with the Center for Global Women’s Health Technologies and Calla Campaign at Duke University, The (In)visible Organ documents a collaboration between engineers, storytellers, scholars, physicians, and artists across ages and disciplines.”

- From the associated initiative

Breast and Eggs by Mieko Kawakami

“Breasts and Eggs paints a portrait of contemporary womanhood in Japan and recounts the intimate journeys of three women as they confront oppressive mores and their own uncertainties on the road to finding peace and futures they can truly call their own. It tells the story of three women: the thirty-year-old Nat-su, her older sister, Makiko, and Makiko’s daughter, Midoriko. Makiko has traveled to Tokyo in search of an affordable breast enhancement procedure. She is accompanied by Midoriko, who has recently grown silent, finding herself unable to voice the vague yet overwhelming pressures associated with growing up. Her silence proves a catalyst for each woman to confront her fears and frustrations.”

-From Europa Editions Publishing



An Interview With:

LILY ELMAN

'23

Interviewed and written by Ben Sperber

Program Title: *Disabled Bodies as "Minority Bodies" in Theory and Practice*

Hometown: *Philadelphia, PA*

At the age of sixteen, Lily began volunteering for an overnight camp that catered to campers with Muscular Dystrophy. At the camp Lily saw how the removal of barriers (physical and social) enabled everyone at camp to participate equally in activities and in the community. She didn't know it at the time, but this was the social model of disability in action. Here disability was an aspect of identity, not the whole identity. The community she encountered there and the sense of communal care stuck with her as she began to inspect and ponder the deep disconnect that existed between spaces like this camp and the rest of the world. After finding disability studies early in her tenure at Duke—during a time where she felt “unmotivated and unchallenged” because of the lack of connection between what she was learning in classes and what she cared about outside the classroom—Lily found the same excitement and passion for the field as she did at sixteen. Consequently, she created and began to pursue her unique course of study in Program II, searching to understand how looking at disability as an aspect of identity and recognizing it as a minoritized identity impacts the way we think about disability, how we relate to others, and the way we think about the world.

Disability Studies is gaining traction in academia, with more courses being offered both at Duke and elsewhere, as we begin to reckon with the inaccessible world that we occupy. For Lily, Program II offers a means to understand disability in a nuanced manner, looking at more than experiences with the medical establishment or social interactions and instead extending her course of study to look at religious, educational, psychological perspectives, and more. Fundamentally, Lily says that her program explores the minoritized place that disabled people occupy with “resultantly less access to resources from being part of this group,” questioning the broader implications of these ideas. Through her course of study, Lily believes in the importance of applying what she has learned in the classroom by engaging with and working to support the disabled community. She has worked as an aide for an 8-year-old with Down Syndrome where she has learned in ways that surpass what is possible in the classroom. She has also become increasingly involved in activism on campus through her involvement with the Duke Disability Alliance and with DukeASL. Much of this has been focused on trying to open the conversation about disability at Duke and to work towards formalized courses and programs of study in the fields of disability studies and Deaf studies.

Most recently, Lily was a key member in orchestrating a teach-in—a series of events targeted at widening awareness and teaching Duke students about American Sign Language (ASL). As a part of these events, she helped bring in Dr. Donna Jo Napoli of Swarthmore College to describe her work in ASL Linguistics, as well as lead a workshop teaching Duke students ASL—an extension of the House Course



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that she already helps lead on the subject. The house course, “Intro to ASL and Deaf Studies” introduces students to the richness of Deaf culture and the importance of ASL to the Deaf community. Through such projects, Lily has been able to generate a variety of meaningful connections and says that one of the most interesting parts of her Program II is the ability to “meet receptive people...and have conversations where people offer perspectives that [she] hasn’t considered before” or shed new light on an idea that she is already exploring. Through Program II, Lily has been able to explore the intersection of multiple subjects and the mediating impact they have on the disabled-experience, which has deeply informed the way that she wants to go forth into the world after graduation. Upon completing her degree at Duke, Lily will attend the University of Pennsylvania and earn a Masters in Genetic Counseling, ultimately hoping to work in a pediatric unit, helping families through the diagnostic journey and supporting them as they consider what a diagnosis will mean for their family. She recognizes how scary a diagnosis can be and the challenges that the family will face as they move forward and she hopes to help families through this time and remind them that nothing about a child has changed upon being diagnosed, now “they just have a name for it.”

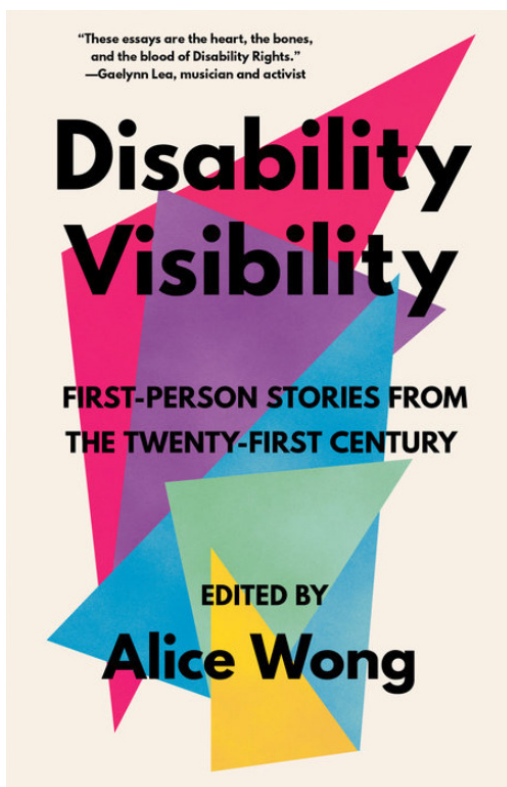
Lily’s program is deeply important as society continues to reckon with issues of marginalization, accessibility, ableism, and more. She thanks the many faculty members at Duke and beyond, particularly Dr. Odendahl James and the late Dr. Diane Nelson, who have supported her program and her as an individual. Those interested in learning more about Lily’s program, *Disabled Bodies as “Minority Bodies” in Theory and Practice*, can reach out to Lily (le64@duke.edu), as she believes so much can be gained in conversation with others.

She also offers the following sources to those interested in an introduction to disability studies and to the Deaf and disabled communities:

“Disability Visibility” by Alice Wong
“Disability Pride” by Ben Mattlin
“Code of the Freaks” (film)

“Deaf U” (available on Netflix)

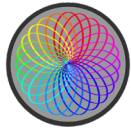
“The Disability Debrief Newsletter” (available on their website)



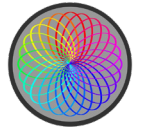
Disability Visibility edited by Alice Wong

“One in five people in the United States lives with a disability. Some disabilities are visible, others less apparent—but all are underrepresented in media and popular culture. Now, just in time for the thirtieth anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, activist Alice Wong brings together this urgent, galvanizing collection of contemporary essays by disabled people...this anthology gives a glimpse into the rich complexity of the disabled experience, highlighting the passions, talents, and everyday lives of this community. It invites readers to question their own understandings. It celebrates and documents disability culture in the now. It looks to the future and the past with hope and love.”

-From Vintage Publishers



EVENT SPOTLIGHTS



Visual Connections Art Gallery Opening

*Health Literacy and Visual
Arts Senior Thesis Research
Research Project*



at left: Artwork depicting visual narratives related to health
done by the organizer, Fatima Massare Somers
at right: Photography and artwork depicting visual
narratives related to reproductive health

Shown above are images from one component of Fatima's senior thesis. She worked with professional and student artists to put on a show about visual narratives in the medical realm while also conducting research. The exhibit, displayed in the Ruby in late January pulled in hundreds of Duke students and local Durhamites.



Shown above: Students (including Program II student Lily Elman), gather on the quad to learn basic signs of ASL and celebrate ASL's place in the world's languages

As a part of a multi-day teach-in, students were able to learn the basics of ASL. Though not offered as an official language at Duke, students show an obvious interest in learning sign language. Along side these lessons, the teach-in brought Swarthmore Professor Donna Jo Napoli to lead a talk, organized a film screening of "CODA," and more!

American Sign Language Teach-In

*ASL Club hosts a "Signing 101"
class on Abele Quad to teach
students and raise awareness*



Graduating Senior Cohort

Fall 2022 and Spring 2023

Fall 2022

Ami Wong ***

Narrative Arts: Storytelling Forms and Functions

Madeleine Jenner

Public Health and Food: Environmental, Psychosocial, and Biological Perspectives

Ayda Lee

Housing Justice and the Environment

Merill O'Shaughnessy

Human-centered Design & Informatics

Anisha Watwe

Global Reproductive and Sexual Health Policy

Spring 2023

Em Adler

Urban Planning

Devon Anthony **

Movement and Minority Health

Sofia Bottinelli ***

Immigration and Child Development

Sophia Chimbanda

Social Movements & Social Justice Across Cultures

Meghna Datta **

Medicine, Mortality, and a Meaningful Life

Sophia Carroll ***

Symbolic Communication: Visual and Linguistics Semiotics

Natalie Chou **

Documentary Health Humanities: Child Disability and Illness

Cynthia Dong *

Health Disparities: Causes and Policy Solutions

Lily Elman **

Disabled Bodies as "Minority Bodies" in Theory and Practice

Amanda Junek **

Mental Health Studies: The Latinx Community in the United States

Taylor Kiefer

Disability, Identity, & Neuroscience

Josee Li ***

Global Disability and Health: Policy, Practice, Narratives

Fatima Massare Somers ***

Art, Fear & Healing in Medicine: Exploring Health Literacy through Visual Arts Narratives

Sydney Reede ***

Fashioning Society: Reassessing and Restructuring

Continued next page...

Graduating Senior Cohort

Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 continued

Elizabeth Rothstein ***

Fashion and Globalization: The Creative Commodity

Saisahana Subburaj **

Global Women's Health in Asia: Culture, History, and Power

Thomas Shen

Performing SGD Health: Reducing Stigma Through Theater

Hanna Tawasha **

Intersectional Inequality Politics

Aaron Spruill

How can a traditional Music Education be approached through Modern Music production?

Kara Wall

Health in Rural America

Prokop Martinek *

Resource Economics and Energy Technology

Benjamin Wallace *

Constructions of Race and Racial Attitudes in America

Ying Yu ***

Medicine, Music, and Mind

Amy Yoon ***

Critical Food and Agriculture Studies



Asterisks (*) indicate Graduation with Distinction as follows:

- * Distinction
- ** High Distinction
- *** Highest Distinction

At Left: photo from the Senior Program II Banquet. Congratulations graduates! We are so proud of you.



In Future Issues:

Interviews with Alumni

If you are an alumni and are interested in being interviewed for our Fall 2023 issue, email the editor through bhs19@duke.edu

Program II Advisor Spotlights

Students, if you feel that your advisor deserves special recognition, reach out to the editor, Ben Sperber (bhs19@duke.edu)

THANK YOU PROGRAM II COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Dr. Sherryl Broverman

Chair of Committee, Global Health Institute.

Dr. Rachael Murphey

Director of Program II, Trinity College Dean

Dr. Shira Viel

Assistant Professor of the Practice. Mathematics

Dr. Purnima Shah

Associate Professor of the Practice Dance

Dr. Bahar Leventoglu

Associate Professor, Political Science and
Economics

Caroline Stinson

Associate Professor of the Practice, Music

Benjamin Sperber

Student Representative

A note from the Editor

If you have made it this far, thank you so much. This has been a labor of love and great collaboration and it is not possible that the inaugural issue of this newsletter could be created without the help of key individuals. Thank you to Dean Rachael Murphey for her guidance and enthusiasm. Thank you to Tyrice Rogers for the countless number of hours she has put into Program II. Thank you to Lily Elman and Fatima Massare Somers for agreeing to be interviewed. Thank you to the Office of Alumni Affairs for assisting in creating the Alumni Group. And lastly, thank you to all those before us—and to those who will come after—for making Program II the unique, stimulating, and exciting group that it has been and will continue to be.

If you would like to be included in future editions as a student, advisor, or alumni spotlight do not hesitate to reach out to Ben Sperber at bhs19@duke.edu for more information! We are so excited to continue these Newsletters and share all that Program II has to offer.

