

## Candy R. Wei Prize for International Studies in Art and Design

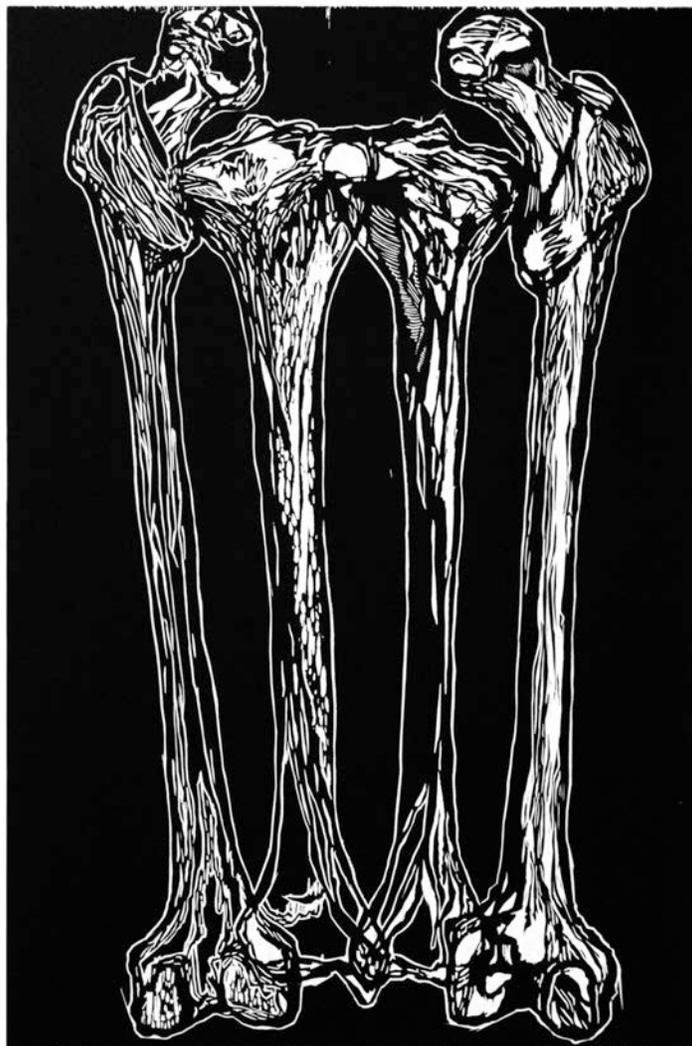
In June of 2013, I went to Tanzania with Joe Trumpey and our group of Exo-Explorers; a group that we would later name ourselves “The Golden 19.” It was my first time to Africa, and a month after my junior year of college ended. A year I will never separate from losing a friend to suicide, and the ripple effect it created, leading to my beloved friend group gradually breaking apart. For eight months, I was a storm of grief. Going to Tanzania was when everything became clear: my life wasn't behind me, it was all ahead of me. And I finally began to move on.

During that month, I became more comfortable and connected with a group of classmates than I could've believed possible. Beyond our group of Exo-Explorers, what I have come back to time and time again about my experience in Tanzania is how similar we all are at our core. We are all human beings with hopes, fears, desires, all incredibly complex individuals and at once simple in our connection. It sounds so simple, something that I always knew, but before Tanzania didn't truly understand. The passion, love, and willingness to help one another that bonded me to our “Golden 19” are the same things that bonded all of us to the Maasai tribe of Lesoit, who readily accepted us into their lives.

In the first months coming back, I couldn't shake this idea of human connection, along with trying to discover what larger place my experience abroad would have in my life. Though the content of the work I produced this past year does not directly relate, Tanzania's ripple effects are embedded in everything I've made. With my new perspective and amplified confidence, I embarked on my IP project with larger than life ambitions, and even more so: a bizarre, new-found bravery to make work about my

junior year. Every wood block I carved, every print I made came from my own hands. The same hands that carry a copper Maasai bracelet, coiled around my wrist on our last day in Lesoit. The bracelet forever reminds me not just of my experience, but of the person I was, and the person I am today.

Images of my Work:



“Remain” Woodcut 22” X 33”

My first attempt to make work about both my friends loss and the idea of human connection.



My first large scale iteration of "The Cliffs." The Cliffs became the imagery I worked with to represent losing my friends suicide and the effect on my group of friends. This is an image of the 16 ft scroll print I completed first semester-with the help of an amazing printing team.



Detail (4ft of pattern)



My final installation of "The Cliffs." 12, 8' X 3' woodcut prints, hung from the ceiling in pairs.

(Below Image) A view from inside the installation looking out.



