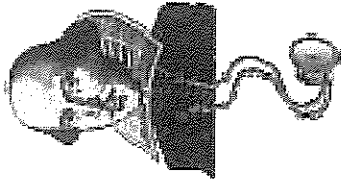


Humanitas

Medical University of South Carolina
Volume 12, 2008

HUMANITAS



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PREFACE

Dear Friends,

Welcome to Volume XII of *Humanitas*, the literary journal of the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC). For twelve years, *Humanitas* has offered a forum for demonstrating the depth and range of artistic talents possessed by the faculty, staff and students of MUSC. This forum would not be possible if it were not for the unwavering support of the MUSC Humanities Committee. This committee is comprised of members of the Charleston community who are committed to fostering humanistic attitudes and values in all facets of daily life, including medical education.

The *Humanitas* editorial board would like to thank each person who submitted their work for consideration. We would also like to extend special thanks to Kristi Rodgers-Cishek for passionately supporting each step of the production of *Humanitas*, year after year.

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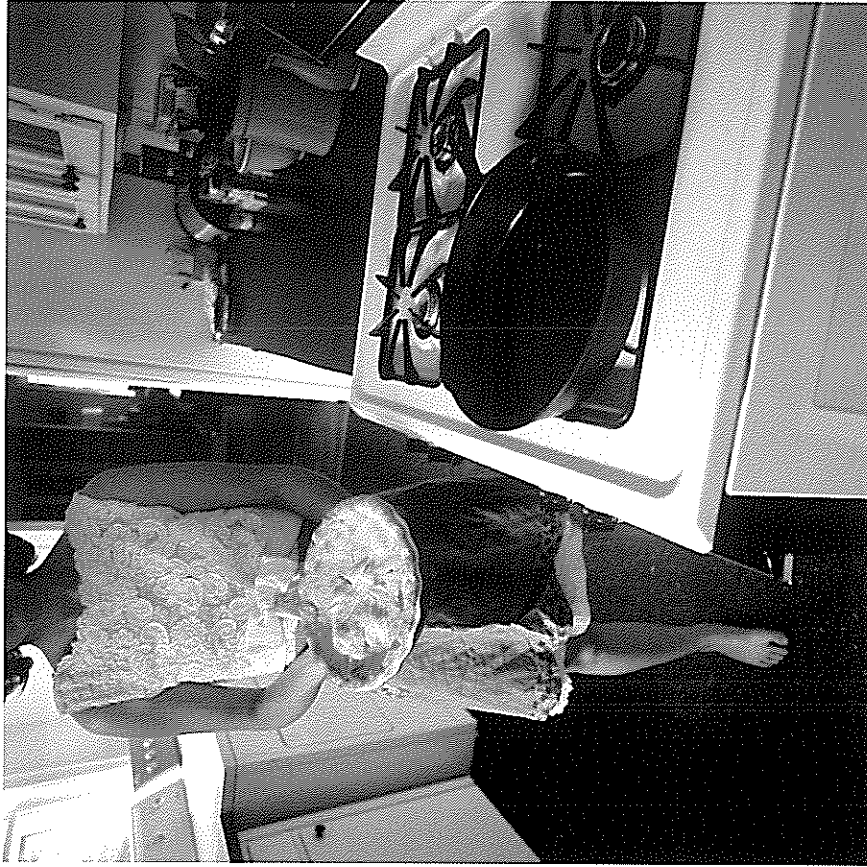
Subject: Dave Vandiver

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Cover: **Magnolia Blossom**, Stephanie Dellis



Title: Self-Portrait with Apple Pie

Photographer: Kathleen Robbins

Hands

March 5th, 2004, Cape Town, South Africa

I stood in the shower, the spray stinging my face. The hot water like a punishment, a self-inflicted purging of my sins. I looked down at my hands. The streaming water made them look different, somehow surreal. They looked like someone else's.

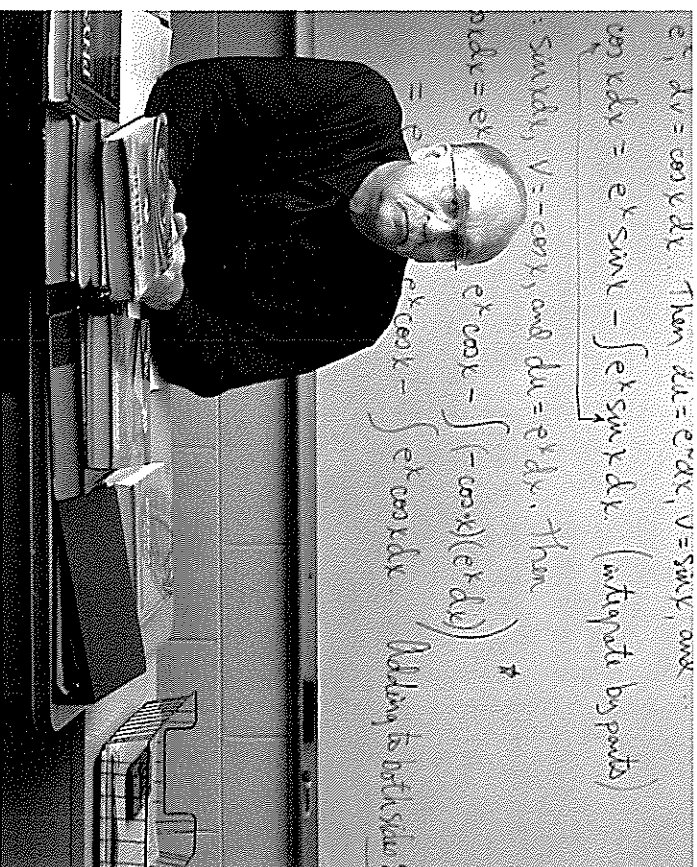
I always wanted girls' hands. The kind with long, slender fingers and gently tapered nails. Hands like my mother's. Instead, I got my father's hands, complete with short fingers and stubbornly round nails. But they were strong hands. They had held me up through the rigors of existence. They never left me, even when everyone else had. They had remained loyal through my failings, and through those that had failed me.

How could I have let everything slip through these hands so easily? How could these sturdy fingers lose grip of everything I had once held so dear? At the end, I had felt them clawing at the air, frantically trying to hold on. Sometimes I expected to look down and see blood on my mangled, tortured fingers, a physical sign of my desperation. That might have been a relief, to see that what I was fighting against was, in fact, real. But like most struggles, this was invisible to the eye. Something I would have to live through alone.

But that's the way of the world really, isn't it? We all like to think we have people with us, someone to love and comfort us when things get too hard. We need to think that we're not all alone in this world. That there will always be someone there to catch us when we start to fall. How many times did it take me to realize that wasn't true? How many times had I hit the ground with the full force of my body, shocked time after time to find nobody there to save me?

Amy Strohecker

Center for Professional Development



Subject: Jack Hopkins

Photographer: Milton Morris