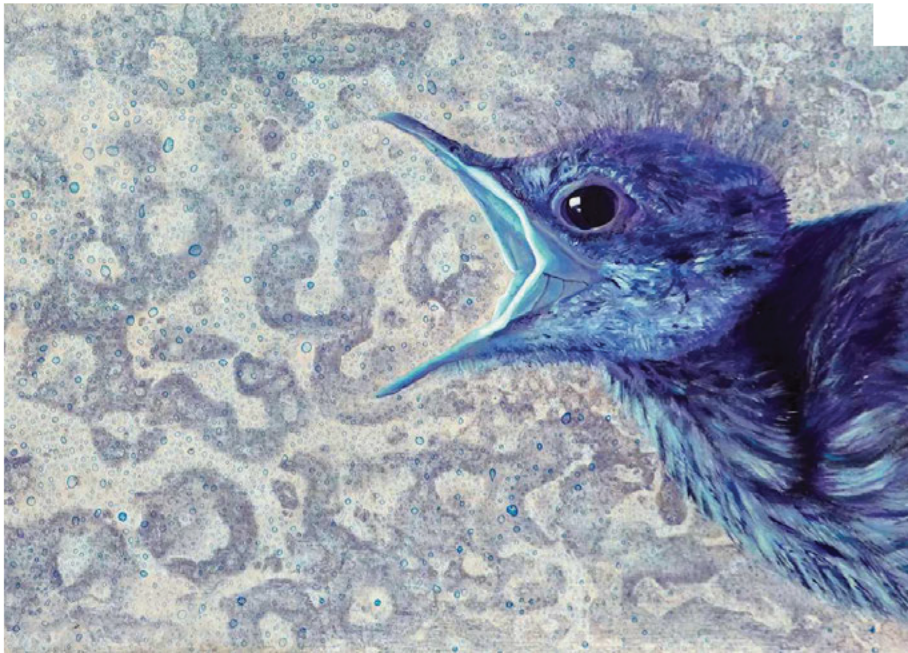


An Artist Walks Into a Vet School

A trailblazing artist-in-residency program in Baton Rouge celebrates the marriage of art and science.

BY JORDAN LAHAYE FONTENOT **AUGUST 22 2022**

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"Wild Card," by Shelby Prindaville.

A Vet School is not the first place you imagine finding an internationally-regarded artist, but for **Shelby Prindaville**, the **LSU**

School of Veterinary Medicine's new artist's residency made perfect sense. The artist, best known for her hyper-realistic depictions of various wildlife, has long been interested in the intersection between the arts and the sciences—in particular the “human impact on the balance of nature”.



"Lineage," by Shelby Prindaville.

This is not Prindaville's first visit to Baton Rouge; she earned her MFA from LSU's College of Art and Design in 2013. Since then, she's taught and served as Art Program Director at two different universities—including Morningside University in Sioux City, Iowa, where she currently works. She also maintains her own artistic practice, which she nurtures by attending artist residences around the

country. “They’re, for me, a very positive pressure cooker environment to create new and interesting work,” she said.



"Creche Chic," by Shelby Prindaville.

Her relationship to LSU and experience with residencies, in addition to her work’s quality and thematic nature, led LSU Vet School Dean Oliver Garden to consult with Prindaville about developing the nation’s first artist-in-residency program at a veterinary school. By the end of the conversation, Garden had invited her to be the program’s first resident. “We think that you’re gonna forge a really good tone, and set a standard, and be successful,” he told her.

Garden had conceived of the idea from his own love of art, and its role in multi-disciplinary environments. “I think art has a lot of value in delivering a message that we at the school espouse and hold dear to our heart ... visual representations of all our missions: teaching, healing, discovery, protection,” he said.



Skeletal Ceramics by Shelby Prindaville.

Over the course of Prindaville's time at the school, from June 1–July 31 this year, she created dozens of works in various media—from sculpture to acrylic to watercolor to ceramics. Coming in with the blankest of slates, she sought out inspiration not only in the patients she encountered up close—including a pregnant goat, a baby brown thrasher, a pelican—but also within the school's many departments, from the wildlife hospital to the Zoo Med labs to research.

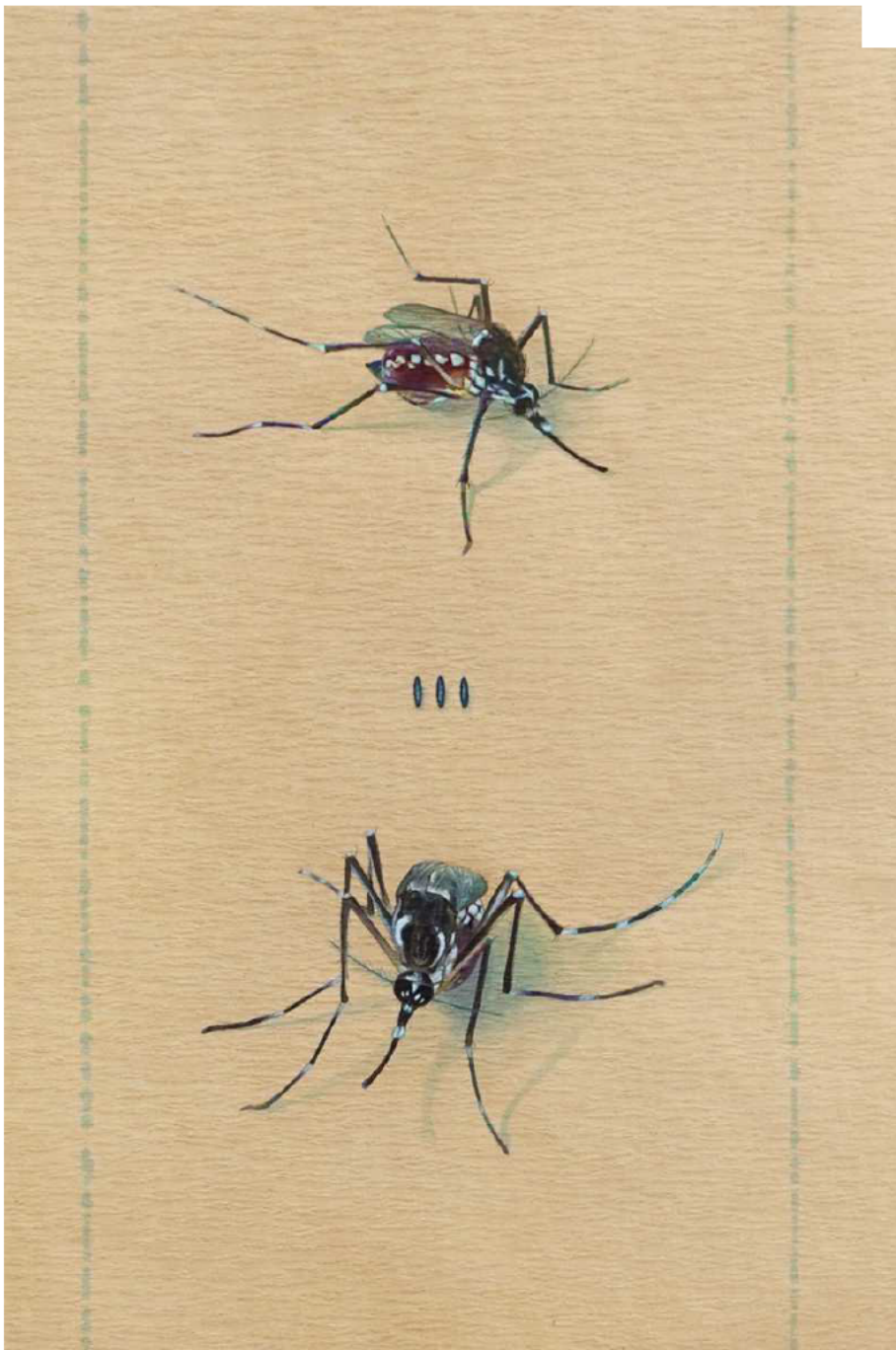
Long intrigued by creating art using nonconventional materials, Prindaville was particularly drawn to the idea of incorporating the various tools, chemicals, medicines, and research ephemera used

within veterinary educational settings. Diff-Quick Eosin Y stain colors a painting of three goats; netting from the epidemiology lab adds texture to a painting of mosquitos; a sculpture of a vulture is crafted from clay and Zoo Med's artificial turf.



"Fortification," by Shelby Prindaville.

“It’s very exciting to be part of new opportunities like this to combine disciplines and reach new audiences, and sort of trigger passions in a lot of different groups of people,” she said. “You get unprecedented access to all of these different areas, people, animals, and then—depending on what you are interested in—you potentially get access to some of these unusual materials.”



"Hosts," by Shelby Prindaville.

At the end of the residency, Prindaville's body of work was presented and celebrated at a closing reception—which brought together people from all across the Baton Rouge and LSU community, joining the left brains with the right brains in a distinctly multi-disciplinary celebration. "I really want this school to be a firm member of the community, and to engage with the community in an effective way"

said Garden. “[The artist residency is] such a powerful way to enrich our environment here, and to bring different interpretations of what we do and how it can be messaged to the world.”



"Singularity," by Shelby Prindaville.

The application process for the 2023 LSU School of Veterinary Medicine's Artist-in-Residence Program will be announced soon, and invites artists in various genres—painting, photography, sculpture, filmmaking, poetry, music, and more—to apply. To learn more, contact Sandra Sarr at sarr1@lsu.edu and visit lsu.edu/vetmed/artist_in_residence.

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