

## Pigments and Medicine

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As a third-generation physician farmer, I have a deeply ingrained reverence for the intangible mysteries of life. As a scientist, I understand the physiologic changes that allow a newborn to take its first breath. Yet, despite attending deliveries nearly daily in my work, I remain in awe of the magnitude of that miracle. Actively nurturing that sense of awe is important to me.

A physician's work is challenging, complicated, and sometimes even daunting. We can heal, but we are also witnesses to tragedy and loss.

Maintaining grace in this setting requires an active investment in community, self, and beliefs. And so, when I am not working, I paint.

Painting enhances and balances my medical life. As a painter, I must initially move from doer to observer. From that perspective I cultivate appreciation and curiosity. My preferred subject is nature, most often flowers. Their deceptive delicacy, tenacity, immense diversity and complexity, and beauty reaffirm optimism. Simply put, their beauty has the power to enrich and to restore.

I choose to work in watercolor because it has its own spontaneous, evolutionary process. One can plan and direct the image, but the paper, paint, and water ultimately influence the image in unexpected ways. Like nurturing babies to breathe or seedlings to unfold, watercolor painting honors the mystical as it captures color, light, and life. And isn't that a great way to spend an afternoon. ❖

### How to Cite this Article

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