



Conner Dobson

Spring 2021

Capstone - Metalsmithing

Department of Art and Art History

**Artist Statement:**

Over the last four years, I have been through three separate abusive relationships, each one leaving me with worsened depression, anxiety, and body image. Combined with an inability to confront my past derived from toxic masculinity, this negativity dominates my mental state. Since finally admitting all that I've been through, my work has been driven to fight the emotional and psychological weight that I have carried for too long.

By shaping vessels, I find that I am able to share this weight. In the same way my body carries the burden of my story, each vessel I create bears a unique story fragment, either a single event or an arduous journey within my life. At once, the story fragment is memorialized and stored away, the associated feelings and their baggage now shared between the vessel and my body. Rather than a burden, each story is instead a lesson, and its vessel a way to open up. Yet I am not ready for the world to hear my story, at least not all of it.

In achieving a much needed balance, I looked to a font that I had designed early in my art career. Though initially a child of boredom, this font ended up being the perfect way to open up about my struggles. The font reads as English (it is not a completely new language), but it is nonetheless something only I can decipher. By using the font, I am able to overtly place deeply painful stories into each piece without the viewer judging me for my past. In a sense, the font and the work enable me to open up and share my stories with the world, but not necessarily the people in it.

**Title****Original Format**

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Figure 1: Drinking Habits	4" across x 1/2" deep, Chased and Repousséd Copper
Figure 2: Drinking Habits (Detail)	4" across x 1/2" deep, Chased and Repousséd Copper
Figure 3: "Walk until your feet bleed, then keep walking."	4" across x 6" tall, Copper, Brass, Laser ink
Figure 4: "Walk until your feet bleed, then keep walking." (Detail)	4" across x 6" tall, Copper, Brass, Laser ink
Figure 5: "Walk until your feet bleed, then keep walking." (Detail)	4" across x 6" tall, Copper, Brass, Laser ink
Figure 6: Long Way Down, Long Way Out	6" across x 1" deep, Chased and Repousséd Copper, Enamel
Figure 7: Long Way Down, Long Way Out (Detail)	6" across x 1" deep, Chased and Repousséd Copper, Enamel
Figure 8: Existential Question, Formal Answer	3" across x 3/4" deep, Copper Wire
Figure 9: Existential Question, Formal Answer (Detail)	3" across x 3/4" deep, Copper Wire
Figure 10: Boston Tincture	3 1/2" across at shoulder x 6 1/2" tall with lid, Raised Copper
Figure 11: Boston Tincture (Detail)	3 1/2" across at shoulder x 6 1/2" tall with lid, Raised Copper



Figure 1: Drinking Habits



Figure 2: Drinking Habits (Detail)



**Figure 3: “Walk until your feet bleed, then keep walking.”**



Figure 4: "Walk until your feet bleed, then keep walking." (Detail)



Figure 5: “Walk until your feet bleed, then keep walking.” (Detail)



Figure 6: Long Way Down, Long Way Out



Figure 7: Long Way Down, Long Way Out (Detail)



**Figure 8: Existential Question, Formal Answer**



**Figure 9: Existential Question, Formal Answer (Detail)**



**Figure 10: Boston Tincture**



**Figure 11: Boston Tincture (Detail)**