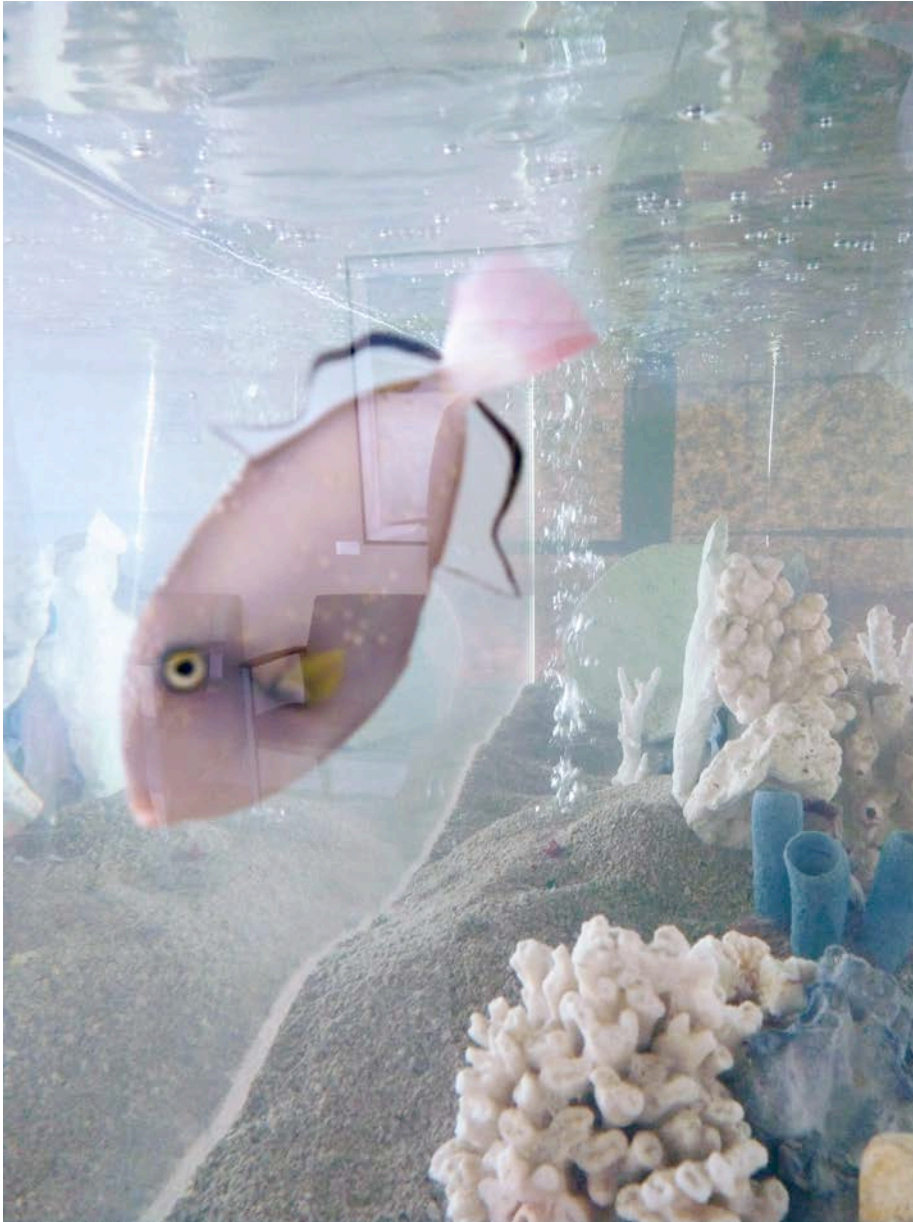


STUDIO ART | FALL 2023

Oncology Fish

By Laura Carmen Arena



flim flam
swims in the pale coral
gentle fin sways
in the current we don't see



my mother is not a swimmer
and yet the current
drips into her veins to stop the growth
the fishes swim in every season



emptied lobby
everyone has nearly gone
nose touching the water's edge

fantails floating in quiet expectation

© *Oncology Fish 1 to 3* by *Laura Arena*

“In 2022, my mother was unexpectedly diagnosed with an advanced and aggressive cancer. For many months, I went with her to a hospital in Boston for bimonthly infusions. While she was undergoing treatment, I would sit by a large fish tank in the waiting area, often only with my thoughts and the fish. The two fish were a kind of welcoming committee, and companions in the endurance sport we were undertaking. At every visit, I would look for them, and when one of the pair was not visible—perhaps sleeping under the coral and hidden—I would feel a kind of panic. I photographed the fish with every visit, until the visits stopped. This triptych is part of a larger work in progress.”

Laura Carmen Arena is an Argentinian-American writer and visual artist and an experienced yoga and meditation teacher based in Cambridge. She has led workshops on meditation and yoga at universities and other professional settings and her photography has appeared in local and international outlets. She studied literature at New York University, and contemplative traditions, education and creative writing at Harvard University, where she also served as a teaching fellow, photographer, web master and assistant director of multicultural affairs.

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