

Summer • Fall 2024

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# AESTHETIC SOCIETY NEWS



 The Aesthetic Society®

Art by: **Ronald M. Friedman, MD**

—  
The Aesthetic Meeting 2024  
is in the Books!

—  
Beyond Vancouver—Gearing Up  
for Next Year's MEET 2025

—  
Record-Breaking Donations—  
Read Heartfelt Patient Stories



## Ron Friedman, MD— ASN's Summer/Fall 2024 Cover Artist

woodwork. (Interpret that however you want.) Not a great pick-up line, but it's been 30 years—and we're still married.

Wood is fascinating. There is something spiritual about working on a recently live material that has tremendous variations in color, texture, and pattern. Frequently the grain twists and swirls in unpredictable and serendipitous ways. Although I also enjoy sculpting alabaster, stone feels colder and less forgiving (and the flying shards hurt).

I am doing considerably less woodworking these days because my other major avocation, composing music, has taken over my life. I have been playing piano since age 8 (yes, despite my large saw collection, I still have all my digits), and I have been writing music since age 10. I did demo recordings of my songs on 8-track tape in the 70s, CDs in the 90s, and mp3s in this millennium. Of course, I also play keys in two Dallas-area rock bands and sing in a choir. Because, why not?

In 2019, my wife, Jin, and I attended the musical, *Hamilton*, and I had an epiphany. If *Hamilton* is a uniquely American story, what could be more quintessentially American than silicone gel breast implants? So, of course, I got to researching and writing, *cleavage*, the "real" story behind fake breasts. It is a larger-than-life musical comedy inspired by the trailblazing surgeons, brave patients—and the stray dog—behind the spectacular rise, fall, and rebound of silicone gel. With my co-librettist, the respected writer and movie producer Laura Goodenow, *cleavage* has enjoyed two table reads and a staged

reading. We are planning to workshop the musical this fall and hoping to land on a stage as soon as next year. (Of course, if invited, we'd love to do a production at the annual Aesthetic Society Meeting.) The reviews have been gratifying:

D (Dallas) Magazine featured *cleavage* in a 10-page article: [dmagazine.com/publications/d-magazine/2023/january/does-the-world-need-a-musical-about-breast-implants](https://dmagazine.com/publications/d-magazine/2023/january/does-the-world-need-a-musical-about-breast-implants)

And, Texas Monthly titled their review of the staged reading, "Hamilton with Breasts": [texasmonthly.com/arts-entertainment/for-a-very-dallas-musical-experience-see-cleavage-hamilton-with-breasts/?utm\\_source=Twitter&utm\\_medium=Organic+Social&utm\\_campaign=SND](https://texasmonthly.com/arts-entertainment/for-a-very-dallas-musical-experience-see-cleavage-hamilton-with-breasts/?utm_source=Twitter&utm_medium=Organic+Social&utm_campaign=SND)

Of course, my friends are concerned: I do surgery on breasts all day, write songs about them at night, and sculpt them out of wood on weekends.

To view my sculpture gallery, please visit [plasticsurgerydallas.com/artistic-approach](https://plasticsurgerydallas.com/artistic-approach)

To take a deep plunge into my *cleavage*—and hear some titillating songs, please visit [cleavagethemusical.com](https://cleavagethemusical.com)



I began woodworking at age 12 purely by chance; it was the only elective that fit my school schedule. I started out by making a bunny-shaped hot plate (which one of my friends said would make "great firewood"). But slowly I improved and became more ambitious. Soon, I convinced my parents to help me buy a lathe, band saw, table saw, and a chainsaw. (Who buys their kid a chainsaw?) A few years later, I watched a NOVA program on PBS (okay, I was a little nerdy) featuring Stanford plastic surgeon, Burt Brent, MD, who pioneered carving ears from costal cartilage—using sterilized woodworking tools. I traveled solo to Stanford at age 15 and watched Brent perform reconstruction for kids with microtia. That's when I decided to become a plastic surgeon. So, my recipe for success was junior high woodshop class and too much TV.

My handmade birthday gifts soon became very popular with my family and friends, and I exhibited at art fairs and shows... and sold several commissioned works. In fact, years later when I met my future wife, I asked her if she wanted to come upstairs to see my

