



DRAWING ON RESEARCH

Chemist Bozhi Tian's art and science recast reality.

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ILLUSTRATIONS BY BOZHI TIAN

At first glance, you may see a serene lake at sunset or delicate petals on a winter-blooming tree. But look closer at UChicago professor of chemistry **Bozhi Tian's** artwork and you might notice these images don't quite capture the world as it is. They meld scenes of nature with hints of technology, much as his research merges biological and synthetic systems.

A materials scientist who works with semiconductors for biomedical applications, Tian designs devices to stimulate or modulate parts of the anat-

omy, such as the heart and neurons. One project his lab has been working on for almost eight years is a solar powered pacemaker. The team is also exploring technology to influence microbes, including an edible material that could modulate the gut microbiome, potentially helping to treat gastrointestinal ailments like inflammatory bowel disease.

Tian's research is inspired by the natural world: its shapes and textures and patterns. And that influence suffuses his artwork, often created in conjunction with his science: a riverscape with a nanowire forest, a neural cell framed as a snowcapped mountain. These are created digitally, but Tian has been painting and drawing since childhood.