

The Evidence on Film

Here's a live one,
works in medical photography
Not a bad job—short and solitary hours
with all the skin you can see
though most of it is geriatric
or looks like liver
for one reason or another.
You can afford to not be idealistic
he says.
I can afford; I can afford;
I work way down in X-ray;
I know I'm slowly being baked
—I keep my backs to the machine at times
so I'm done the same
both sides; the chance of having a kid
with five fingers on each hand
is probably one in ten.
But back to Mr. medical photography;
all alone in his dark room
with the stages of the autopsy
Ooga-Booga! You could jump him
like the boney hand of death itself
while he's leaning over a cancer on a drape.
But you wouldn't want to:
His hair is soft,
his eyes lit up by the lamps,
waiting for something to develop;
he really believes
that if the lighting's right
he'll catch the soul
escaping.

—Ron Charach