

The Morbid Anatomy Museum

A New Museum of Popular Anatomy

JOANNA EBENSTEIN

The Morbid Anatomy Museum • morbidanatomymuseum.org

joanna@morbidanatomymuseum.org



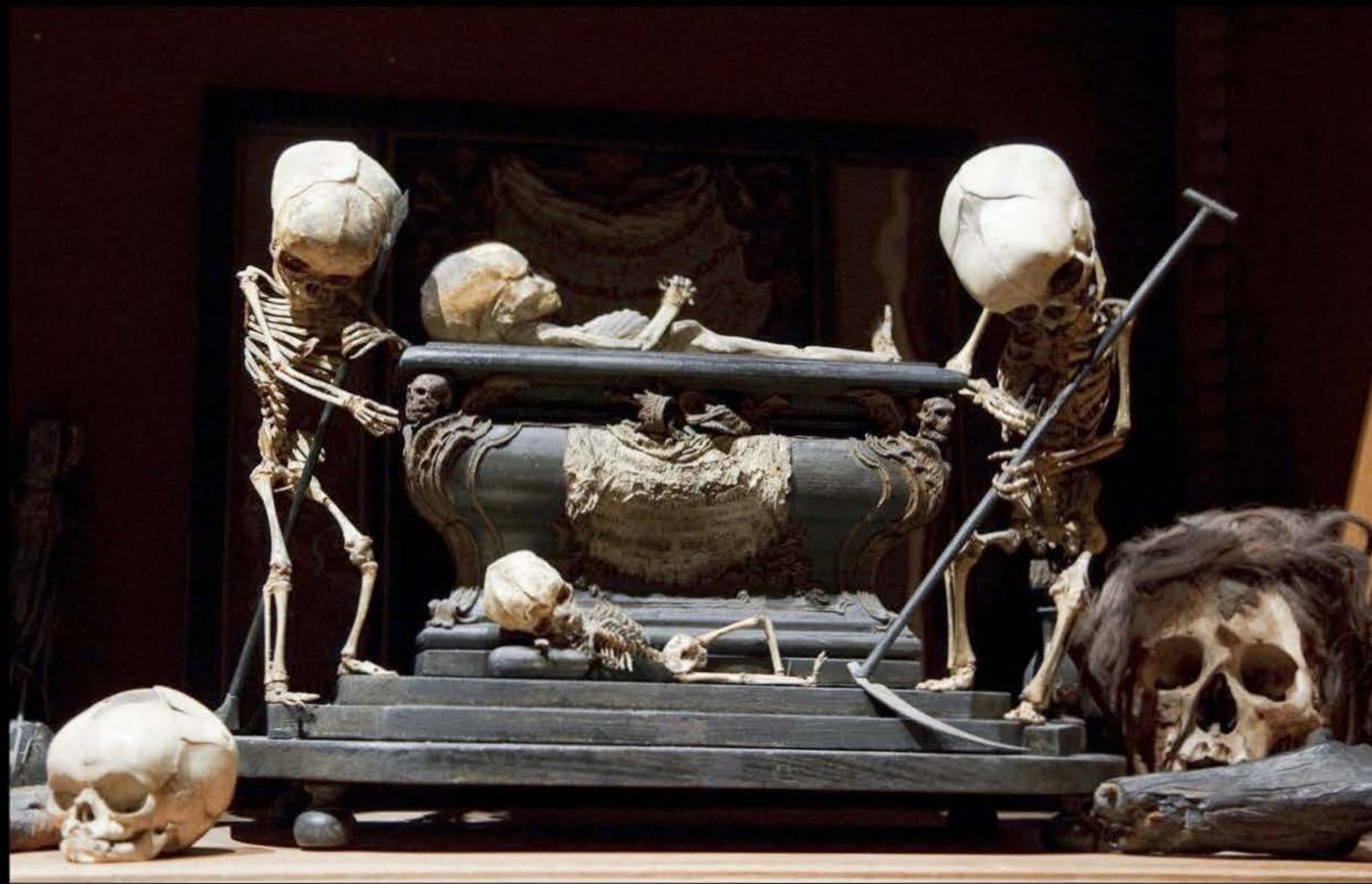






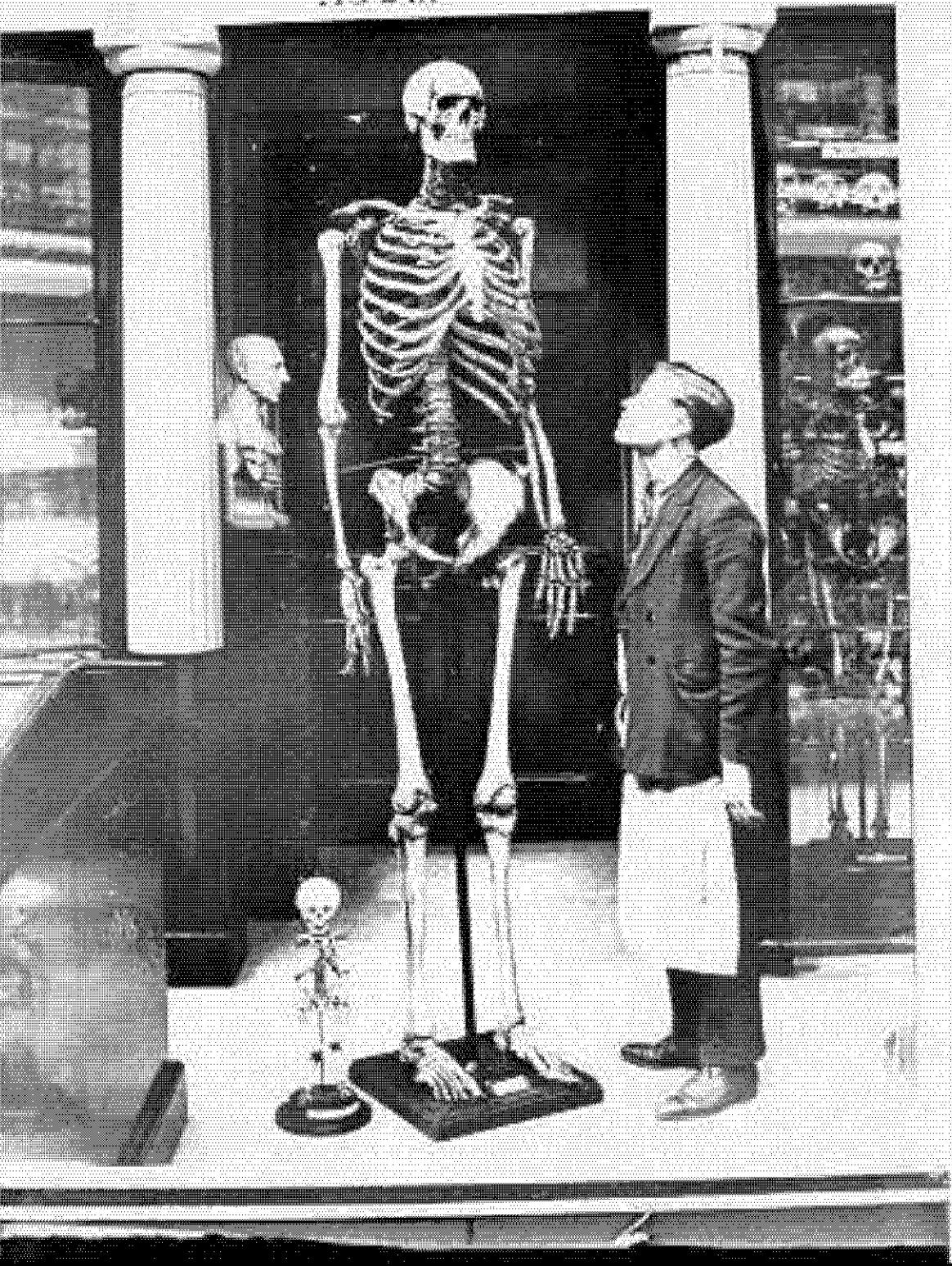


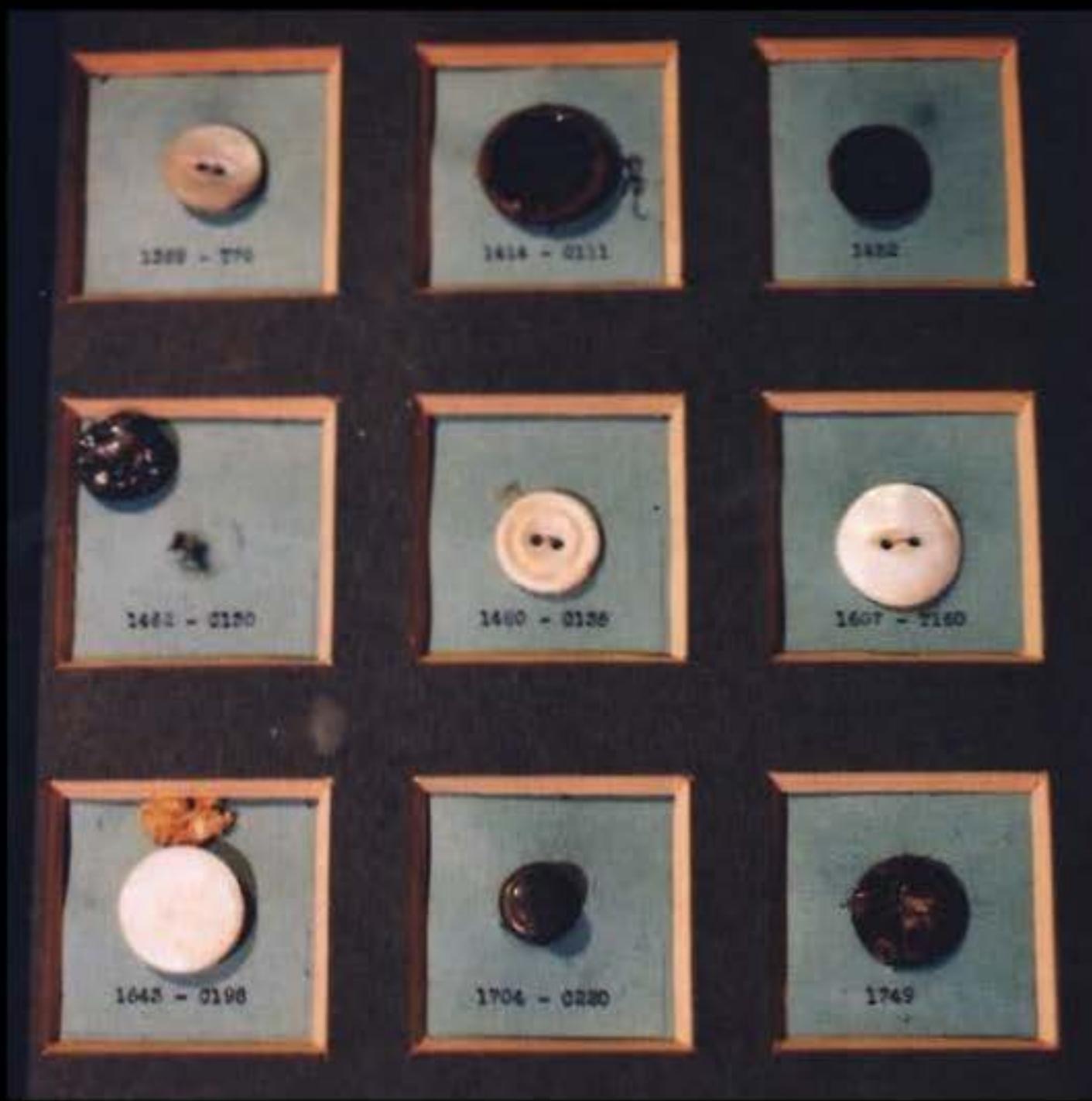


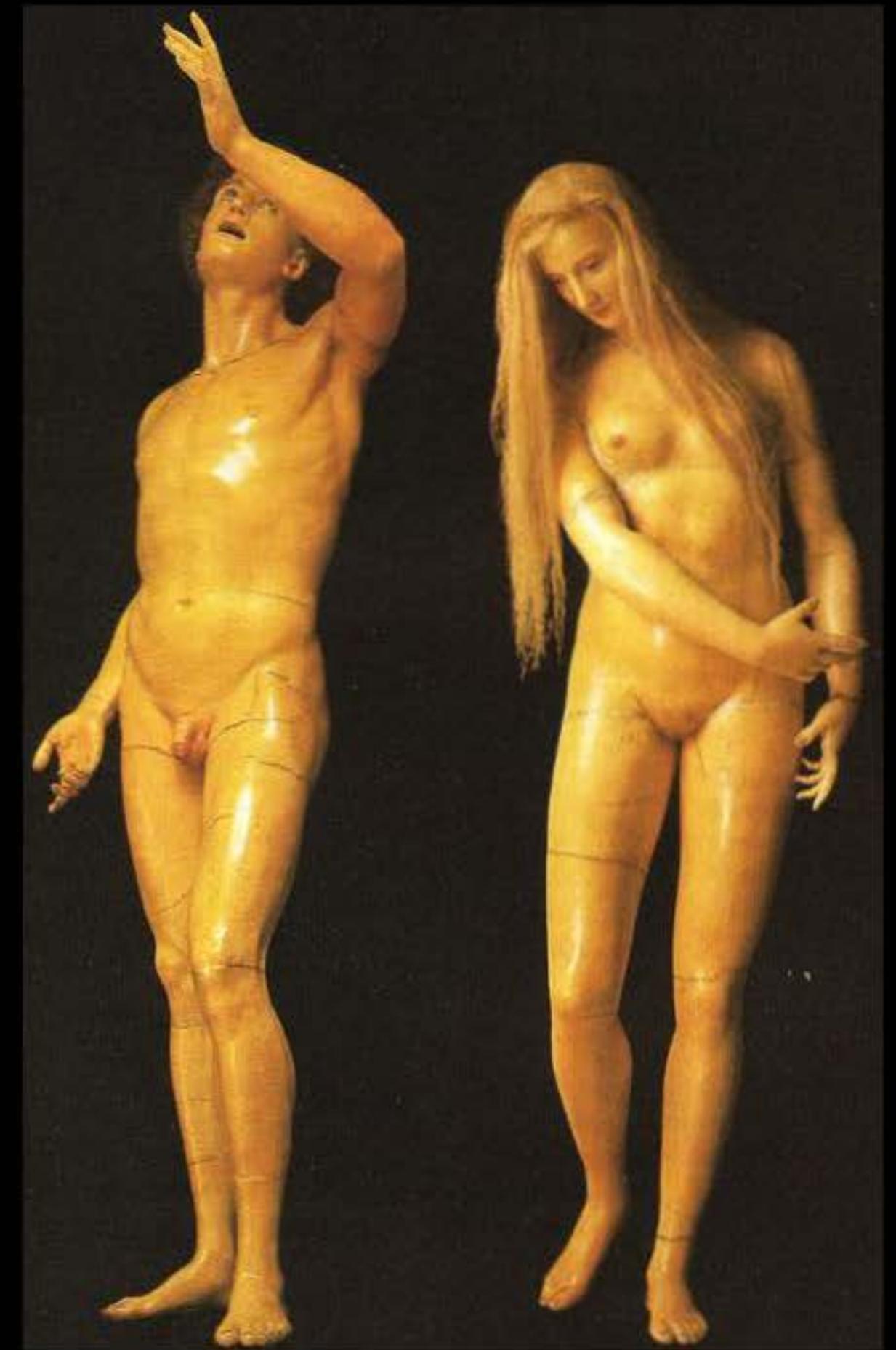


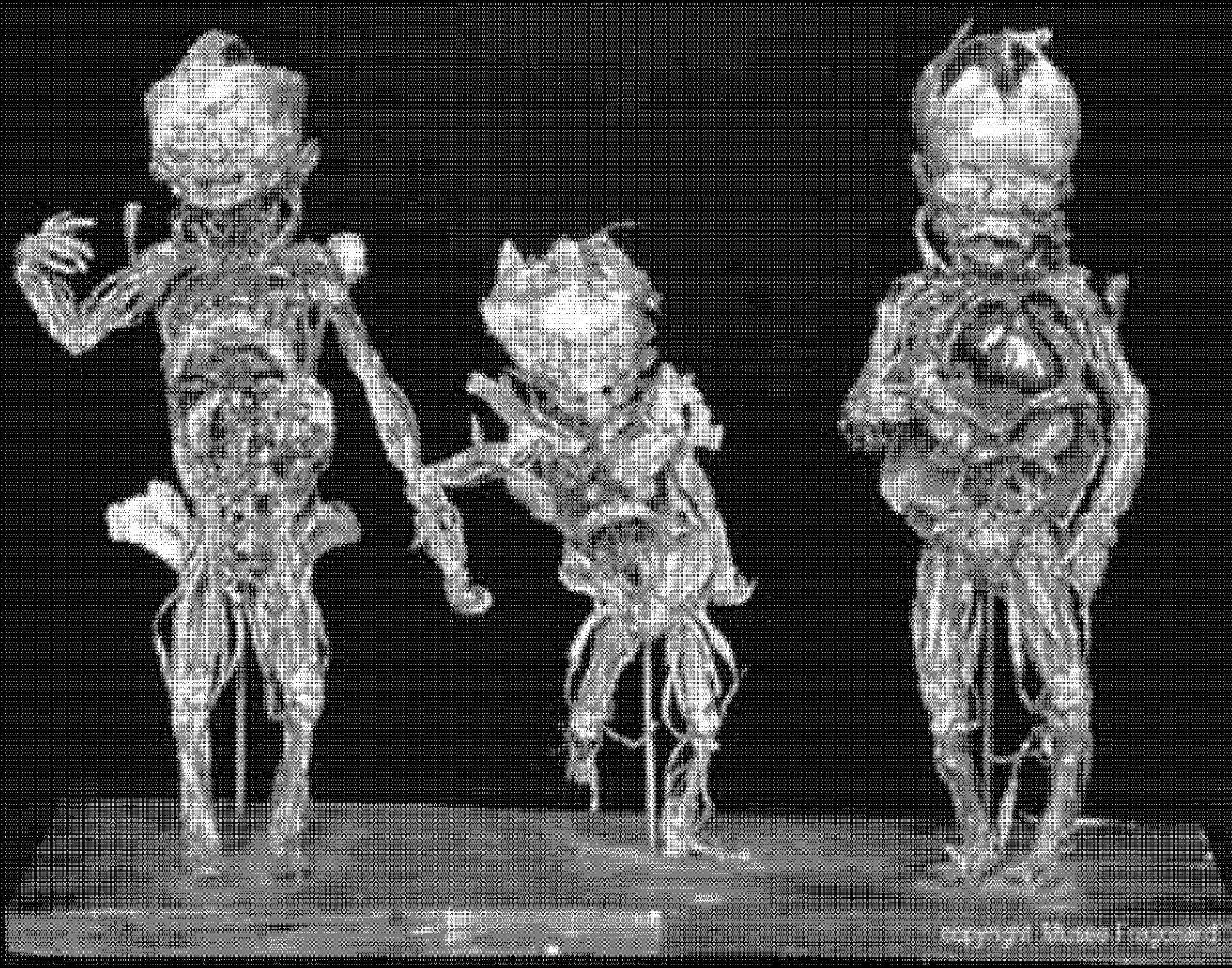


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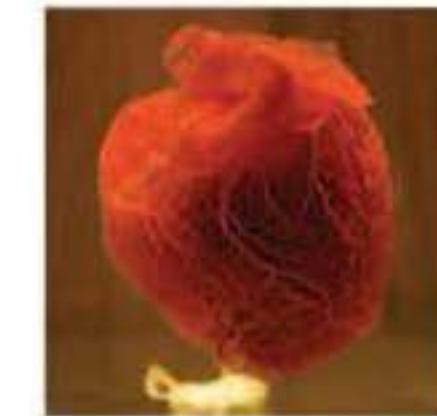


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Anatomical Theatre

Depictions of The Body, Disease and Death in Medical Museums of The Western World.



















































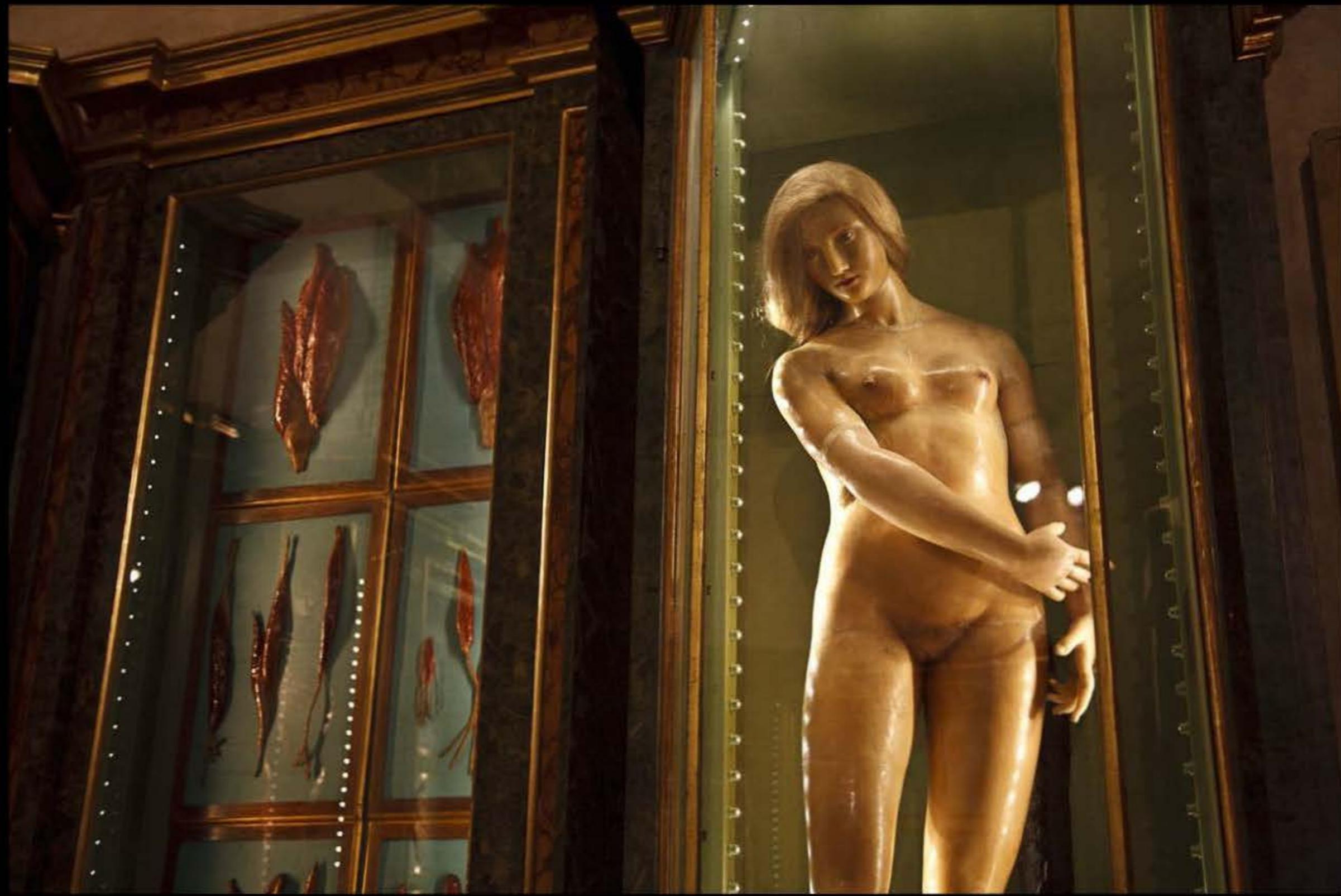
























Anatomical Theatre

INTRODUCTION

MUSEUMS

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List of Museums Featured in *Anatomical Theatre*

Alabama Museum of the Health Sciences : Birmingham, Alabama

The earliest recorded donation to what became the Alabama Museum of the Health Sciences was an out-of-date apothecary scale given in 1946 to the University of Alabama and its Medical Center in Birmingham. Three-dimensional objects were given throughout the decades and the Museum was officially established in 1981.

Today the Museum has over 4,000 objects including hundreds of wet specimens preserved under the direction of pathologist Dr. William Boyd, who wintered in Birmingham during the mid-20th century. Other treasured collection pieces are nineteen wax pathological specimens by London sculptor Joseph Towne and purchased by Dr. Josiah Nott in 1860 for the first medical college of Alabama. From the donated collections of Dr. Lawrence Reynolds, after whom the Reynolds Historical Library is named, are eleven rare anatomical manikins of the 15th to 17th centuries.

Dedicated to collecting medical-related artifacts used primarily in the southeastern United States, the Alabama Museum of the Health Sciences cares for many significant pieces developed and/or used by health care professionals as teaching tools or for patient care in the state and specifically the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Visit the museum website by [clicking here](#).

Museum of Anatomical Waxes "Luigi Cattezneo" (Museo Delle Cere Anatomiche "Luigi Cattaneo"): Bologna, Italy

Museum of Anatomical Waxes "Luigi Cattazneo" (Museo Delle Cere Anatomiche "Luigi

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The Secret Museum

Private Cabinets: A Work in Progress

Photo: P. P. Morrissey





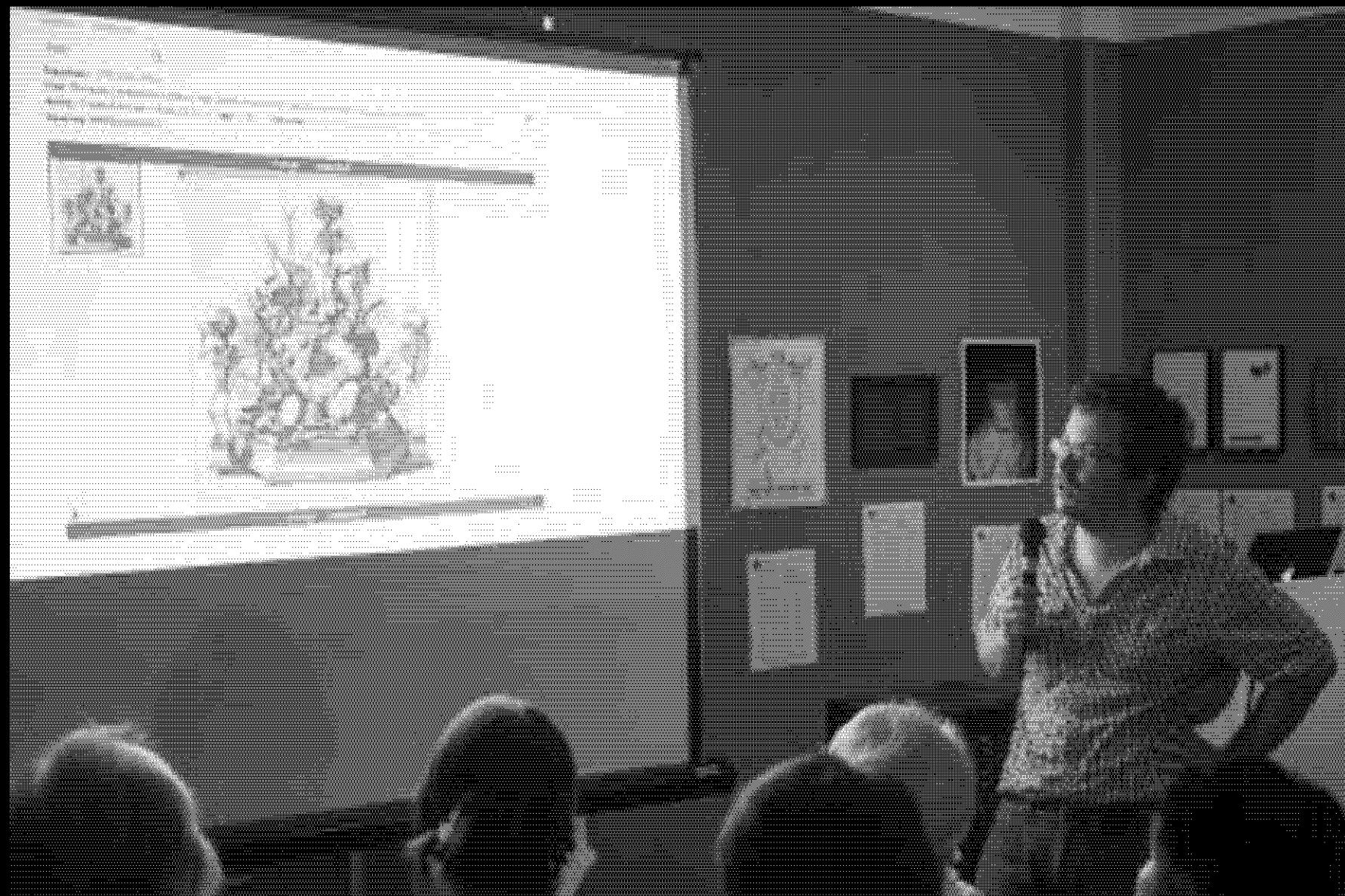
An iconography of the industrial body:

Fritz Kahn, popular
medical illustration, and
the visual rhetorics of
modernity

Michael Sappol June 19, 2008





















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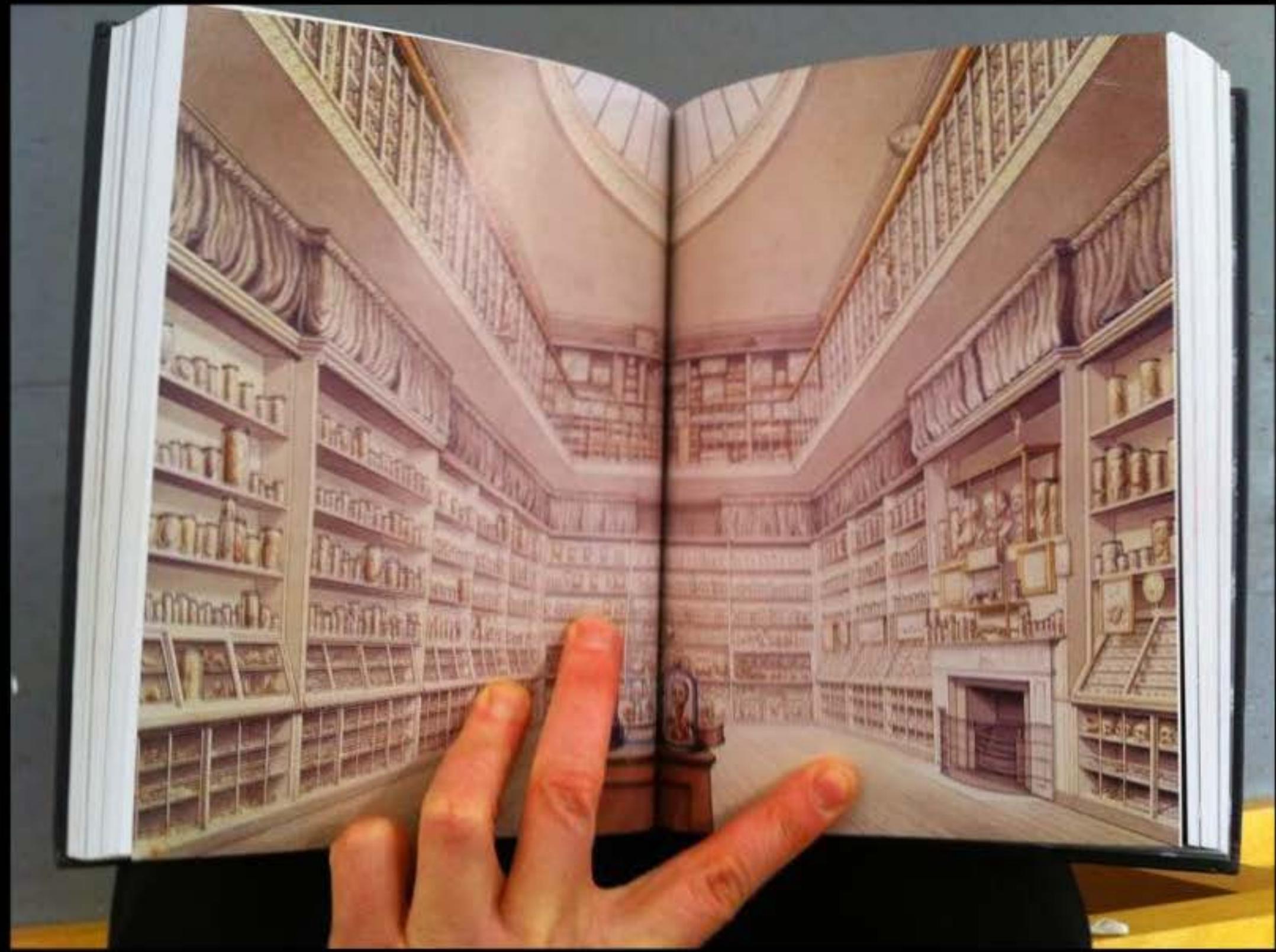


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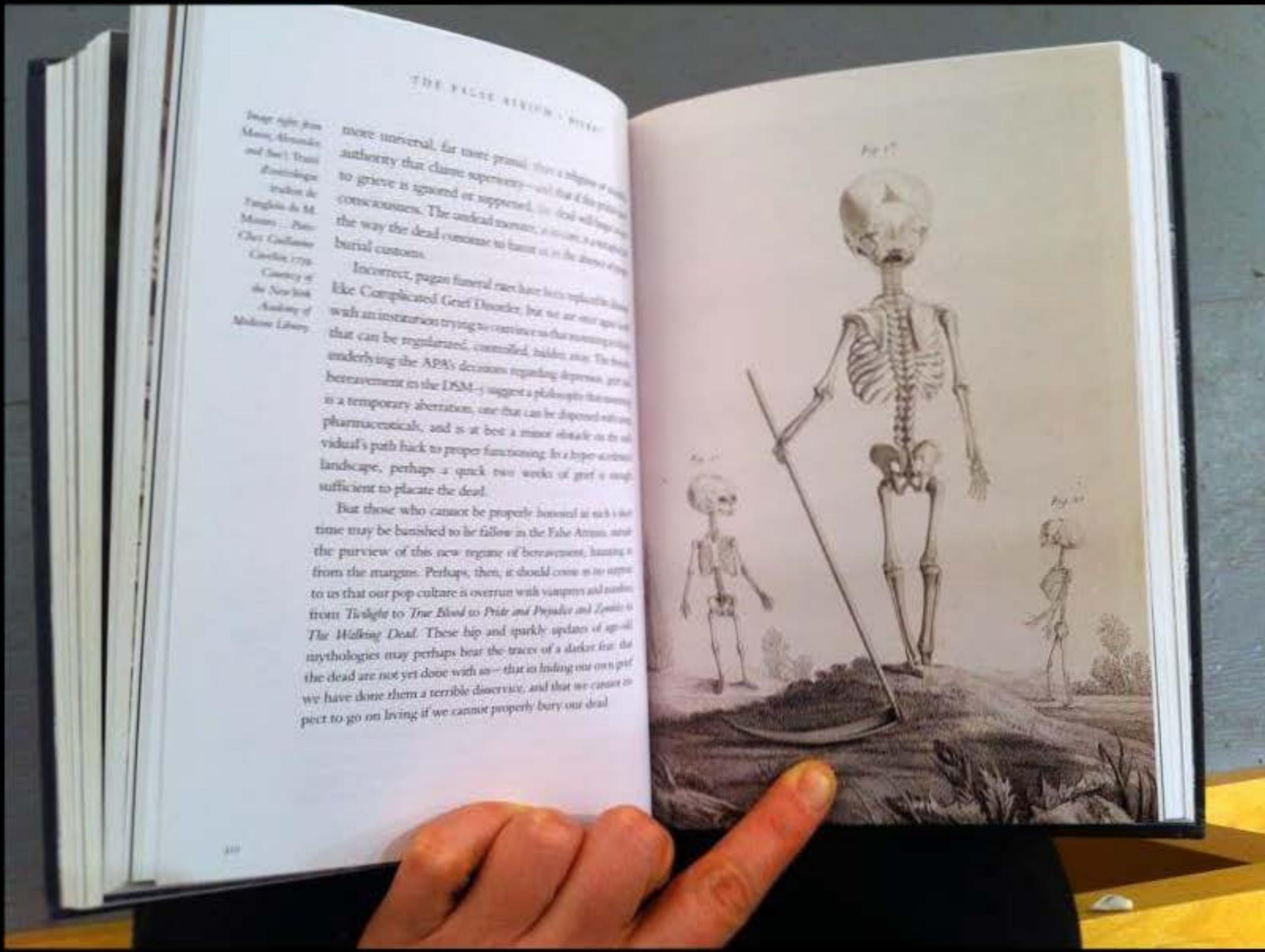


STAGING SCIENCE AT
WELLCOME COLLECTION
Anatomical Models in Context

KATE FORDE

In 2009, Wellcome Collection staged an exhibition known as "Exquisite Bodies," inspired by the popular anatomical models of nineteenth-century Europe. The exhibition was visited by over 50,000 people, and received national and international attention in the press. It was by no means unique in its focus on anatomy—over recent years Gunther von Hagens' Body Worlds and Ron Givens' Body Worlds have attracted millions to their exhibitions of plastinated cadavers and body parts, while ostensibly more academic exhibitions have set anatomical models and illustrations into a wider historical context, aiming to elevate them beyond the status of mere medical curiosities.¹ What was unusual about Wellcome's exhibition was that it emphasized the contemporary location within which objects including wax models, preserved specimens and anatomical illustrations were originally shown. By tracing the movement of such collections from the dissecting theater to the private museum to the fairground, the exhibition considered the range of associations and fantasies they originally inspired, examining their popularity (or, in some cases, notoriety) and their ultimate demise. In this brief essay I





THE FALSE ARK OF SOULS

Image right from
Maurice Alexander
and Scott L. Davis
Entomology
London: M.
Murray ... Publ.
Chez Galignani
Caroline, 1799.
Courtesy of
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Academy of
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more universal, far more primal, than a regime of soul authority that claims superiority—and that the practice to grieve is ignored or suppressed by dead wills and consciousness. The undead moreover, are not a threat to the way the dead continue to haunt us in the absence of our burial customs.

Incorrect, pagan funeral rites have been replaced by things like Complicated Grief Disorder, but we are once again waltzing an institution trying to convince us that mourning periods that can be regulated, controlled, hidden away. The logic underlying the APA's decisions regarding depression, grief, bereavement in the DSM-5 suggest a philosophy that sadness is a temporary aberration, one that can be dispensed with via pharmaceuticals, and is at best a minor obstacle on the individual's path back to proper functioning. In a hyper-academic landscape, perhaps a quick two weeks of grief is enough, sufficient to placate the dead.

But those who cannot be properly honored at such a time may be banished to lie fallow in the False Ark, now the purview of this new regime of bereavement, having a from the margins. Perhaps, then, it should come as no surprise to us that our pop culture is overrun with vampires and zombies from *Twilight* to *True Blood* to *Pride and Prejudice* and *Zombie* to *The Walking Dead*. These hip and sparkly updates of aged mythologies may perhaps bear the traces of a darker fear: the dead are not yet done with us—that is, finding our own grief, we have done them a terrible disservice, and that we cannot expect to go on living if we cannot properly bury our dead.

Fig. 17



Fig. 18











Crime & châtiment

Sous la direction de Jean-Claude



Nicolas Bémont
Véronique Milleron
L'ŒIL DE LA POLICE CRIMES ET CHÂTIMENTS
À LA BELLE ÉPOQUE

DEADLY MEDICINE CREATING THE
MASTER RACE

UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

Boot Hill Express

1/24 SCALE UNASSEMBLED MODEL KIT • MODELE REUDET



Show Rod
MOLDED IN COLOR







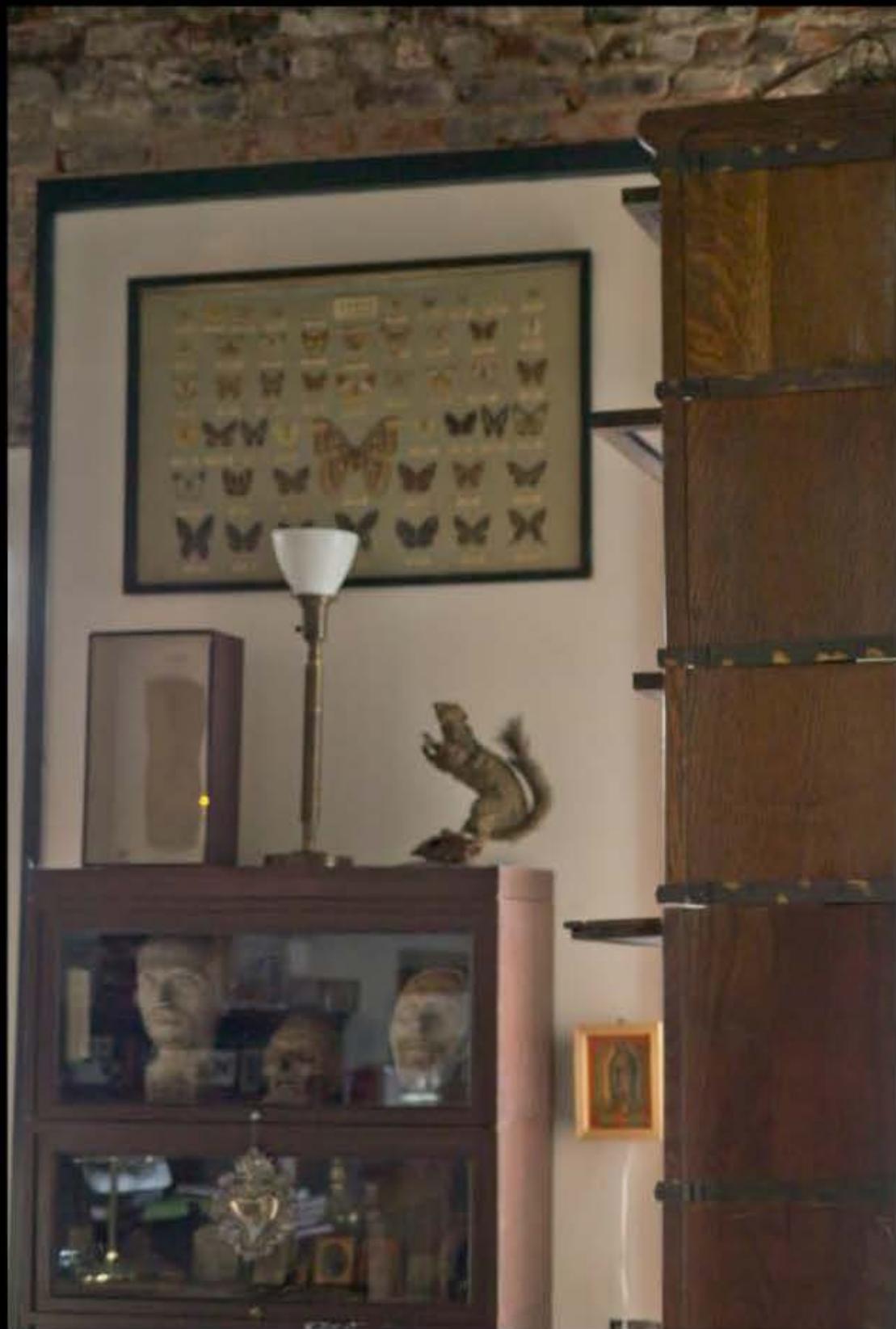




















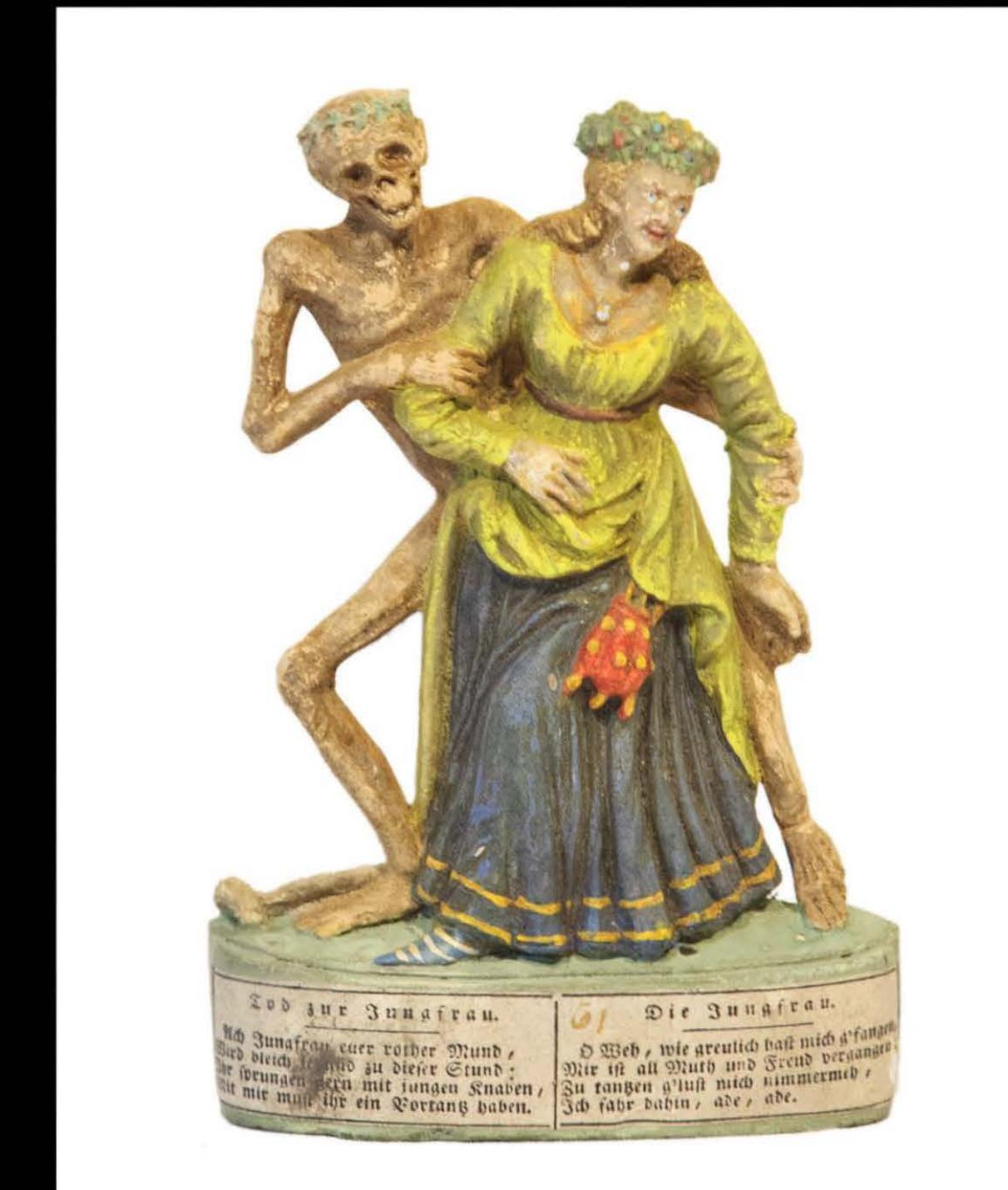






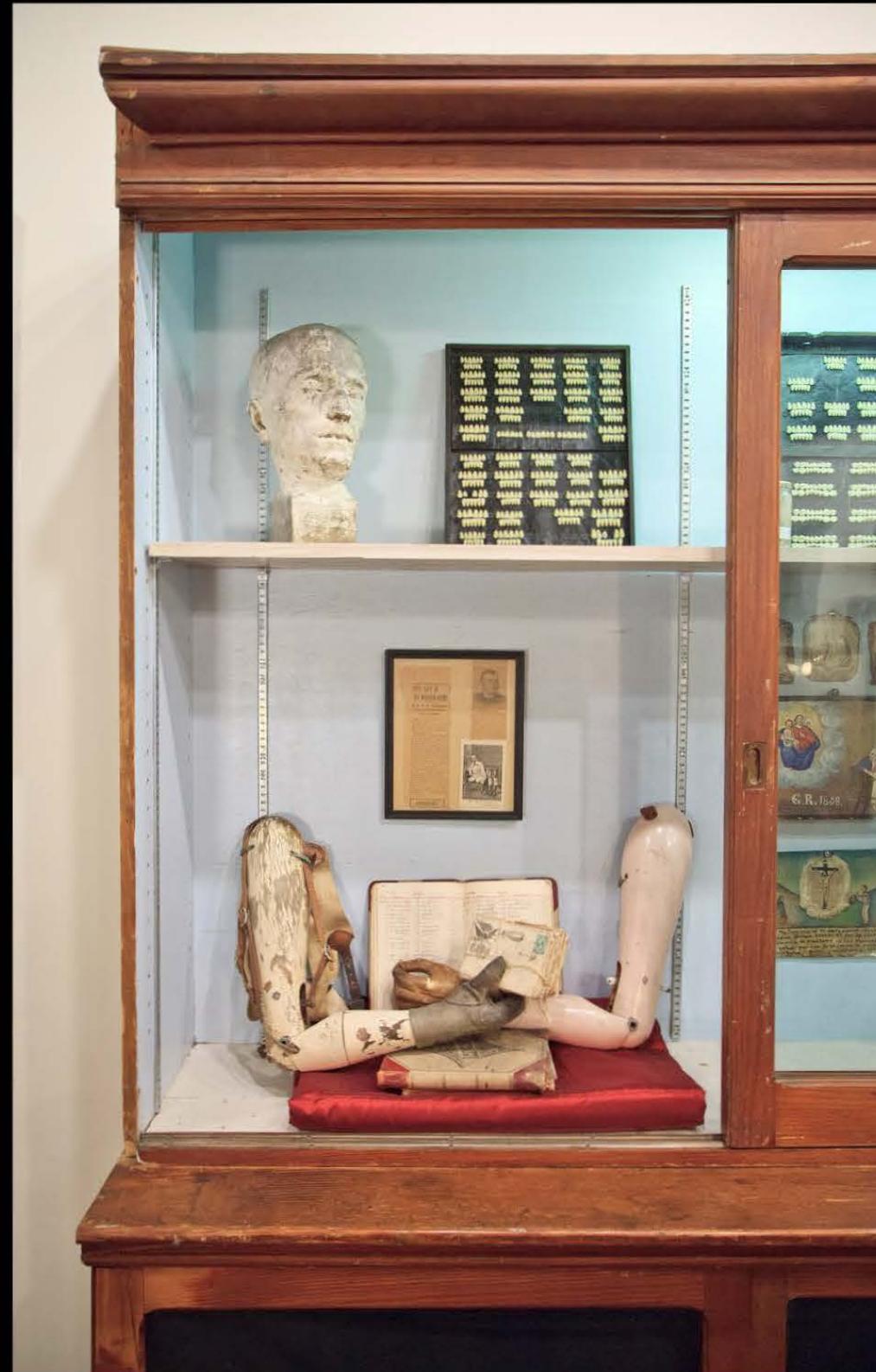
K.P.225. KITTEN WITH 4 EYES, 2 FACES & 2 MOUTHS.

WAS BORN AT BROADWATER, WORTHING, & LIVED 7 DAYS

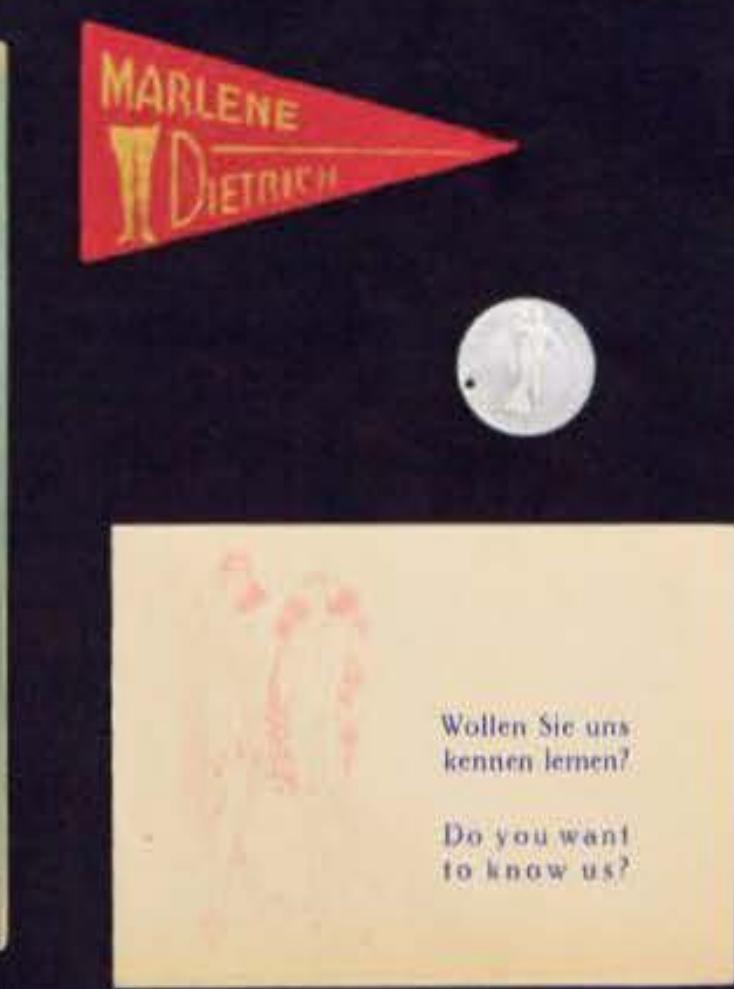
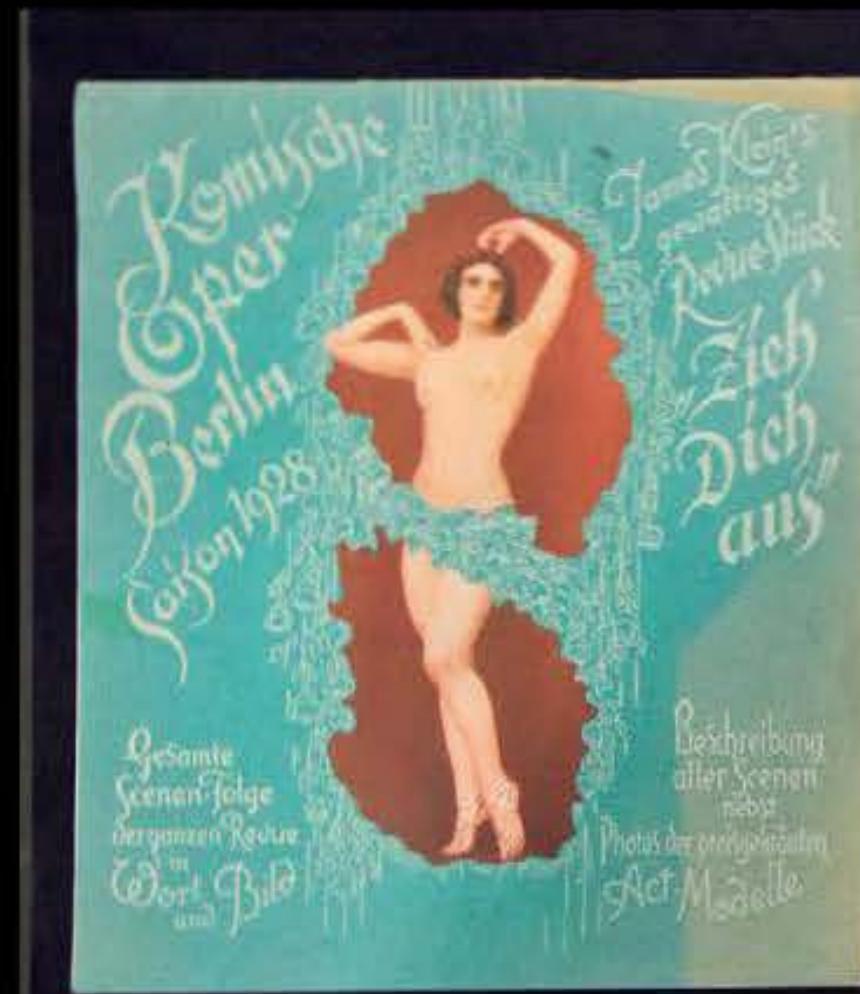


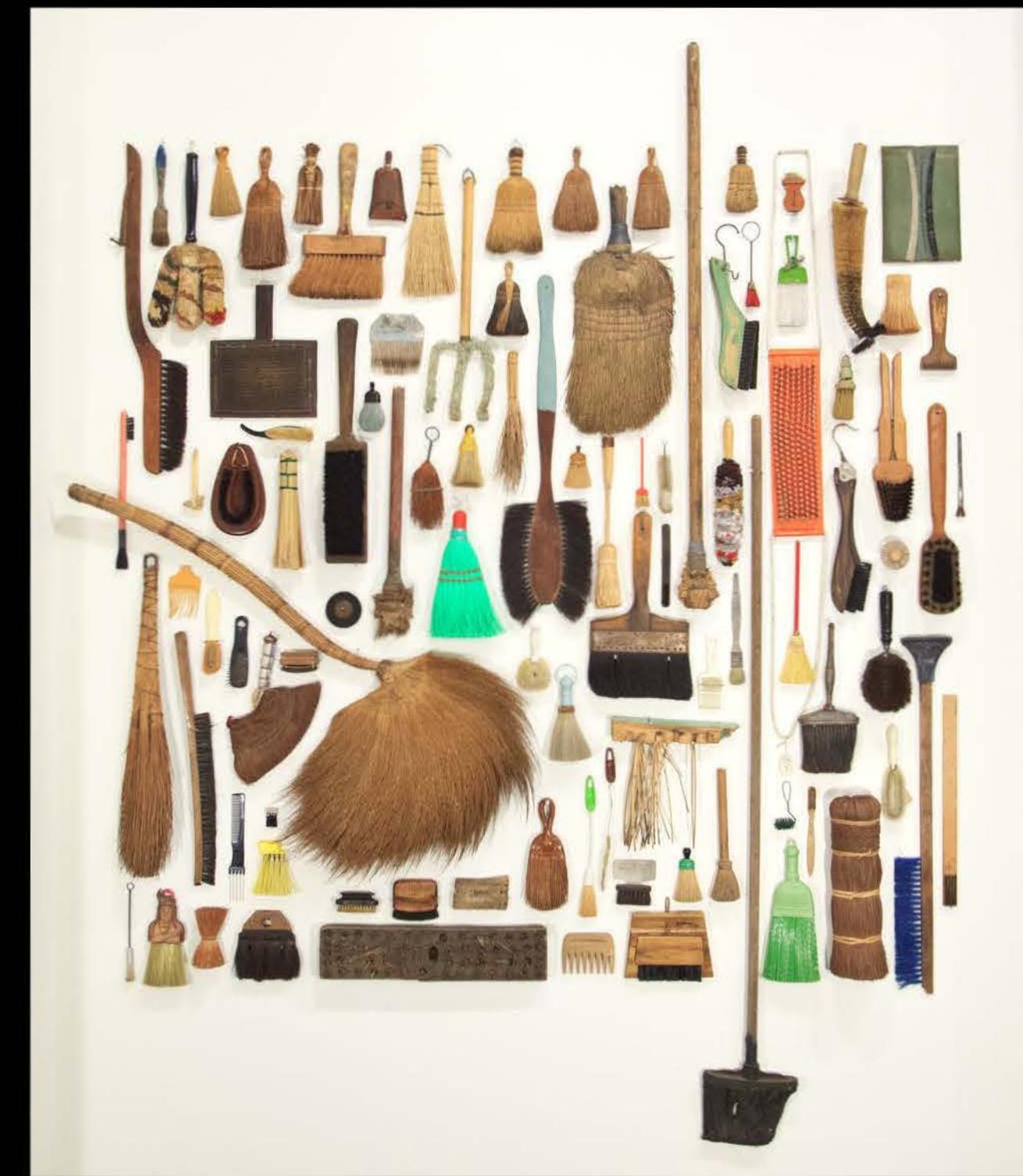


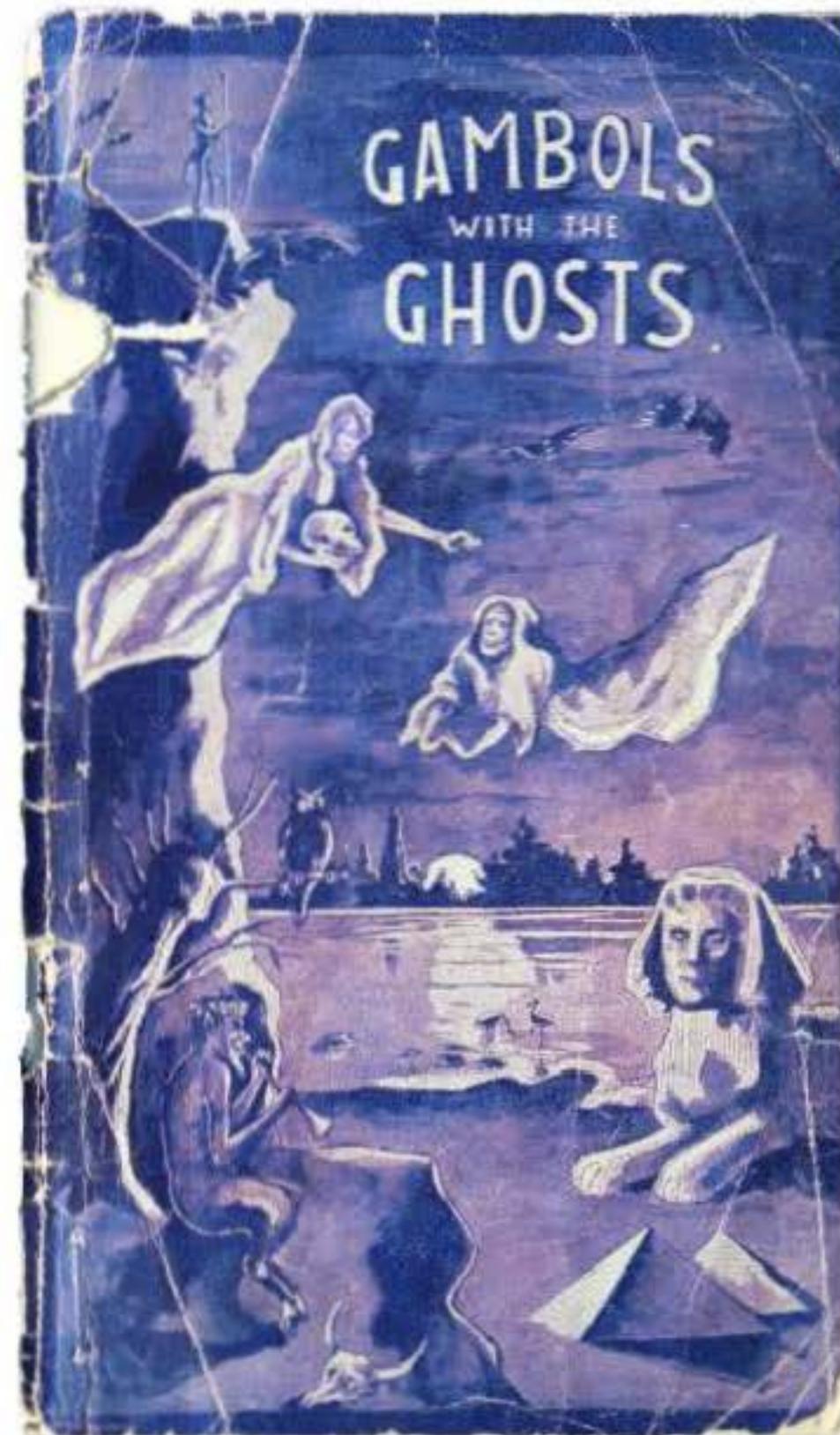












Gambols with the Ghosts
Sylvestre & Co., Chicago, Illinois
1901
From the collection of Brandon Hodge

This diminutive pamphlet is purportedly a secret catalog selling gaffed séance apparatus for fraudulent mediums. Surviving copies are so hard to come by that famous ghost hunter Harry Price once said they were "so excessively rare that during a lifetime's search for a specimen... I came into possession of a copy, the only one in Great Britain." So, I felt I was in good company when I purchased a copy of my own in 2012.

Price wasn't the only skeptic to get a hold of the infamous catalog. In 1910, magician William S. Marriott exposed its secrets in Pearson's Magazine, where he posed with some luminous ghost forms ordered from Sylvestre & Co. in an effort to educate the public about fraudulent spirit manifestations.

Nestled between the catalog's covers is page after page of spirit slates, séance trumpets, talking boards, gaffed handcuffs, and other deceptions—everything a fraudulent medium could possibly need. Here, you can see it opened to a selection of talking skulls and rapping devices.

But was it really a catalog for fraud mediums as Price and Marriott believed? Many of the items are admittedly geared more toward magicians—particularly pages of card tricks and mentalism effects. While they would certainly have served a fraudulent medium well, I found the tell-tale markers ironic: that magicians might have used a disguised magic catalog to "expose" fraudulent mediums with devices more suited to their own sleight-of-hand performances than legitimate séance practitioners, who rarely needed much more than a dark room and a group of faithful believers. So really: who's fooling whom?

Brandon Hodge is an Austin-based author and antiquarian. He is the historical authority on automatic writing planchettes, and owns the world's finest collection of séance and spirit communication apparatus, which he documents on his popular website, www.mysteriousplanchette.com.

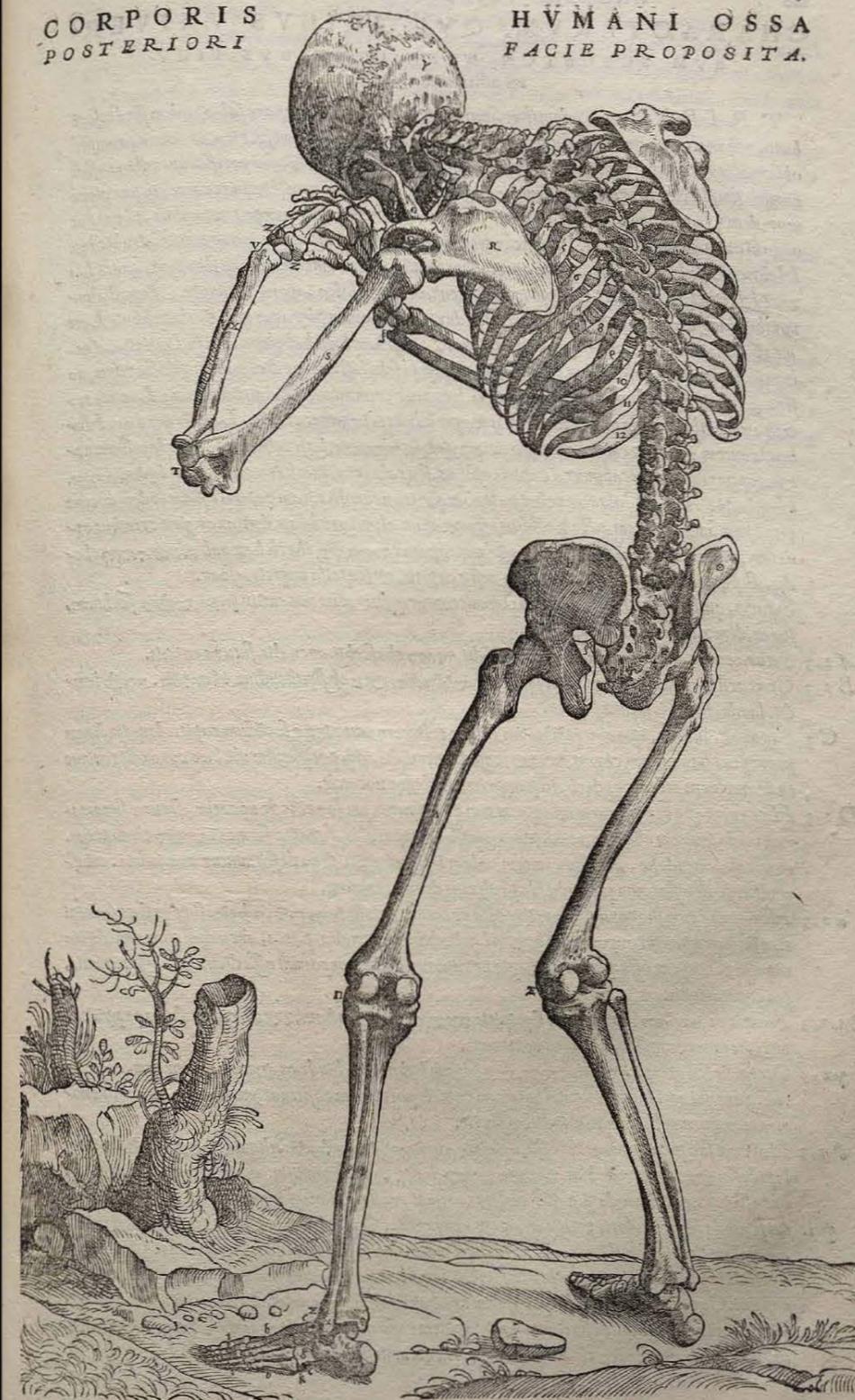


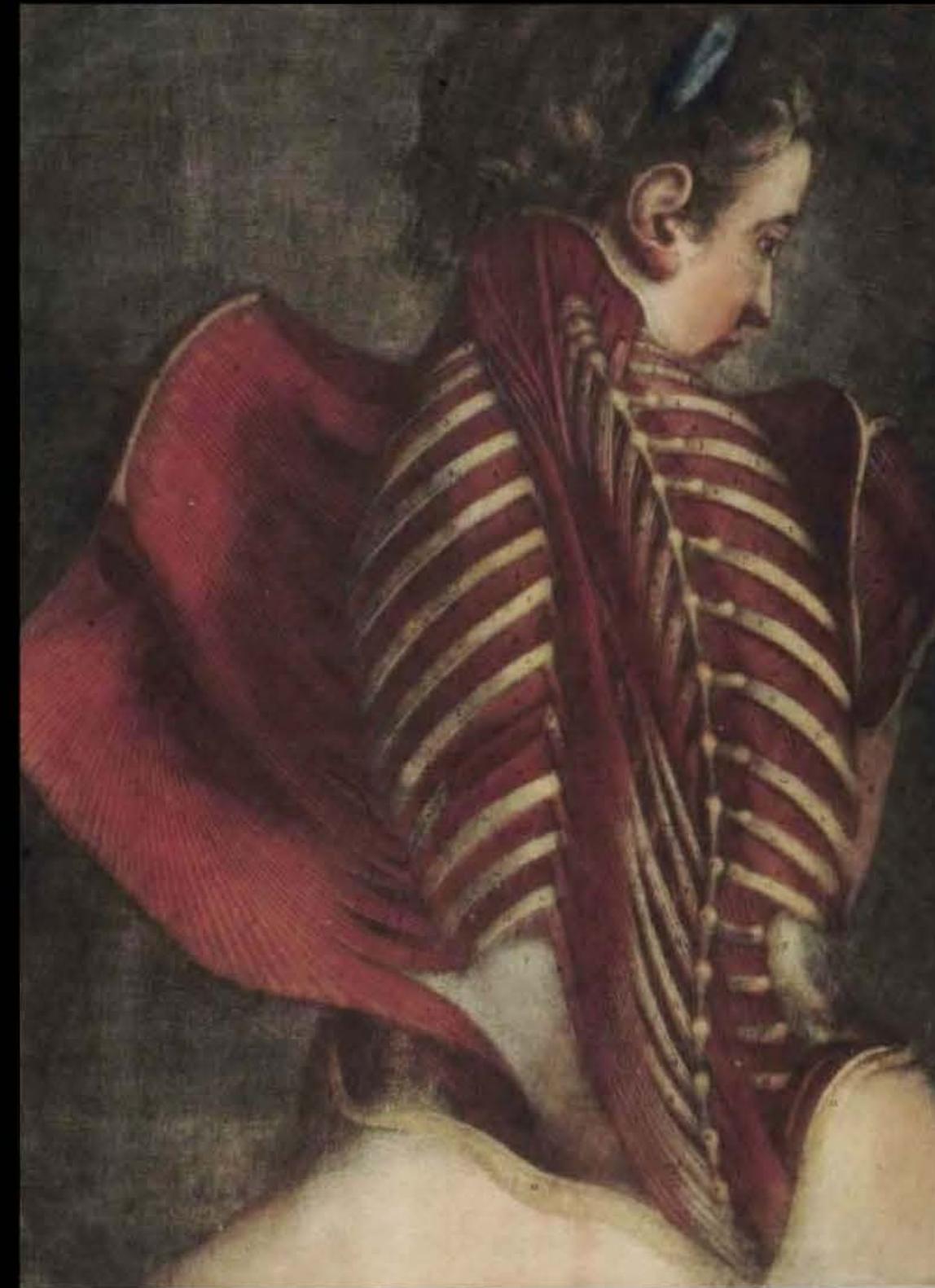


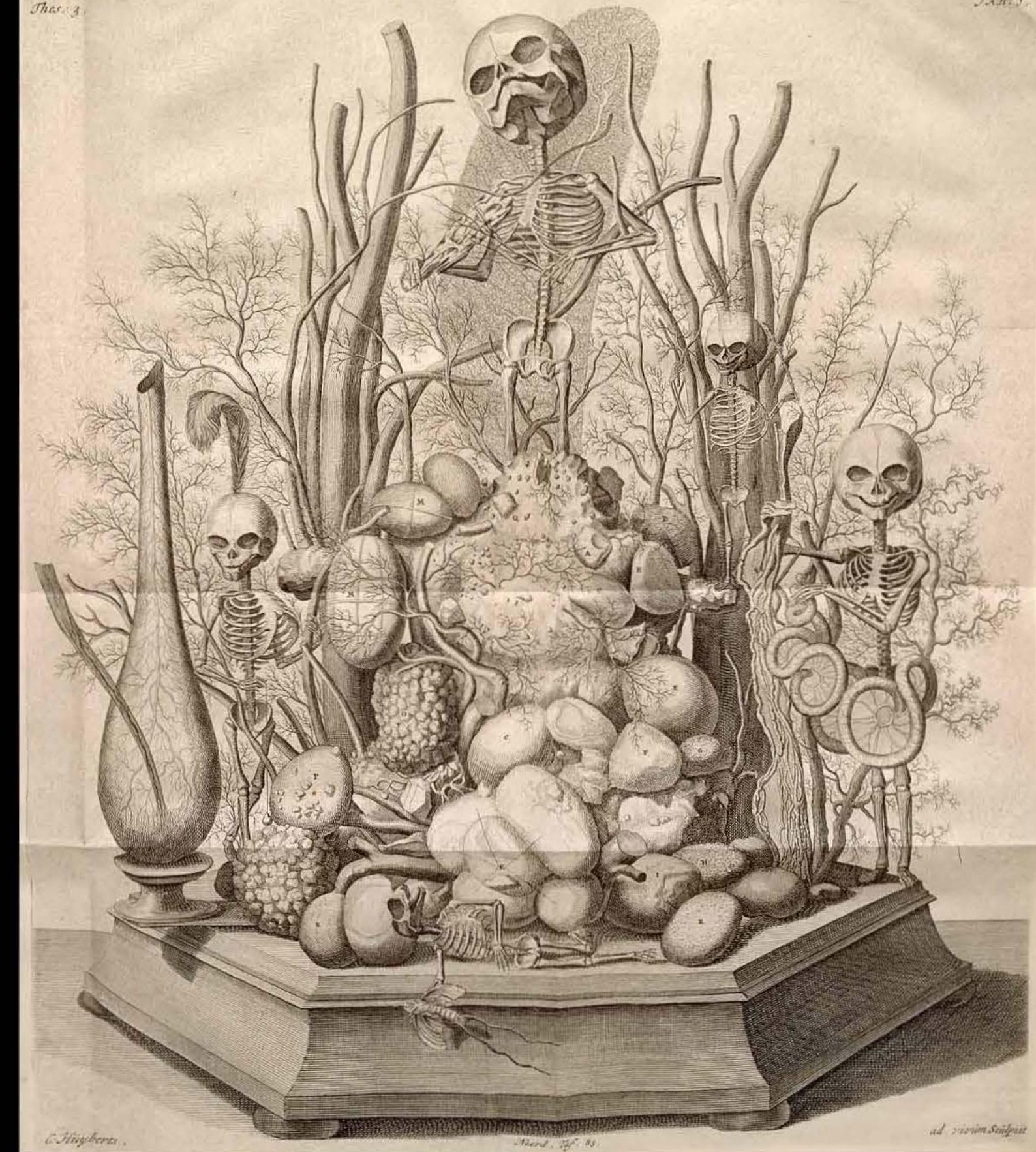


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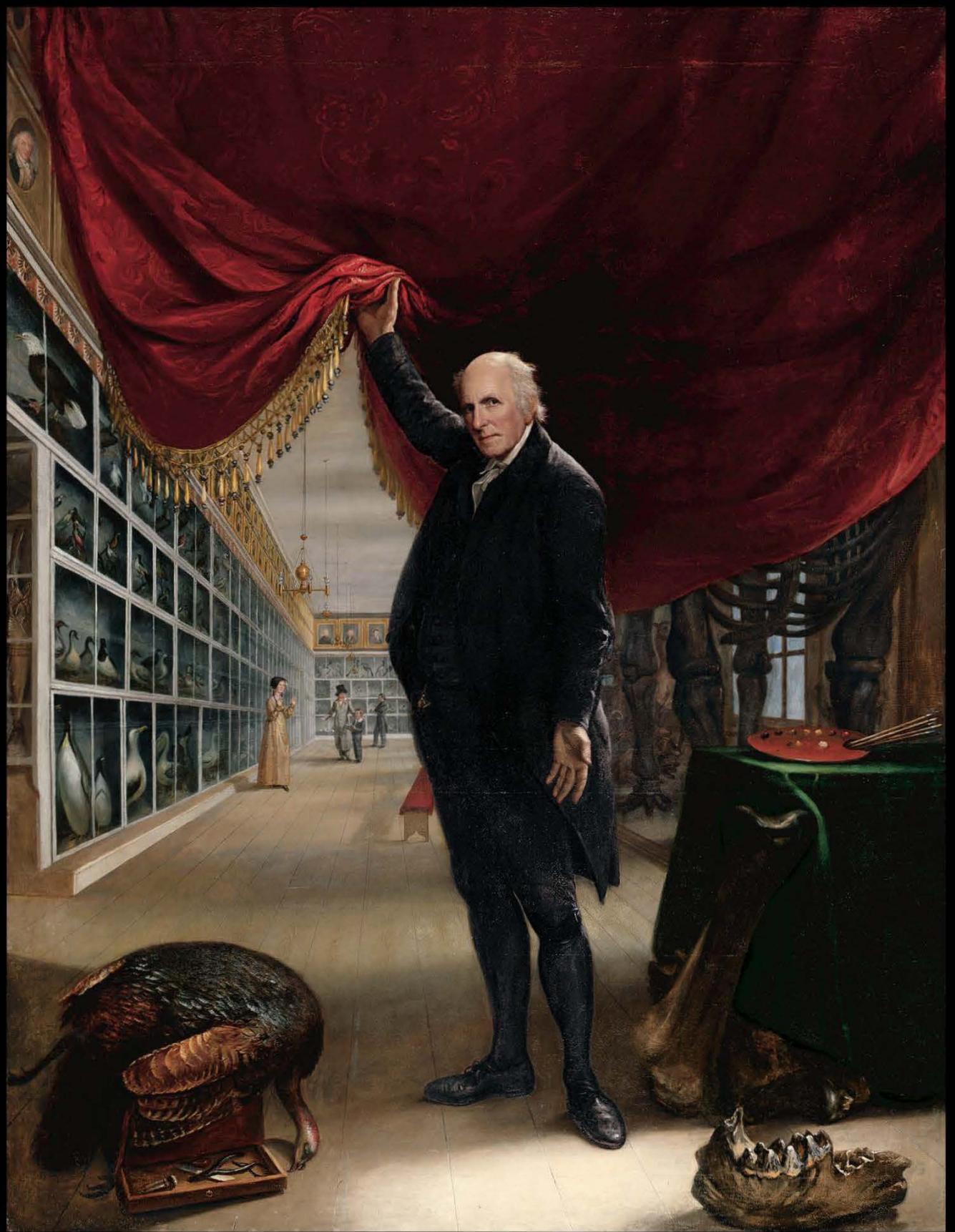


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Photo: P. P. Morrissey

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Posted by Joanna Ebenstein 77 · 3 hrs · 48

Memento Mori: The Three Living and the Three Dead, from a 15th century book of hours.

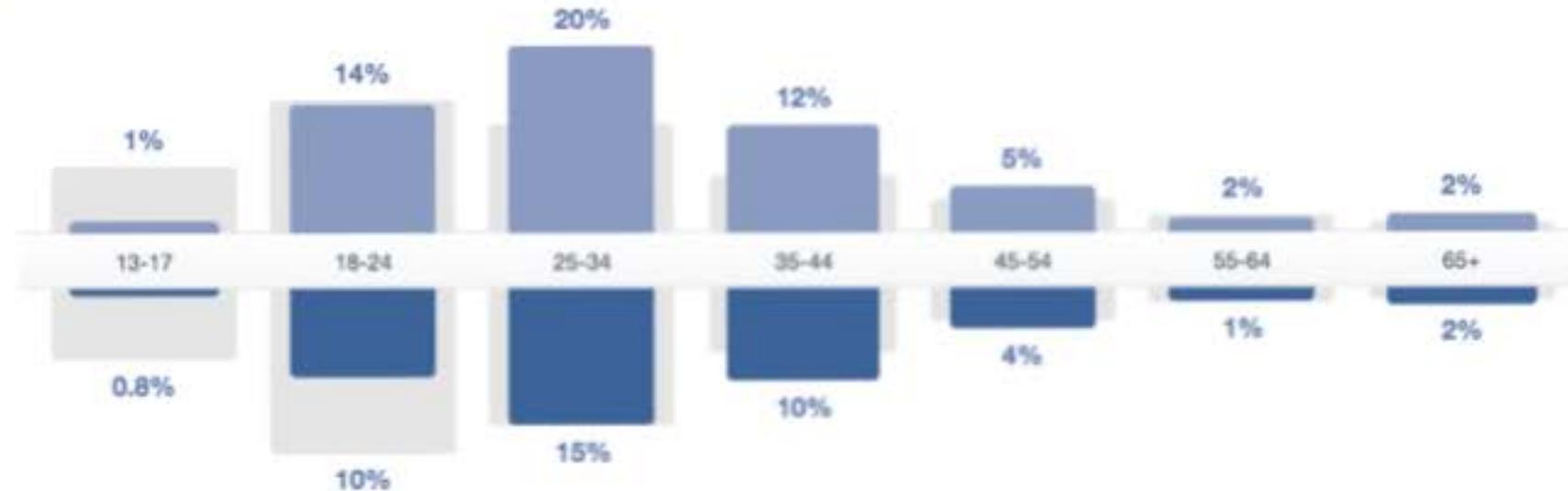


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■ **43%** Your Fans

■ **54%** All Facebook

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Mexico	19,595	New York, NY	3,459	Spanish	28,648
United Kingdom	9,882	Brooklyn, NY	2,914	English (UK)	21,765
Brazil	9,745	London, England, United ...	2,277	Spanish (Spain)	8,849
Italy	4,775	Los Angeles, CA	1,893	Portuguese (Brazil)	8,672
Canada	4,576	Bogotá, Distrito Especial, ...	1,848	French (France)	6,431
France	4,444	São Paulo, Brazil	1,788	Italian	4,676
India	4,277	Buenos Aires, Ciudad Aut...	1,426	German	2,780
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Spain	4,171	Santiago, Santiago Metro...	1,310	Polish	1,398

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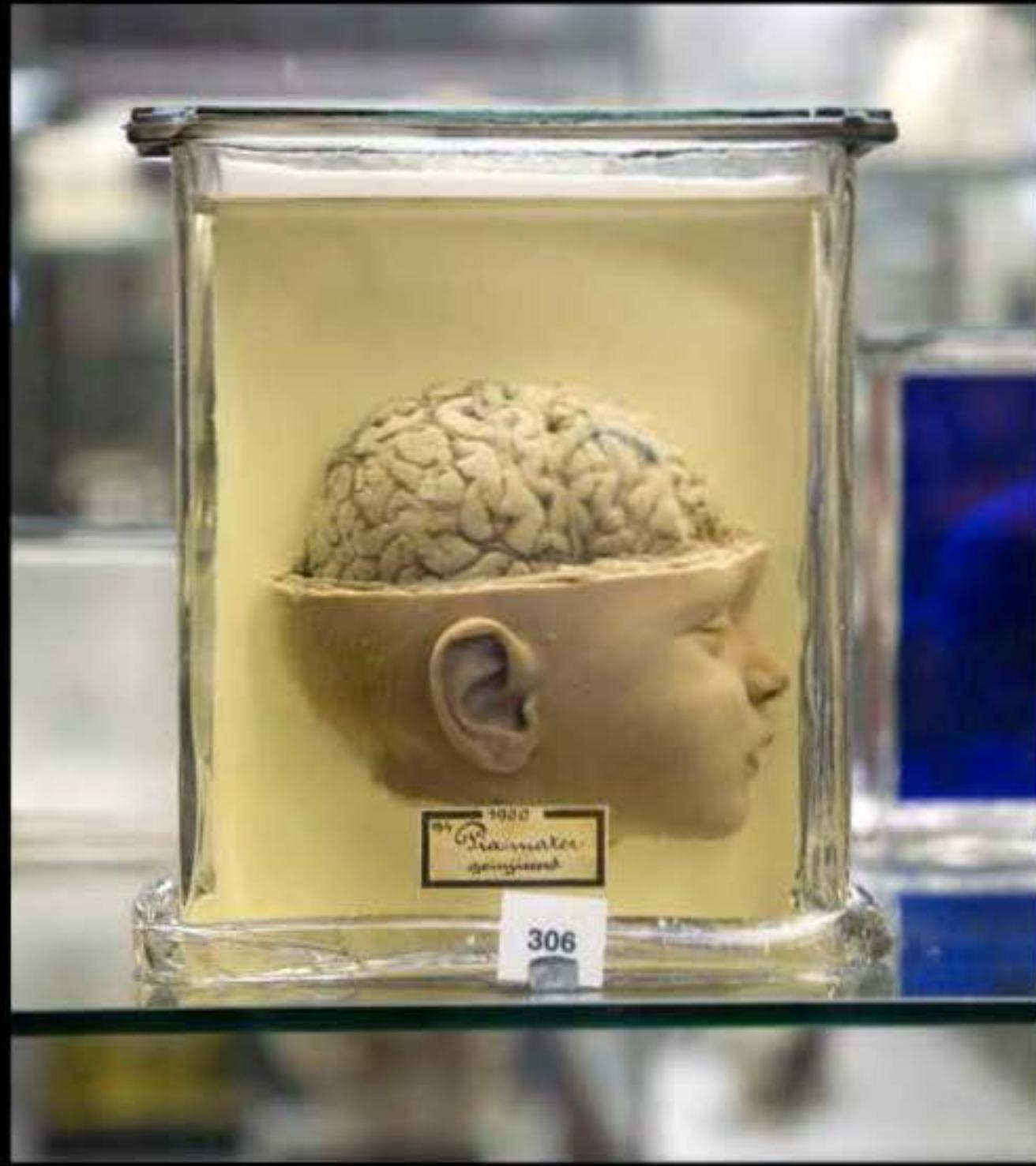


PANZERFÄLLE - Acute brachy-
erthrog. ventr.













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"The Secret Museum," Photography Exhibition, Observatory, Closes June 6th

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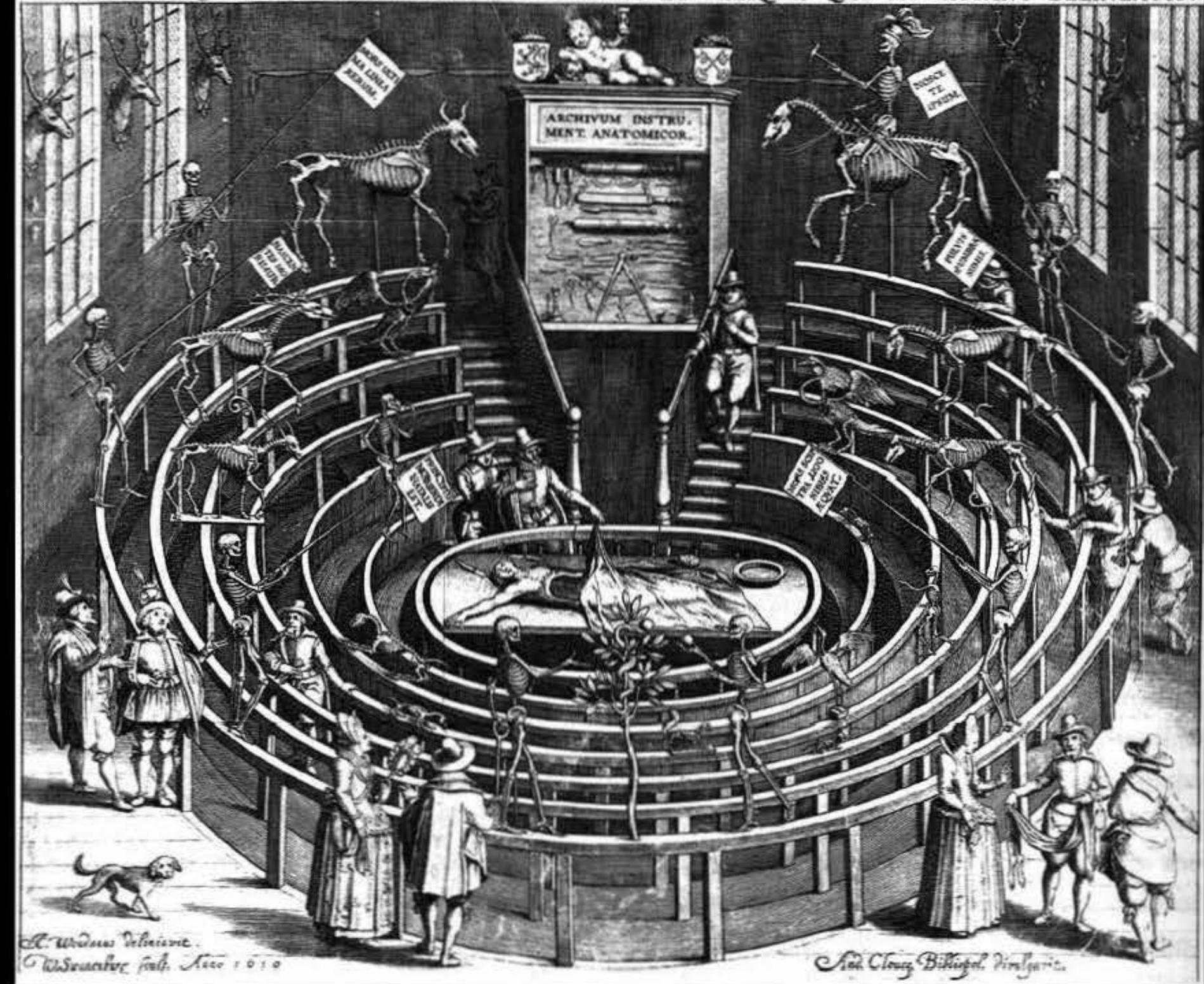
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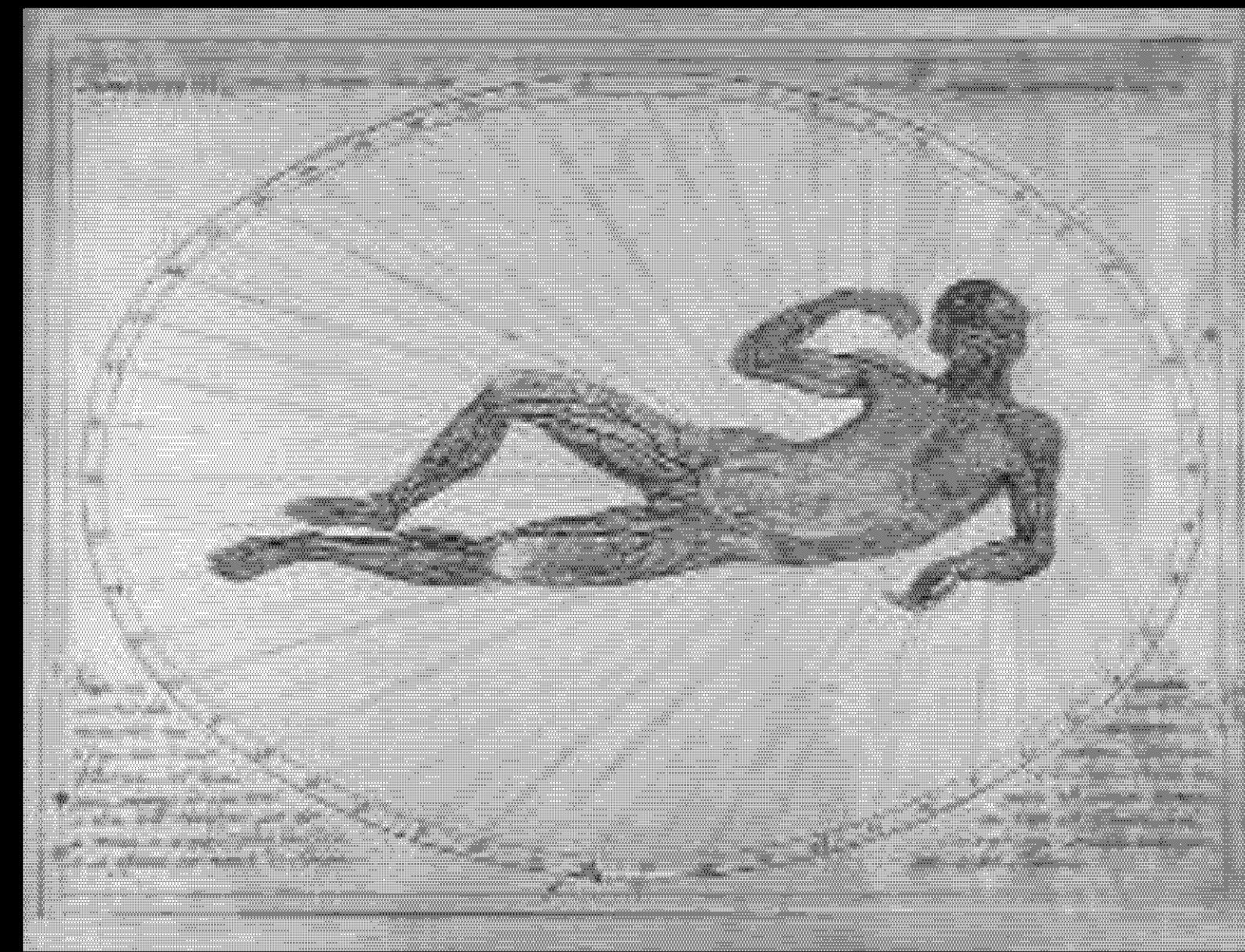
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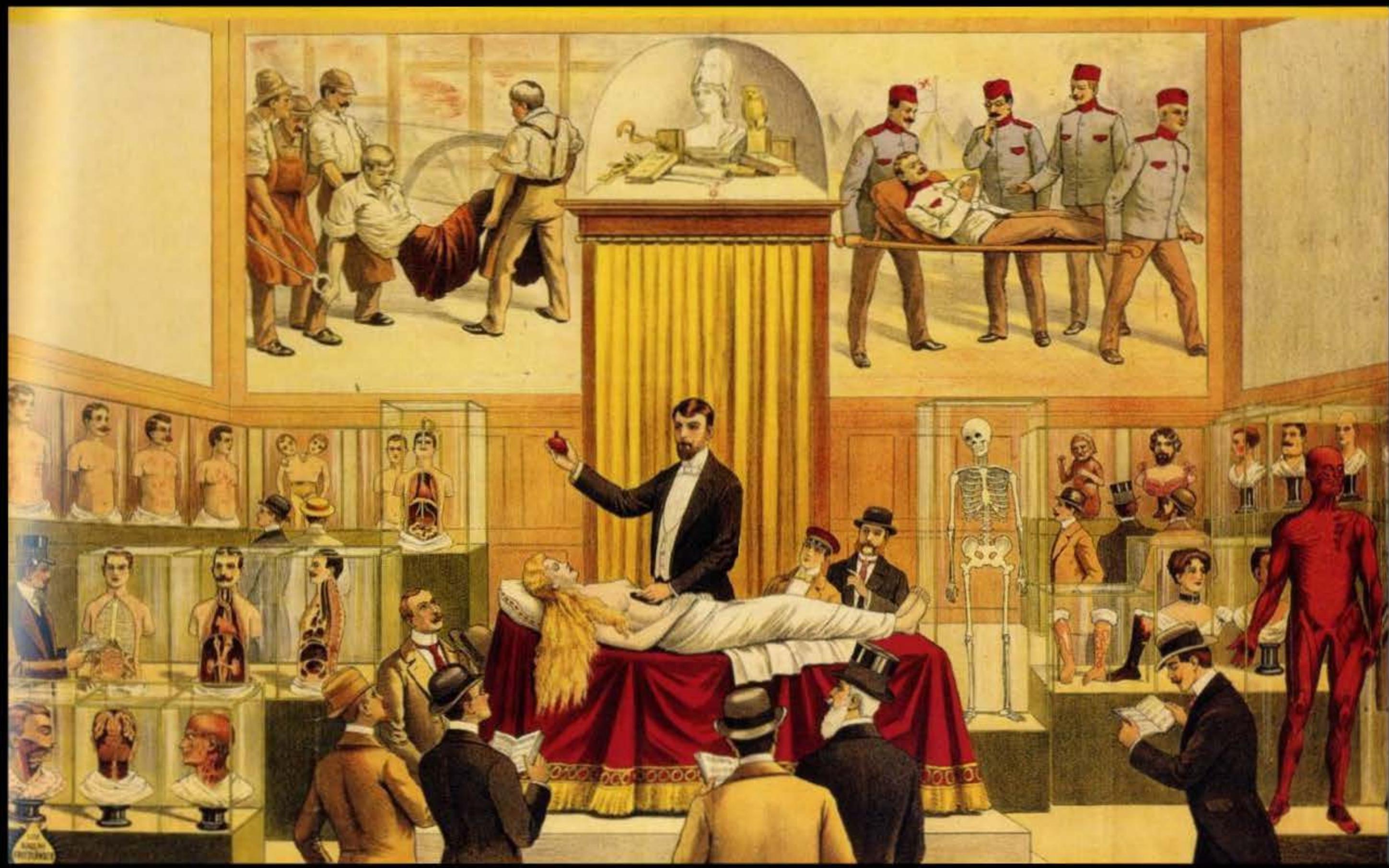


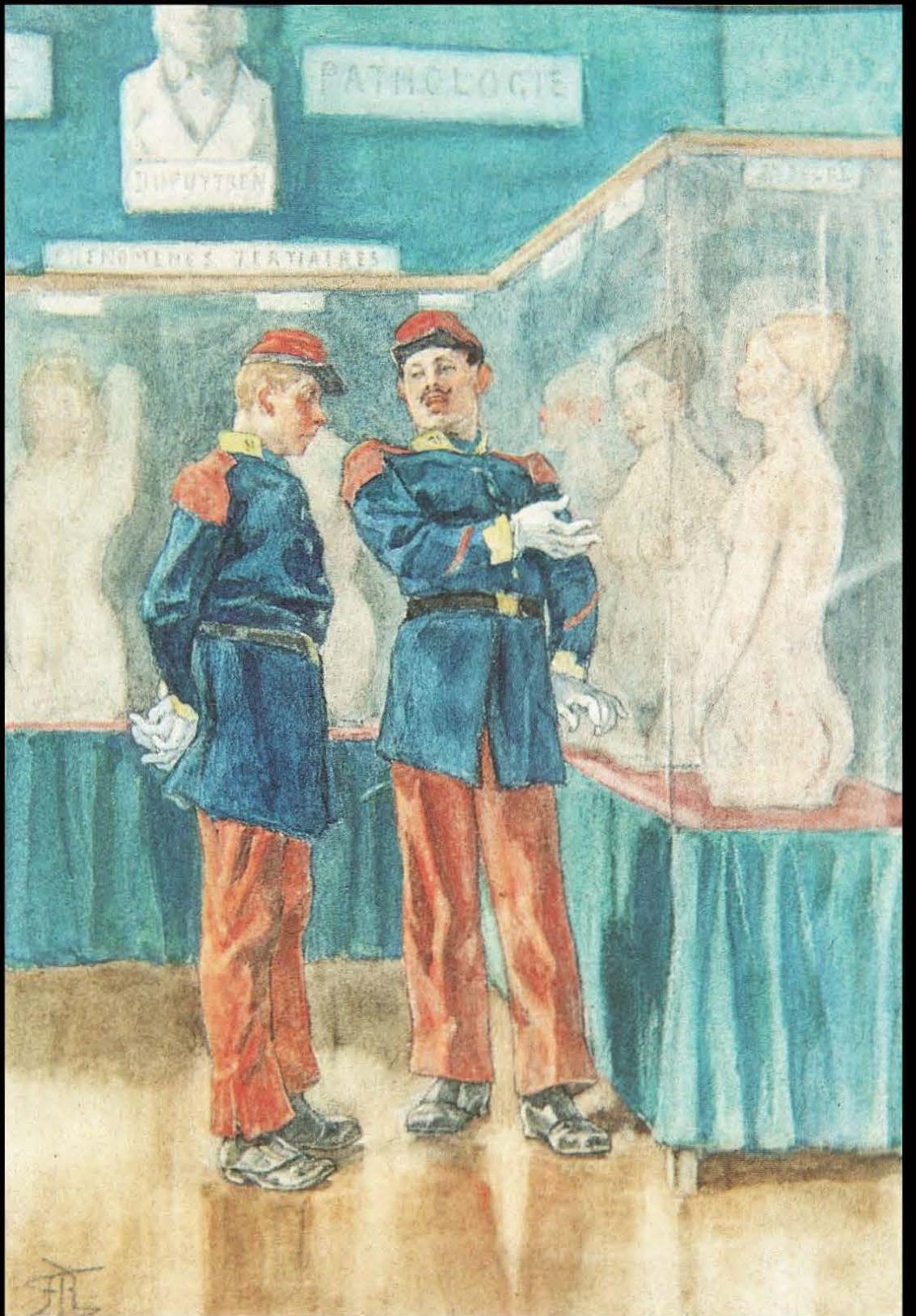
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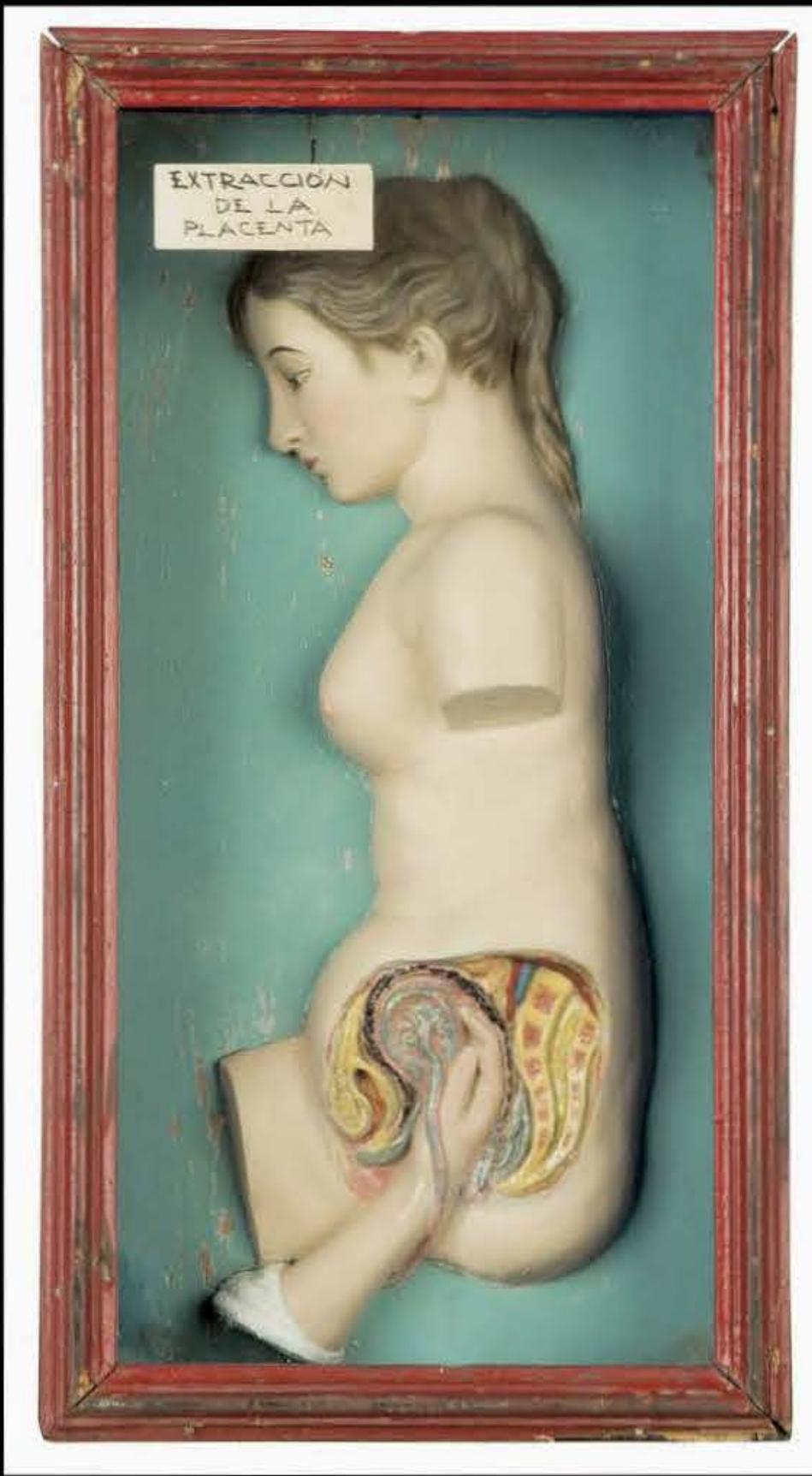


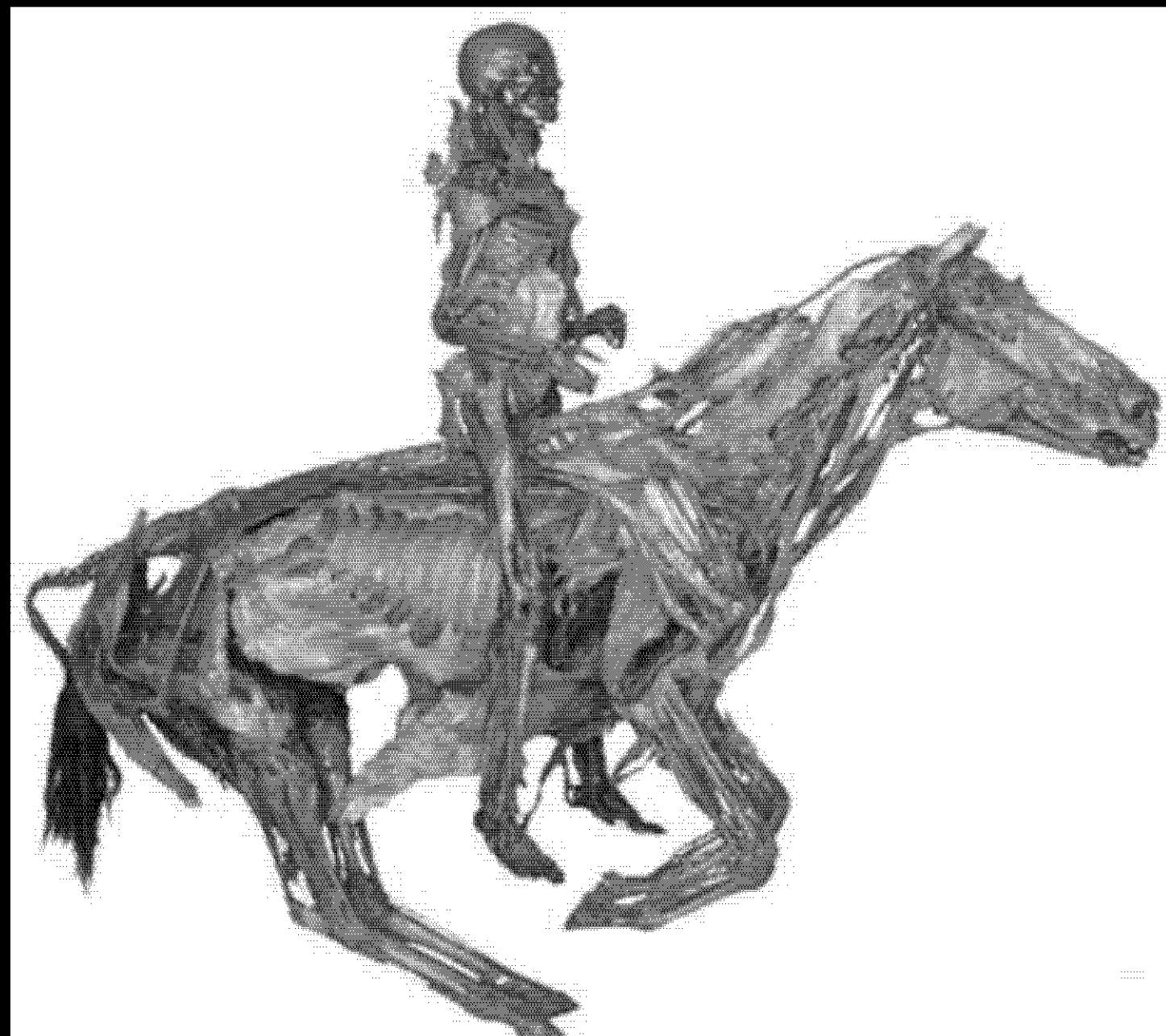


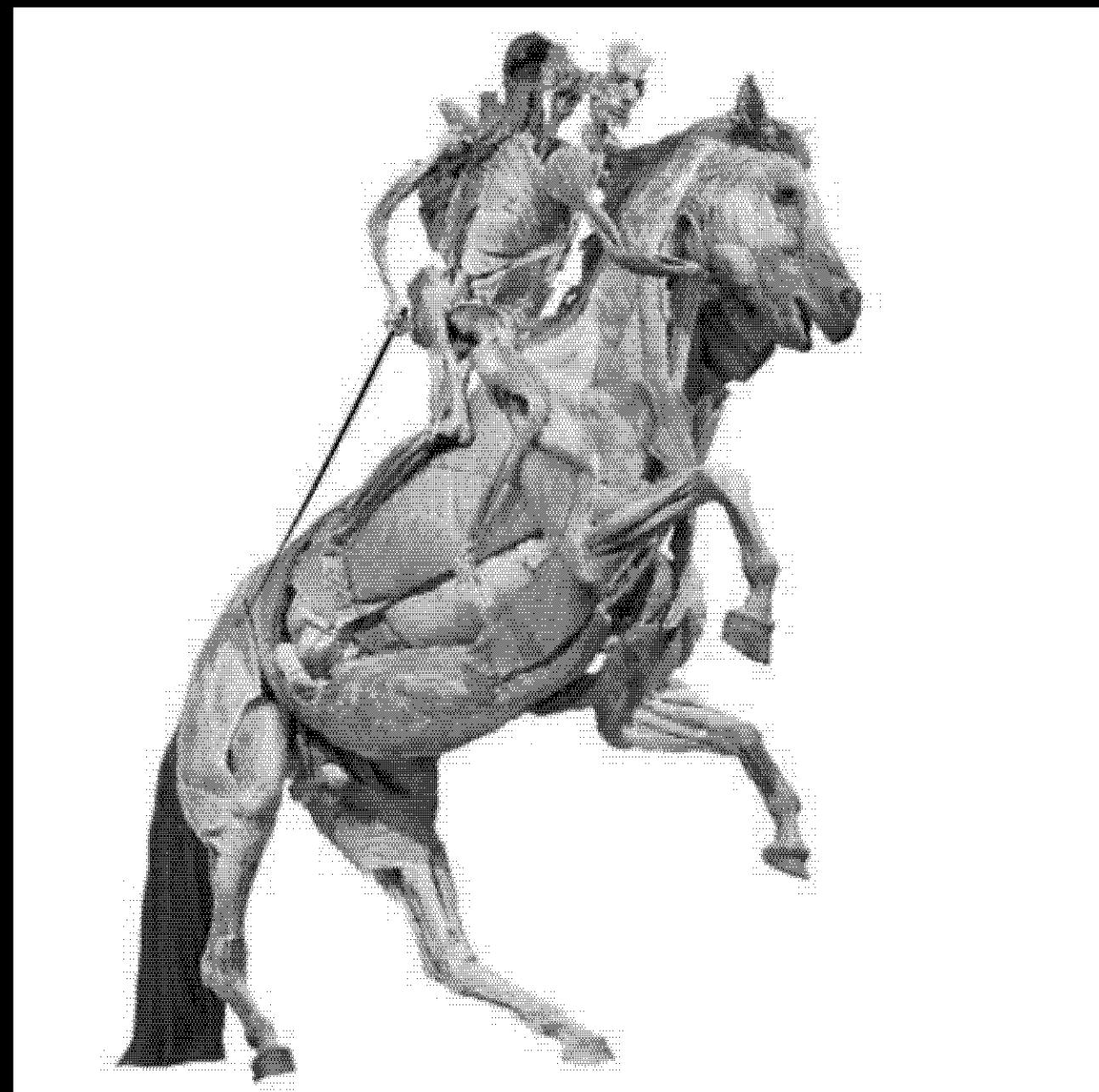
















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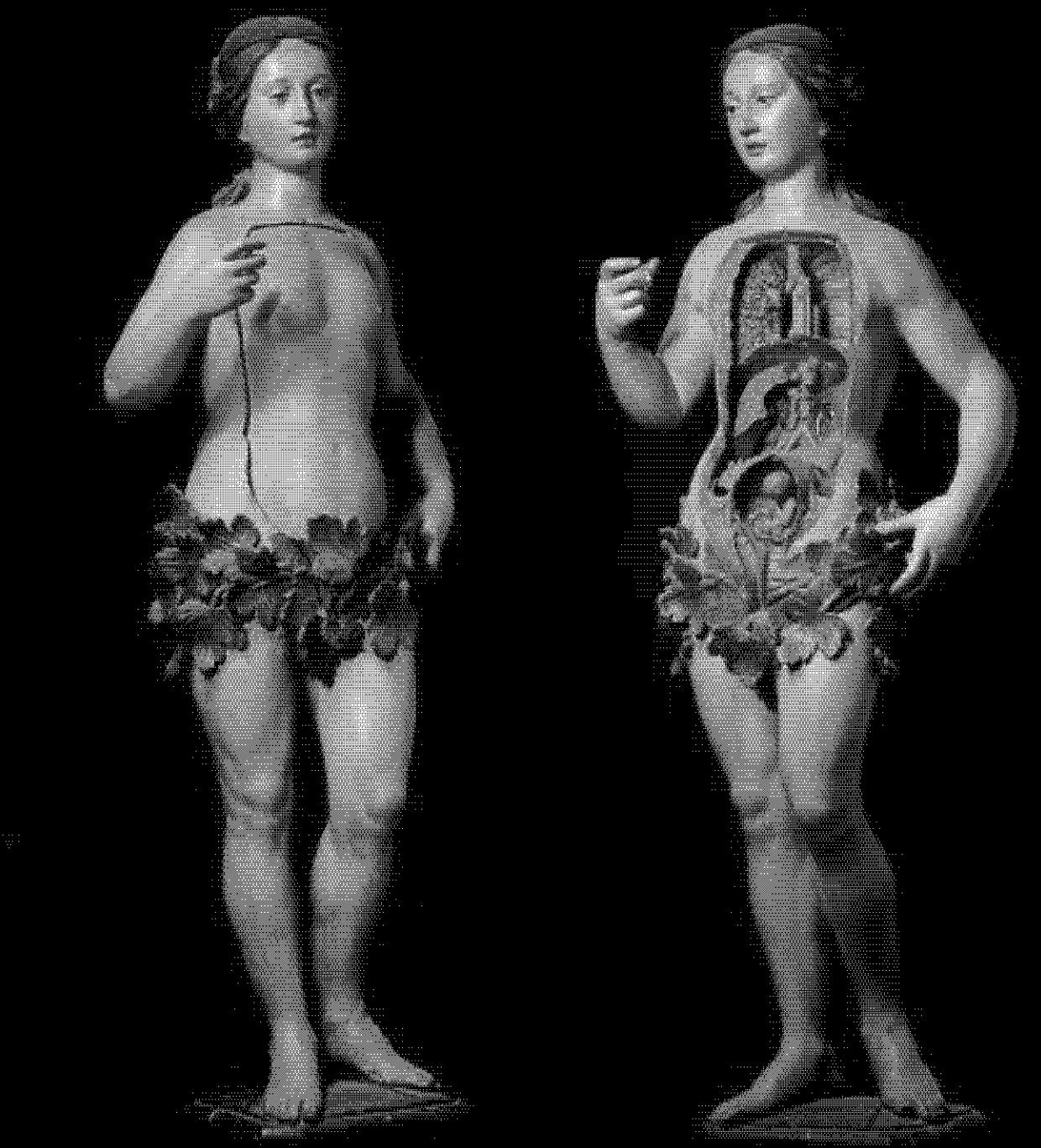
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The Anatomical Venus

Thames & Hudson

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PRESENTS

The Anatomical Venus

JOANNA
EBENSTEIN



The Anatomical Venus is a compelling and unsettling look at the eroticised female waxworks used around the world to demonstrate anatomy in medical schools in the 19th century. It traces the evolution of these enigmatic and sensual sculptures from the death masks, wax effigies and votive offerings of the Renaissance to the anatomically instructive Venus wax figures of the Enlightenment.

Thames & Hudson



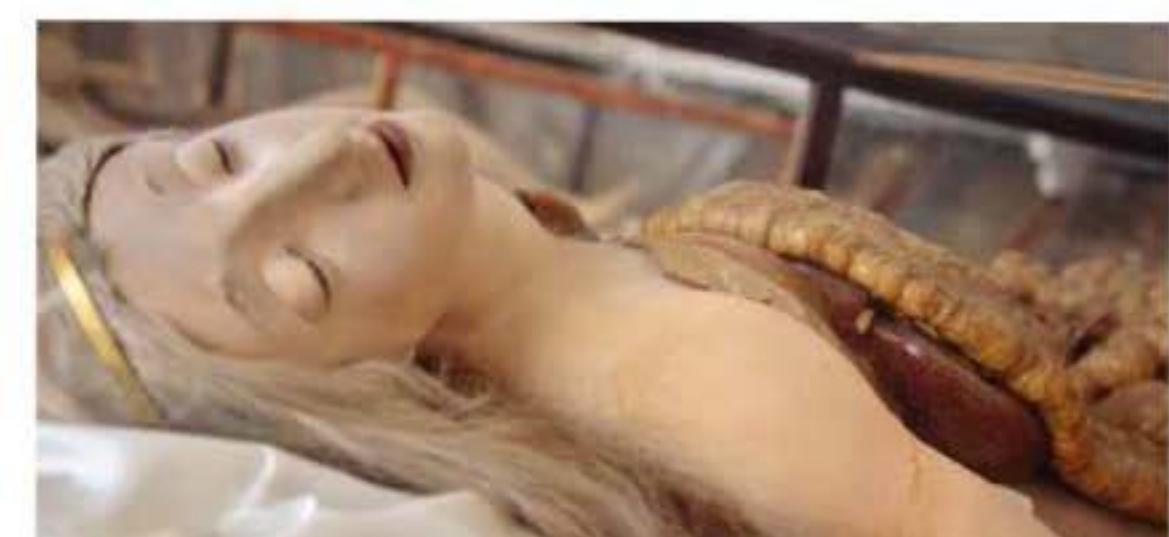
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THE ANATOMICAL VENUS

JOANNA EBENSTEIN

 Thames & Hudson







oppositi: etiamque
dilectio exercitus quae
non dolosperita quo. Met
ad qui seculum. Ut autem
consuetudinum et ostendat
etiamque

etiamque | dilectio
exercitus quo non
dolosperita quo. Met ad
qui seculum. Ut autem
consuetudinum et ostendat
etiamque

The culture of medical anatomy that rose up from the sixteenth century was not the first to capitalize on images of the anatomized human body. These had long circulated in a variety of religious, artistic and ritual traditions, many of which influenced the conventions of the early scientific worldview up until the publication of Grey's Anatomy in 1858.

One of the best known of these were *memento mori*,¹ artworks intended to remind the viewer that they, too, would die, as a means of invoking them to live a more holy life. Common tropes of the *memento mori* tradition included the decomposing human body covered in worms and toads, skulls, skeletons and figures that were half skeleton, half nubile flesh. Other common visions of the dead and anatomized body included the effigies and paintings of martyred saints, votives in the shape of body parts, anatomical Christs, and bone relics of saints.



16.1



16.2

Fittingly, the first anatomical waxwork lies somewhere between art, anatomy, and *memento mori*. It was created in the seventeenth century by Sicilian abbot Gaetano Giulio Zumbo (1656–1701), aka Zumbo, in collaboration with French surgeon and anatomist Guillaume Desnoues (1650–1735). Zumbo was renowned for his Baroque, 'Theatres of Death'. These were tiny wax dioramas filled with meticulously rendered and incredibly lifelike representations of dead, decomposing and tortured humans, bearing titles such as 'The Plague', 'The Triumph of Time', 'The Transience of Human Glory' and 'Syphilis'. His work drew the attention of both the Grand Duke Cosimo of Tuscany, who became Zumbo's patron, and the Marquis de Sade, who said of one of his pieces: 'So powerful is the impression produced by this masterpiece that even as you gaze at it your other senses are played upon, moans audible, you wrinkle your nose as if you could detect the evil odours of mortality.... These scenes of the plague appealed to my cruel imagination: and I mused, how many persons had undergone these awful metamorphoses thanks to my wickedness?'

Around 1700, Zumbo was approached by Guillaume Desnoues to employ his renowned skills in creating a likeness in wax of an important medical preparation that was beginning to decompose. The product of this collaboration was the first wax anatomical teaching model; it also established the tradition of an artistic-medical partnership in the creation of such tools. Part *memento mori*, part pedagogy, the model embodies the fascination that all cultures demonstrate towards death, that greatest of human mysteries, and the ways in which it can never entirely break free of metaphor, affect and meaning.

In the mid-sixteenth century, the study of anatomy experienced a renaissance, when it was liberated from a centuries long reliance on classical tradition by Andreas Vesalius (1514–1564). Through the dissection of human cadavers, Vesalius had discovered that the wisdom handed down from the



17.3

ancient Greek physician Galen—upon whose texts the Western medical tradition had been based—were incorrect. Galen had, it turned out, never dissected a human body, as such practice was forbidden in ancient Greece. Instead, he had based his theories of the human body on his dissections of Barbary macaques and pigs, and the examination of patients during surgery, which had led to many basic factual errors.

In 1543, Vesalius published *HUMANI CORPUS FABRICA* (*On the Fabric of the Human Body*) which set the anatomical record straight. A lavishly illustrated elephant folio, it is filled with exquisite engravings, probably rendered by an artist from Titian's Venetian studio. The book depicts page after page of dramatic *écorché*—flayed muscle men—and skeletal figures posing with considerable animation in a pastoral landscape. These illustrations were highly influenced by *memento mori* and fine art conventions, and feature an anatomically correct skeleton contemplating a skull, and an *écorché* draping his removed skin, in a reference to the iconography of the flayed St Bartholomew.













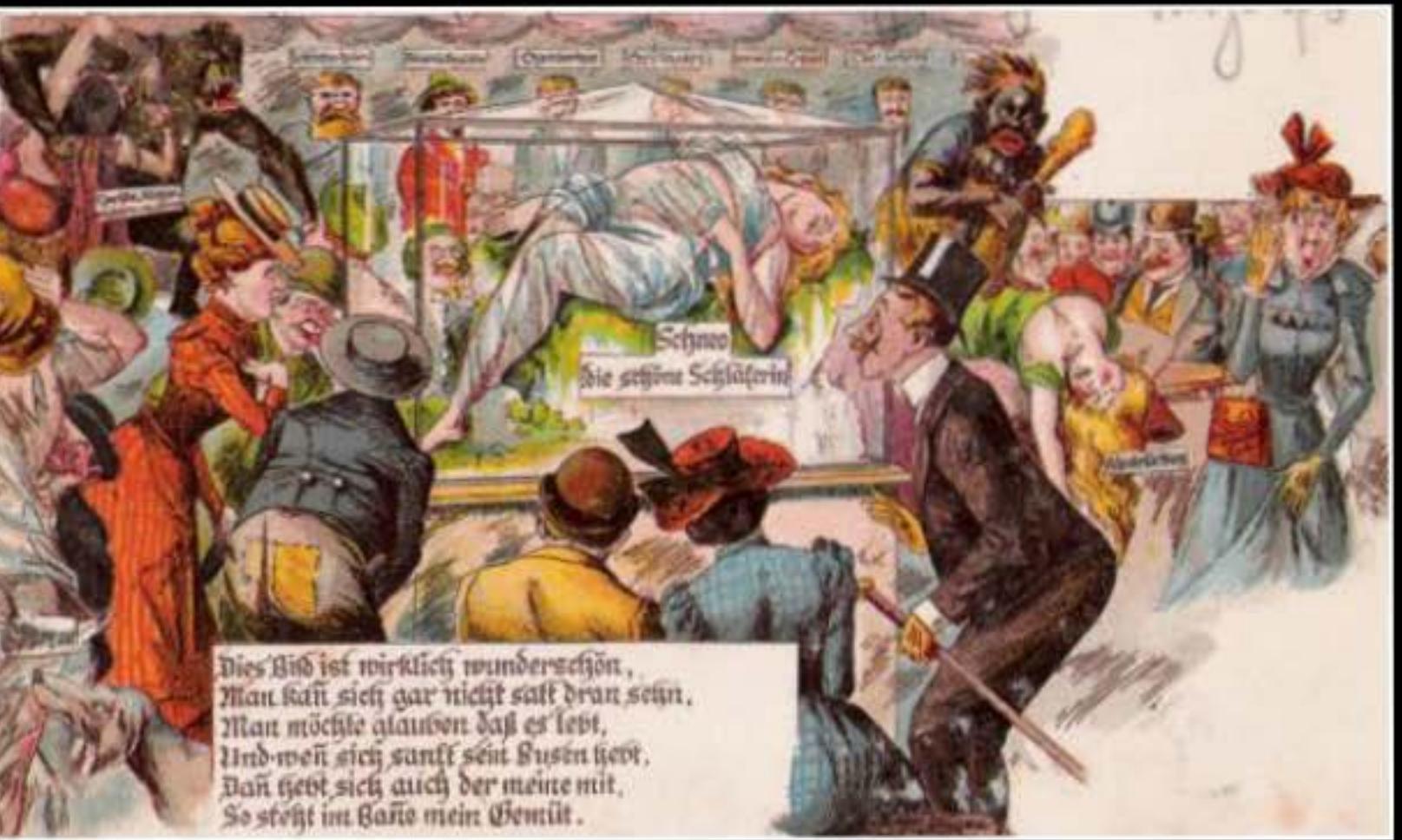












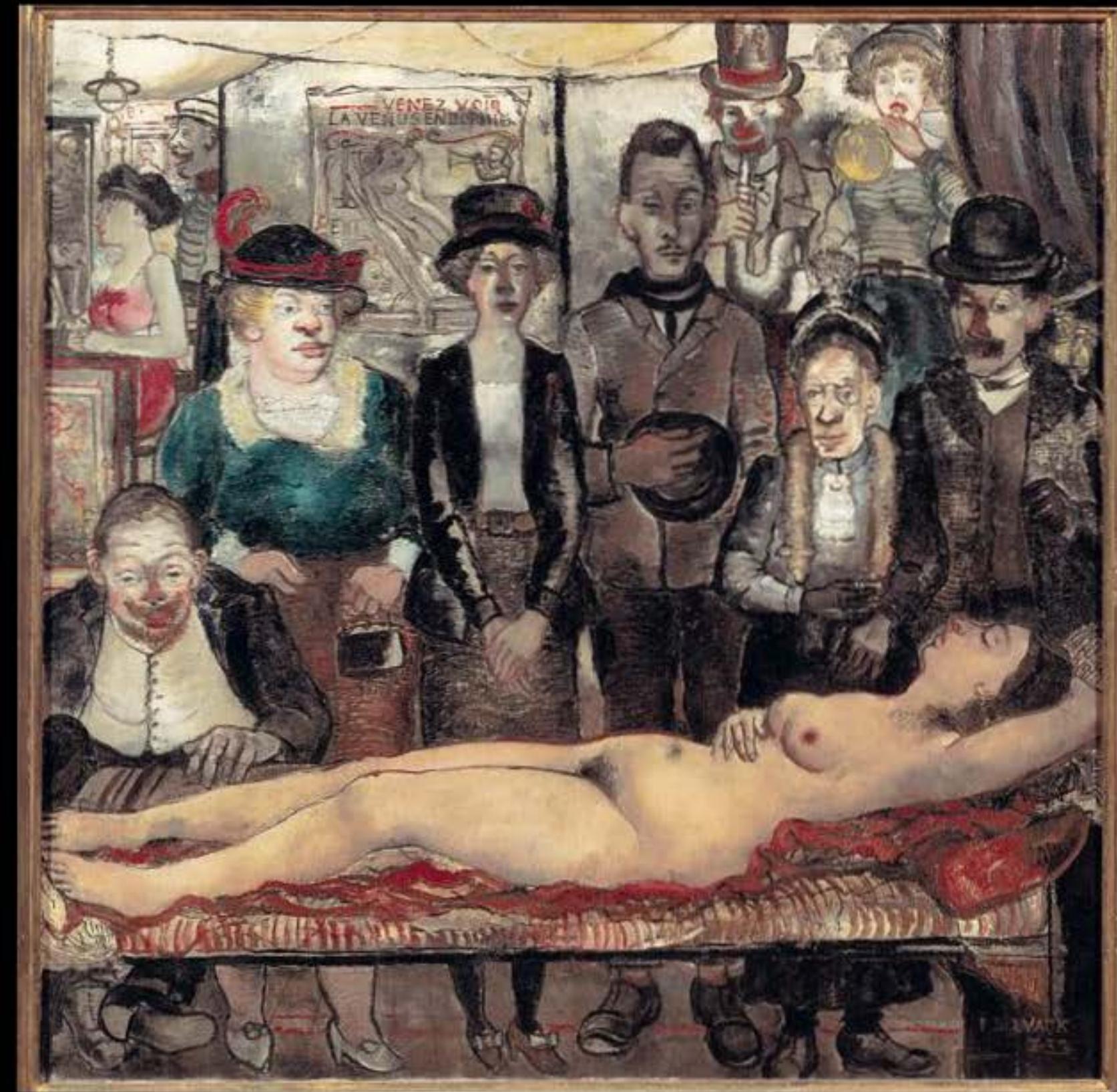








Le Musée Spitzner, 1943, by Paul Delvaux; Museum of Fine Arts, Brussels



Paul Delvaux, Sleeping Venus I (La Vénus endormie I), 1932



Paul Delvaux, Sleeping Venus (La Vénus endormie), 1944; The Tate Gallery



Marcel Duchamp *Étant donnés: 1° la chute d'eau, 2° le gaz d'éclairage . . .* (Given: 1. The Waterfall, 2. The Illuminating Gas . . .), 1946-66,



Herbert List, 'The Unknown One from the Danube, Vienna, Austria,' 1944 (printed 1946),
Robert Miller Gallery





Ecstasy of Saint Teresa, Gian Lorenzo Bernini, 1647–52





The Phenomenon of Ecstasy, photomontage by Salvador Dalí (1933)





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