

The Medical Artist: Communicating Visually

presented by
Ms. Jeanet Dreskin
Greenville Art Museum
Greenville, SC

A graduate of Johns Hopkins, Ms. Jeanet Dreskin gave us a unique perspective on teaching anatomy and physiology. She provided insight into the role of a medical artist: a person who is trying to convey a visual image of the concept the scientist is trying to convey. This person must work with a scientist, personally review the subject and make preliminary sketches. The drawings must suit the audience it will serve, such as fifth graders, physicians, or lawyers, and all the drawings must be technically correct.

Ms. Dreskin's art is primarily two dimensional using water colors, but other medical artists may create three dimensional figures, use photography, or design computer generated graphics. Some artists specialize in one area, such as the eye or ear, whereas others produce a diversity of work.

In explaining the training one needs to become a medical artist, the speaker emphasized that the medical art was a wonderful way to make a living as one can combine two strong interests. After completing a fine arts degree, one must attend a medical school and take many of the same courses that a medical student would take that would involve visual imagery, (histology, anatomy, watch operative procedures) and prepare portfolio. Medical Art is a very

competitive field with only one out of five applicants being accepted at the 7 major schools that have medical art training.

Ms. Dreskin also explained the difference between medical art and science illustration. While medical art concentrates on the human body, science illustration would encompass a far broader range that would include zoology, botany, invertebrates, etc. She also pointed out that diagrams are often better than photographs for study because areas of interest can be clearly defined, isolated, enlarged and clarified.

Through a series of photographic slides of medieval woodcuts and da Vinci's sketches to modern sketches (with examples of her own work) Ms. Dreskin gave an excellent visual explanation of the step-by-step procedure required to produce illustrations we find in our textbooks and journals. Her pictures were diagrammatic, realistic and interpretive. Her enthusiasm was contagious and those in attendance have a greater appreciation for this profession. For those interested in more information about this type of career, she gave the following addresses:

Science Illustration
P.O. Box 652
Ben Franklin Station
Washington, D.C. 20044

Medical Artists
National Association of Medical Illustrators, 1819 Peachtree Street, N.E., Suite 560
Atlanta, Georgia 30309

Medical Photographers,
Prosthesis, Medical Art
Assn. of Biomedical
Communications Dept.
MS Hersey Medical Center
P.O. Box 850
Hersey, Pennsylvania 17033

NSTA Meeting

The Society for College Science Teachers (SCST) is offering an **Anatomy and Physiology Minisymposium** at its annual meeting in Boston on **March 27, 1992**. There will be presentations from three speakers and opportunities for questions, answers, and introductions. The session will be from 3:30 to 4:30 at the Marriott Copley Place. SCST meets in conjunction with the **National Science Teachers Association**.

For more information,
please contact:
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-- reported by
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