

ANATOMICAL ILLUSTRATIONS

To complement the exhibition *More-than-Human Wellbeing* (22 May to 18 August 2023) in the Level 5 Exhibition space, the rare book display on view in the level 2, 3, 4, and 5 foyers feature anatomical illustrations from the 15th to 18th centuries. These prints are from the Yale Medical Library and depict the medical knowledge of late medieval scholars. The woodcut *Martyrologium* is the earliest printed picture of what is commonly known as *The Zodiac Man*, a chart mapping the relationship between the human body and celestial events. As described by the Yale Medical Library, "A martyrology gave information about the saints for each day of the year. As the dates changed, so also did the influences of the stars. Each Astral body affected a particular part of the human body, as illustrated here. Thus a patient's horoscope was believed to explain his disease." Other anatomical illustrations portray the senses, the aorta and laryngeal nerves, and 16th-century surgical operations and dissections.

MUSCULAR & CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEMS

These illustrations portray the internal muscular and cardiovascular human body systems. Physicians and anatomists learned about the body's inner workings through direct observation, often dissecting corpses in surgical theatres in front of students and other scholars. The two woodblock prints from Dutch anatomist Andreas Vesalius's seminal book *De Humani Corporis Fabrica* (1543) present a twisting male figure with the skin removed, the flexing muscles rendered in precise detail. Italian artist Leonardo da Vinci drafted his "venous figure" in his anatomical notebooks before he had access to corpses to dissect. Although he captured veins in the figure's limbs accurately, his drawing imprecisely locates and depicts the internal organs.

NOTABLE SURGEONS AND ANATOMISTS

The displayed illustrations feature the anatomical knowledge of four historically significant surgeons and anatomists. These scholars progressed Western society's collective understanding of the human body's internal structure and systems through their influential books.

Jacopo Berengario da Carpi (c.1460 – c.1530) was an Italian physician who published *Isagogae breves* (1522), the first anatomical text printed with illustrations.

Dutch anatomist Andreas Vesalius (1514 – 1564), known as the founder of human anatomy, published his seven-volume *De Humani Corporis Fabrica* (1543), complete with 273 highly detailed illustrations based on human dissections.

British surgeon and scholar William Cheselden (1688 – 1752) was pivotal in advancing surgery as a medical profession. He is known for his osteographic atlases that render bones and skeletal systems with precision and accuracy.

Perhaps most widely known is Henry Gray (1827 – 1861), a British anatomist and surgeon. In 1858, Gray published a reference book titled *Anatomy: Descriptive and Surgical*, now on its 42nd edition and considered the “doctor's bible”. The textbook's current title is *Gray's Anatomy*, which is also the name of a popular long-running television drama.

SKELETAL SYSTEM

In 1733, British surgeon William Cheselden published his large-format osteological atlas *Osteographia*, or, *The anatomy of bones*, which depicts every bone in the human body. The illustrated skeletons appear as lifelike, expressive figures in motion striding through idyllic landscapes. When standing, they appear in a naturalistic contrapposto position with their weight resting on one leg. Cheselden, working with artists, utilised a camera obscura to produce the anatomical illustrations for *Osteographia*. The structure of the camera obscura acts as a mechanised filter for optical perception. It operates by projecting a scene or image through a small hole in a screen to flatten the perspectival plane, enabling artists to render three-dimensional objects as highly realistic two-dimensional representations.