

# maa news

The Newsletter of the Medical Artists' Association of Great Britain • Spring 2004

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## Anatomical Drawing Workshop in Sheffield

**Recently, Patrick Elliott, Senior Medical Artist at Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust organised and led an all-day workshop on the History and Practice of Medical Art with reference to the anatomical drawings of Leonardo da Vinci.**

The workshop was in conjunction with an exhibition of Leonardo's drawings which were on loan to the Millennium and Graves Art Gallery in Sheffield.

The day was well attended and began with a formal lecture by Patrick on the historical aspects of Medical Art from Leonardo to the present day. This was a two hour session with approximately 160 personally selected slides showing a complete range of anatomical drawing and painting throughout history.

A few of Patrick's colleagues from the Sheffield hospitals attended the lecture session including the Professor of Surgery – casting a critical eye on medical and historical accuracy, no doubt. However, the majority of the people attending had booked for the full-day and were on the whole, local artists with an interest in the four hour anatomical drawing session to take place during the afternoon.

The presentation was very well received and it became obvious to Patrick when faced with post-lecture questions that most of the participants had rarely been exposed to such a wealth of detailed medical art including a selection of work by members of the Medical Artist's Association. It served as a reminder that even in today's multi media world, as medical artists we work in a highly specialised field remote from the gaze of most of the non-medical public or other artists.

After lunch and an opportunity to visit the on-site Leonardo exhibition, the

anatomical drawing workshop got underway. As part of the preparation, Patrick had borrowed a skeleton to complement the male life model and to enable some visual comparisons to be made. As always, the best laid plans can hit technical problems and the first one was that the life model did not arrive for the session! The skeleton was beginning to look lonely in its carefully chosen pose and while the artists were busy sharpening pencils and getting a little frustrated, Patrick scanned the room for a suitable replacement. A photographic technician from the hospital was willing to do his version of the 'Full Monty' and save the day.

However, halfway through changing, the model turned up and our brave volunteer was quite relieved to be back on the other side of the drawing board. The session began with the 'live' life model posing in an identical position to

the skeleton and Patrick explaining and pointing out the underlying structures. It was unusual and illuminating to be able to almost see under the skin of the model by making instant visual comparisons.

Although some of the artists present were technically accomplished they found the combined poses, some lying, some standing, quite a daunting task and so Patrick split them into two groups for the first part of the session and gave them 'loosening-up' drawing exercises simplifying the basic shapes and leaving the detailed drawing task for the second part of the afternoon. Patrick had set up a display as part of the workshop showing examples of medical art and anatomical drawing with labelled parts and these were referred to during the day.

The whole day was a considered a great success and much positive feedback was obtained. This together with a semi-biographical full-page article in the local newspaper served to bring the specialised field of Medical Art to the attention of many in the Sheffield Area for the first time.



## Obituary for Freda Wadsworth (1918 – 2003)

It is with deep sadness that I write this obituary for Freda Wadsworth who died on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2003. She was a great friend and colleague of members of the Medical Artists' Association of Great Britain, over many years.

Freda was, without doubt, one of the most skilled and innovative medical artists of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Her career began in Brighton, at the School of Art, where she studied from 1936 until 1939. Her elder sister, Marjorie, also trained there. However, Freda became a nurse during World War II working first at Midhurst Sanatorium, and later at The (Royal) London Hospital, where she acquired State Registration in 1946. It was then that she decided to combine her two main interests in a career as a medical artist. She obtained an introduction to Mary Dorothy Barber, Medical Artist at the Central Middlesex Hospital. At the time, it was one of the only two establishments in London where trainee medical artists were accepted; the other being Guy's Hospital Medical School.

After training at the Central Middlesex Hospital for one year, she obtained a sessional appointment as medical artist at Hillingdon Hospital in 1947, and in 1948, she became part-time assistant to Mary Barber. Freda held these two posts concurrently until 1953, when she obtained the appointment of medical artist to the Institute of Urology, in the University of London. She was given the status of Lecturer in 1971, and remained at the Institute until her retirement in 1979.

On the occasion of her retirement, she was asked to give a lecture on her early days at the institute. She recalled,

"...It was snowing when I directed my uncertain steps towards the door of no. 10 and was dismayed on reaching my 'cupboard' to find that no preparation had been made...there was no telephone, no heating and no running water. So I settled in as best I could, wrapped a rug around my knees and waited for something to



Freda Wadsworth

happen, trying at the same time to look impressively busy..."

An exponent of the Max Brödel Ross-board Technique, Freda Wadsworth gained distinction for her specialist work in urology, her drawings were used for postgraduate teaching by lecturers throughout the world, and she illustrated a number of chapters for the Volume on Urology for *Operative Surgery* by Rob and Smith, published by Butterworths Ltd. She also devised an animation technique using plasticine models to demonstrate the stages of some urological operations, and with the co-operation of Ronald Bartholomew, the Institute's Head of Photography, they produced many filmed sequences of new surgical procedures, for use in postgraduate teaching.

Freda Wadsworth became a member of the Medical Artists' Association in 1952, just three years after its inauguration. She was made a fellow in 1969 and was the first medical artist to receive an MBE on her retirement in 1979. Always an active member of the MAA, she was the third Honorary Treasurer from 1954 until 1955, and the third Honorary Secretary from 1955 until 1961. She also served on the education committee from 1962 until 1976, and the Board of Examiners from 1973 until 1980. She became a Tutor on the MAA Training Scheme taking students for four-week periods. Some of our present practising medical artists remember, with pleasure, the time they spent with her at the Institute.

Freda was a remarkable person with a lively and enquiring mind. She was always up to date in current affairs and had strong opinions on a wide range of subjects. During their retirement Freda and Marjorie became very active members of the Free Painters Society, and they both worked, almost daily, at their paintings. Freda enjoyed herself producing the most intricate abstract works based on astrology and mythology, and also very formal, detailed flower pieces. She exhibited most of her works at the Buckingham Palace Road Gallery.

Marjorie Wadsworth died in 2001, and the following months were very hard for Freda; they had lived together for over forty years. They had no family, but they took great pleasure and interest in their three affectionate Godchildren. It was evident that Freda found life very empty without Marjorie, and her admission to hospital and then Sutton Manor Nursing Home early in 2003, marked the beginning of the end. Freda's move to Hampshire was short lived, but she ended her life in a restful and quiet place surrounded by the things she loved.

Patricia Archer  
MAA Hon. Archivist  
February 2004



Freda at her MBE presentation with Pat Archer

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# BAHID Review (British Association for Human Identification)

## Autumn Conference October 31<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2003

Experts representing over ten disciplines gathered to present papers at BAHID's autumn conference last October. Held at the University of Sheffield, the two day meeting covered subjects from two categories; session I Facets of Human Identification and session II Law and Ethics. These areas encompassed the uses of DNA testing to identify theft and fraud. Delegates were provided with a forum for interdisciplinary discussion, which at times became quite ardent, but which only served to illustrate BAHID's objective of the promotion of shared knowledge for professionals involved in the presentation of evidence in forensic case. The accuracy and responsibility of the expert witness was called into discussion throughout.

An area under increasing controversy is the use of computerised visual evidence as opposed to traditional imagery such as crime scene photography. One of the papers that highlighted this controversy was entitled 'Digital Evidence and The Expert Witness', written by independent lawyer Lois Leader. Together with graphic designer Dr Damian Schofield from the University of Nottingham evidence from crime scene reconstruction specialists was used to compile a virtual



reconstruction film of a murder scene. Whilst this method benefits both the jury and the legal teams by providing a consistent depiction of the account, arguments against called into question the accuracy and bias of those individuals whom had created the reconstruction.

Dr Chris Soloman from the University of Kent demonstrated images from his database of composite faces achieved using mathematical formulae. The aim of this methodology was to increase accuracy of facial recognition for victims of crime. This contrasts with most existing methods of facial recognition which use more anthropological variants. With delegates from areas such as human anatomy, pathology, the Metropolitan Police force and fingerprinting the room was seldom silent.

From the perspective of the 'Medical Artist' it would be interesting to contrast innovative techniques in facial

recognition with that of the traditional evidential artist. This kind of artist has access to the victim's memory before it can be tainted with images already in existence. Perhaps one for the future?

BAHID is an umbrella organisation for those involved in human identification. Whilst there is a plethora of expert members and contributors it does encourage student participation. Despite the hectic programme there was time for socialising. The conference dinner did just that! Judge the evidence for yourself!

Paula Rhymes

### £100 Donation

Lindsey Pegus sent me a very kind letter and has generously paid a voluntary retired members subscription and donated £100 to the MAA to be used as Council's descretion. She was concerned last years Conference had run at a slight loss.

I am sure I can speak on behalf of Council and indeed the whole membership that this gesture is warmly appreciated.

Thank you Lindsey.

Alan Waller  
Hon Treasurer

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## Talking Soap

### Hello, this is Jim Smi...

Thank you for calling Artech Supplies

### Hello?

Your call will be recorded for training and security purposes.

### Oh, well that's OK I sp...

Your call is important to us.

### What?

If your call is concerned with an existing order please press 1

### No I'm just enquiring...

If you wish to place a new order please press 2.

### I see, I'm talking to a machine...

If your call is about taking up membership of our new exciting Art Supplies User Club please press 3

### Art Club? I don't believe this.

If your call concerns taking out a franchise to sell our products please press 4

### Silly, but I was trying to buy someth...

If your call is about payment methods please press 5

### If I knew how much it co...

If you wish to request a custom order supply please press 6.

### ...how much it cost I could make...

If you wish to request a custom order supply please press 6.

### I bet this answer machine is in Bombay or...

If you would prefer to speak to an operator Please press 00

### At last, I just want a price on something.

I am very sorry but all our operators are busy at present. Please ring back in a little while.

### Arrrrgh. Arrrrgh. I'll make it myself.

## Perception of Pain

An acclaimed photographic exhibition 'Perceptions of Pain' is currently on show at Leeds Thackray Museum. More than 40 stunning photographic images, produced by award-winning British artist Deborah Padfield in collaboration with pain sufferers, will be on show at the museum until 4<sup>th</sup> May 2004 as part of part of a national tour sponsored by the Arts Council. The exhibition is expected to draw a large audience from artistic and medical communities.



*Credit Deborah Padfield with Linda Sinfield*

The perceptions of Pain collection began life in 2001 when Padfield and pain consultant Dr Charles Pither won the prestigious Sciart award – an award for artists and scientists working in collaboration.

Padfield, herself a chronic pain sufferer, worked with volunteers to find a 'visual language' through which they could express their pain. The result is a collection of moving and startling images that has been acclaimed by doctors, patients and fellow artists.

### Admission charges:

Adult £4.90

Child £3.50

Concession £3.90

Family ticket £16.00

### Museum contact number:

0113 244 4343

## Council

Council has met at Friends' House twice since the last Newsletter, on 27th November 2003 and 29th January 2004.

The Hon. Secretary reported there have been no new membership inquiries.

The Hon. Treasurer said it was disappointing that after last year's excellent response to subscription payment, that this year a handful of subscriptions remain unpaid. In his new job he will not be able to print further Newsletter editions. Fortunately Phil Ball was able to offer an alternate printing service.

The Medical Artists' Education Trust Director reported the Trust had a total of 51 enquiries during the past 12 months.

Three students recently applied for interview, and Matthew Briggs, a past graduate from Blackpool, has accepted. He has taken up a post as Medical Artist in Preston.

The careers' leaflet has now been printed and will be sent to Universities and Further Education Colleges during the next few weeks.

The Education Director has put forward early ideas for a bursary award for students and a draft letter supporting student attendance in surgery/mortuary/dissection rooms.

### Proposed Anatomy Workshop

10 - 11th June 2004 Cambridge

Keep this date free in your diaries!

### MAA News

MAA News is published four times a year by the Medical Artists' Association.  
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