

Gunther von Hagens'

BODY WORLDS

The Anatomical Exhibition of Real Human Bodies

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INTRODUCTION

BODY WORLDS 2

The Anatomical Exhibition of Real Human Bodies

Learning from Real Human Specimens

Throughout the ages, scholars and students have been striving to better understand the insides of our bodies through the exploration of real specimens. *BODY WORLDS 2* connects with this tradition by presenting a new look at the human body.

The specimens in *BODY WORLDS 2* are real. The exhibition features more than 200 authentic human specimens, including entire bodies as well as individual organs and transparent body slices. Through the process of plastination, the body specimens are preserved with special plastics that allow us to view the many layers and many systems that lie beneath our skin.

The authentic specimens show details of disease, physiology and anatomy that are not effectively conveyed on constructed models. Moreover, because models are generic simplifications, the real specimens demonstrate how each of us has unique features, even on the inside. It is because the specimens are real that we connect with them so profoundly. They let us get close to ourselves, to examine and to understand. Through the authenticity of the specimens on display, we experience the wonder of the real human body and marvel at its elegance and complexity.

Welcome to *BODY WORLDS 2*. Discover the mysteries under your skin.

The California Science Center is grateful to its Ethics Advisory Committee - those individuals who assisted us in the review and assessment of this exhibition:

Father Richard Benson, C.M., Ph.D. St. John's Seminar, Archdiocese of Los Angeles
David C. Blake, Ph. D., J.D., St. John's Health Center
Rabbi Morley Feinstein, University Synagogue
Reverend Leonard Jackson, President, Los Angeles Council of Churches
Dr. Stanley G. Korenman, UCLA Medical Center
Reverend Cecil L. Murray, First African Methodist Episcopal Church

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Prof. Dr. Hans-Martin Sass, Kennedy Institute of Ethics, Georgetown University
Tom Weinberger, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, Center for Medical Ethics
Dr. Neil S. Wenger, UCLA Healthcare Ethics Center
Frances M. Wiley, R.N., M.N., UCLA School of Medicine

The Innovation of Plastination

Andreas Vesalius (1514 to 1564), personal physician to Emperor Charles V and King Philip II of Spain, was the first person to assemble a complete skeleton. Since then, such internal bony structures of the human organism have served as instructional and visual models. However, at that time it would not have been possible to preserve a cadaver complete with flesh, much less to have been able to stand it upright. The soft tissue would have quickly putrefied or at best would have dried out as in an Egyptian mummy. As a consequence, only pictorial representations of the discoveries made by the founding fathers of anatomy have come down to us. Some examples of these have been included in this exhibition.

Creating durable, whole-body plastinates and being able to position them in lifelike poses was first made possible by plastination within only the last decade. Posed plastinates are intended to impart insights into the human physical being, to help us visualize the structure and function of our bodily systems that underlie everyday activities. You will notice that every plastinate is posed differently, to reveal something different about the human body. The exhibit is organized according to the major systems: the locomotive system, nervous system, respiratory system, cardiovascular system, digestive system, kidneys and urinary tract, reproductive system, and prenatal development. Each plastinate builds on the ones before to provide insights into healthy and unhealthy bodies in a way that to date has not been possible on such a comprehensive scale.

The Body Donors

The specimens in this exhibit are from body donors, individuals who during their lifetime bequeathed that upon their death, their bodies could be used in this exhibition. The identities, ages and causes of death of the individual body donors are not given with these exhibits, because the exhibit focuses on the nature of our physical being, not on providing personal information on private tragedies. The Body Donors chose to participate in this program for a variety of reasons. All wanted to contribute to the medical enlightenment of laypeople, and without their contribution, this exhibit would not be possible. For their clear vision and tremendous generosity, we are deeply grateful.

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