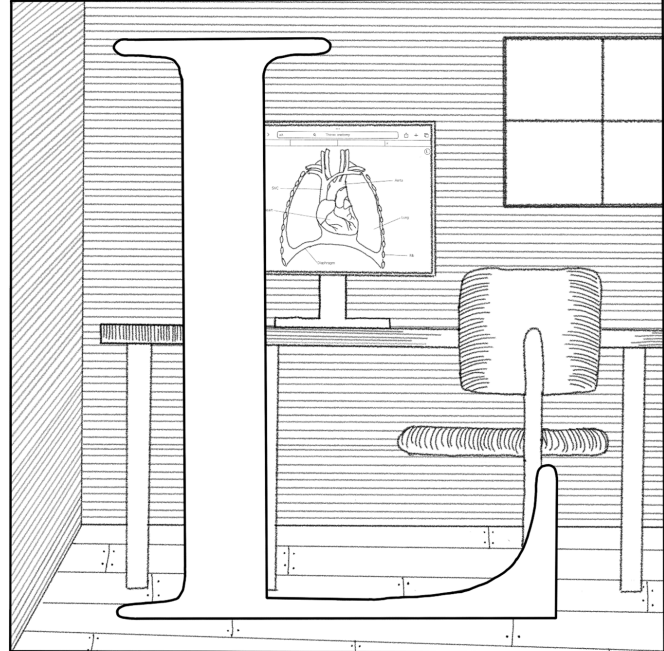
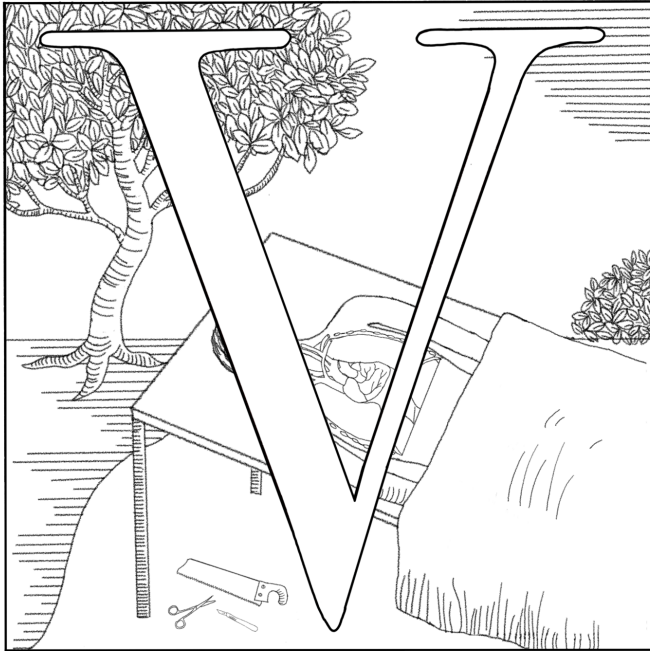


Art by Laura Munn, University of Exeter



I created this artwork as part of my medical humanities module 'What can history tell us?' at the University of Exeter. This module encouraged me to consider how our medical knowledge has evolved over time and reflect upon the importance of evidence-based medicine for continual medical advancement. I was inspired by the work of Vesalius in his book 'De humani corporis fabrica libri septem' and how he has influenced modern medicine.¹ Therefore, I decided to create a piece of art that compares my experience of current anatomical education with Vesalius' work during the Renaissance.

I was fascinated by his use of decorated initials, which he used to illustrate his methods to the reader, including the more controversial aspects such as robbing graves.² I used this concept within my artwork to help me compare 'then' and 'now' and to highlight the lasting impact of Vesalius.

My medical humanities module has encouraged me to question my attitudes towards learning, and I hope that my art will encourage you to do the same. As physicians, if we are not continuously questioning our current practice, then we are doing a disservice to our patients and the profession. In future, instead of thinking "it's a fact," I will consider how we ascertained the information and where there are opportunities for further discovery.

References

1. Vesalius A. De humani corporis fabrica libri septem. Basle: Per Ioannem Oporinum; 1555. 824 p.
2. Wellcome Collection Eleven decorated initials from the Basel 1555 edition of Andreas Vesalius's De humani corporis fabrica. Woodcuts, 1555. [No date]. [cited 2025 Jan 25]; [1 screen]. Available from: <https://wellcomecollection.org/works/xjwvmjqs>.