

PRESENTATION HOUSE

A CENTRE FOR THE PERFORMING AND VISUAL ARTS

333 Chesterfield Avenue, North Vancouver, B.C. V7M 3G9, 986-1351

MEDIA RELEASE

MASTERPIECES OF MEDICAL PHOTOGRAPHY

opens Friday evening, April 7

Selections from an extraordinary private photographic collection will be on view at PRESENTATION HOUSE GALLERY from April 8 to May 7. The Burns Archive is the collection of New York City ophthalmologist and surgeon, Stanley B. Burns.

The Archive tracks the history of photography and the history of healing, presenting a wealth of historical, social, cultural and artistic information.

In these pictures we see medical students at their cadavers, the practice of medicine on battlefields and in hospital wards, medical freaks and the survivors of physical ordeals, disease and early surgical procedures. These graphically factual images are awesome and terrifying reminders of human frailty, dignity, and achievement.

The exhibition images, which appear also in a Twelvetees Press hardcover book of the same name, were edited by Dr. Burns and the artist Joel Peter Witkin. The book will be available in the Gallery Shop.

Witkin is interested in our knowledge of a field of inquiry where science (and art) address the grotesque: "These images are triumphant contributions in the evolution of the quest for our highest attainment, to unselfishly help and heal one another, to eradicate all disease, both social and pathological".

Dr. Burns' interest in the material is in terms of healing techniques and the evolution of medicine. He provides each picture with an explanatory caption from the perspective of their value to science.

MASTERPIECES OF MEDICAL PHOTOGRAPHY is prepared and circulated by Curatorial Assistance, Los Angeles. The exhibition is supported in Vancouver by the Canada Council. It runs concurrently with an exhibition by Montreal artist, NICOLE JOLICOEUR, who has been researching and producing work inspired by the turn-of-the-century Parisian neurologist, Jean-Martin Charcot.

EXHIBITION DATES: April 8 to May 7

OPENING RECEPTION: April 7, 8-10pm

GALLERY HOURS: Wed-Sun, 12-5pm; Thurs, 12-9pm

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