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ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of
The College of Fine and Applied Arts
in Candidacy for the Degree of

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

Medications

by

Patti J. Green

May 1984

APPROVALS

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Acknowledgements

It is not very often that one has the opportunity to show admiration in a way far more meaningful than verbal appreciation and that goes beyond the exchange of physical gifts. There are times when saying thank you is not enough and giving one a coffee mug or book is not appropriate. Often the internal spirit of thanks transcends the external act and there seems to be no real heartfelt method of expressing it.

Suddenly though, the realization that this inability to find the proper expression of gratitude and appreciation is not that at all--an inability, but rather an oversight. For it has been expressed, however in slightly different shape and meaning that one is normally accustomed to. It takes on the form of professional attitude, creative growth, artistic energy, personal development, and that strive for excellence. It is that internal spirit of satisfaction and the realization of self-worth that pays homage to all those who gave of themselves. My work is a tribute and a gift in spirit and meaning to those who contributed their time and energy, patience and understanding, and knowledge and experience so that my experience was one that totally embodied not only all of these qualities, but also the artistic and

creative freedom to grow into my own artist.

I owe a debt of gratitude to Robert Wabnitz for showing me the "medical illustration way." He taught me what it's about and then granted me individual freedom. He saw me through the academic rough spots and in his familiar way eased the pressure of graduate studies with patience and honor.

I would like to sincerely thank Bernadette Merkel whose graphic design input and artistic judgement far surpassed being just helpful. She, too, gave me the incentive to push my creativity to the limit within the boundaries of this project, while at the same time freeing myself of limitations so that I could interpret and create as I saw fit.

I am grateful to Glen Hintz for his enthusiasm and support. His technical input as well as his fresh ideas and artistic energy were a constant creative stimulant that was much needed at times.

I also feel that this project is in part for all my fellow "med. ill." students, undergraduate as well as graduate. Their striving for perfection and relentless pursuit of excellence was an inspiration to me, and the camaraderie both personal and professional could not be matched.

Finally I would like to thank one very special person

whose guidance professionally, personally, and spiritually was invaluable. He pushed when we both felt I needed a push and let me go when creativity and attitude were running smoothly on their own.

INTRODUCTION

As I first began to investigate possible subject matter or projects for my master's thesis, I found that I was somehow overwhelmed by the scope or magnitude of the task soon to be undertaken. Possibly it was not the task so much as it was finding a task that was not only worthy of a master's degree candidate but also of an artist who wanted and believed, that this should be the sum total of all his experience--educational and professional. For this project, I would clear the cob webs, pull out the stops, and reach deep down for something that would say to me, "this is worthwhile, meaningful," and that would say to others, "she learned her craft well, this has meaning."

With education and experience in graphic design, respect and amazement for my newfound field of medical illustration, and fascination with artistic imagination and the creative process, it was only fitting that my thesis reflect these qualities or properties of my artistic development.

Thus Medications was born. Medications was to be a medical magazine of which the main emphasis for this project would be placed on cover illustration. I needed some form of creative outlet for my medical illustration and medical publications needed some sort of imaginative

element or lift. From my point of view, Medications would not only be a publication designed to journalistically inform, but also to visually excite or stimulate the reader (in varying degrees).¹

As the principal, and only artist for these covers, I decided that it would be worthwhile to explore different illustrative techniques and styles in order to find an identity that worked for this particular magazine.² I realized that there was the possibility that no one style would work best but that a variety of styles or looks could suit this publication better and actually enhance the magazine visually (a little unpredictability in a field that is both conservative and strangely enough often impersonal).

The project was mapped out and the wheels were turning so to speak. Expectations had started to form so that I not only had a concept to work with but also an attitude to develop and goals to meet. These were important so that I could benefit from the totality of the project and experience. For myself, the artist, this was to be the most

¹The New England Journal of Medicine, for example, journalistically informs, and quite well as circulation is approximately 207,000, but it certainly does not artistically excite.

²After correspondence with many medical/scientific publications such as Prevention, Omni, Science 83, and Postgraduate Medicine magazine, I discovered that most use a number of freelance illustrators for cover design and therefore get a variety of different looks or style.

important body of work I had ever done, both personally and educationally. I had feelings that this could be the last time that I have full control of my work, so take control! Be methodical, think things out, make decisions, stand by those decisions, visualize, create, and accept. This process that sounds so cut and dry is actually not that at all for it is really a natural state or procedure that I believe every artist goes through when faced with any task. It was an organizational skill that was almost as much a part of the project as the artwork itself. It was in the plan from the beginning, although it probably would have occurred naturally. If I expected to have any sense of order in these cover designs, there had to be order in the method.

For the project itself, my largest expectation was that these cover designs should work together as a cohesive body of work rather than individual "parts." I knew that these "parts" would be displayed together and these "parts" might all have a completely different look, however I had to somehow join the "parts" so that they would reflect the original basic concept for this thesis--totality.

Underlying this, I expected that the artwork for the project would have that same sense of order and organization that I had set down for the artist. I supposed that it was possible to be organized in one area such as thinking or

thought process, and completely disorganized in execution. Again, however, totality in concept dictated that this should not happen.

Now that the basic blueprint for the project had been determined including purpose and expectations, a more detailed analysis of Medications was next. This would include exploration, research, and inspiration.

THE MEDICATIONS CONCEPT

On one level, Medications would be a magazine aimed at the medical profession about the pharmaceutical industry. It would cover a wide range of topics dealing with pharmaceuticals or drugs and it would speak in terms that would place it under the heading of trade journal.³ With the ever changing scientific technology and the constant growth of medical discoveries, Medications would inform the medical community on current and future trends in medications and treatments.

On a more complex level, Medications is a creatively progressive publication aimed at those with a clear aesthetic sense of the visually pleasing. It communicates not only through written work but also with quality of design and creative character. It is conservative and restrained yet artistically free to set a mood or feeling. This is the type of design normally reserved for art and design related publications but that I feel is much needed in a field that is similarly subject to constant change and advancement.

The obvious questions raised now are: will the medical community appreciate or for that matter even notice the quality and care taken in putting together such a journal;

³As opposed to a consumer magazine or journal aimed at the general public.

and will it be worthwhile professionally and fulfilling artistically to place such emphasis on appearance and aesthetics?

The first question is a rather difficult one to address and I'm not sure that I totally answered the problem. However, an attempt to understand the literary or journalistic expectations of those who read medical publications presented me with enough insight to make a decision on the issue, which way to go, and how far to take it; and subsequently answer the second question.

The first step was to talk to people in the medical community about current publications on a journalistic and artistic level.

In discussing current trends in medical trade journal design with Paula Evans of the Strong Memorial Hospital pharmacy, I was curious as to why so many of these publications had poor to marginal cover illustrations,⁴ when illustrations were used at all, and little sense of creativity or imagination. It could be argued that the medical profession is on one hand conservative or staid and on the other inventive and imaginative. Modern medicine could not have gotten where it is today without imagination and foresight by some rather creative scientists. Why shouldn't

⁴Purely a personal opinion but one that comes from an experienced designer and well trained eye.

their journals reflect this dichotomy in character?

According to Ms. Evans, and echoed by many others in the profession, the most predominant reason why this situation exists is simply that the medical world is not ready for any type of radical change in the design of their publications. "Far out" or slick cover designs or illustrations would be first, not acceptable due to the conservative nature of the group; second, not taken seriously or taken as a serious medical journal; and third, just too costly.

Tina Adamek, Executive Art Director of Postgraduate Medicine magazine, also believes that is true but challenges this way of thinking with design that is conservative and illustrations that are often conceptual and always creative (Fig. 1). She admits that this move is quite daring as quarterly readership studies show that most in the medical profession believe that their journals should be "clinical." This, according to Ms. Adamek, means straight forward information delivered quickly and cleanly. The marks as a result of these studies, identifying your material, creates a market for advertisers. This of course is where financial success for the publication is achieved.

Ms. Adamek also admits that Postgraduate Medicine has at times been criticized for not using more hard core medical illustrations for the cover and as a result has been accused of being "fluff." Postgraduate can handle this for inside is serious medical journalism and this reputation

keeps circulation up.⁵

Unfortunately, medical professionals are a tough audience to please and deal with. Often they are under the gun, questioned about ethics, and feel somewhat threatened. Egos run high and time is too short so an attitude of less frills, more good information pervades. There is nothing wrong with this way of thinking, however good design does not necessarily qualify as "frills." To be optimistic, I believe this will change. It will take some dedicated and persuasive artists and designers along with some secure and "modern" medical professionals. Post-graduate Medicine has made a fairly successful attempt.

This now leads to the second question about professional value and artistic fulfillment. Obviously there is value in attempting to change something that needs change. Whether it is successful or not remains to be seen, however the effort is always worthwhile. Artistic fulfillment is of a more personal nature. Anything creatively produced for any reason is fulfilling to some degree!

⁵Approximately 110,000 in the profession subscribe.

MEDICATIONS DEVELOPMENT

In developing the overall visual character of Medications, the main consideration was placed on this conservative yet progressive nature of the industry it represents. I imagined that it could be conservative or rather traditional in the treatment of type and layout, and then imaginative and possibly even daring at times in its illustrations.⁶ I believed this would preserve the intellectual and journalistic integrity of the publication while at the same time freeing the reader or viewer from imaginative constraints and creative predictability.

To achieve this carefully controlled visual style, an orderly method or process was needed. I decided there were four "parts" to each cover to consider: masthead,⁷ type, illustration, and layout.

The masthead was going to be the common denominator or constant factor among all the covers and this of course would tie them all together. Design of the masthead was

⁶Much like Postgraduate Medicine has accomplished.

⁷The word masthead is a rather confusing term and is used by many printing and publication professionals to denote both the circulation and publishing information printed on the inside cover and the nameplate appearing on the outside cover.

first. Of all the preliminary or planning stages, I believe that this took the most amount of time. The masthead would sit atop every issue and act not only as an informational device advising the reader of which journal he or she was reading, but it would also represent or set the design character of the journal as a whole. I felt it was important that the masthead clearly symbolized the meaning and goals or expectations of the publication.

After much exploration and experimentation (Fig. 2), a design that felt free and informal in type style yet semiformal and conservative in placement and possibly even appearance, was chosen. As planned, this particular masthead would always appear the same. Its mood or character would not change with different illustrative techniques or design solutions. In this way, it would truly remain a constant within all the pieces and be the crucial factor in uniting the "parts" a whole.

Once the masthead was designed, it was time to research possible lead articles on which each cover would be based. After going through many medical journals and reading or skimming through many articles, a list was compiled of possible lead stories (Fig. 3). The final selection was made according to a very simple method--which would be most challenging and most fun to illustrate?

Once the masthead was designed and the lead cover

stories selected, the preliminary stages of design were over. It was time to organize thoughts, initiate some problem solving method in order to unite verbal with visual, and determine the illustrative technique which would best suit a given cover story.

I organized my thoughts by asking myself three questions: (1) What's the inspiration? (2) Where's the meaning? (3) How do the visuals come?

My problem solving method was really one of going with gut feelings and design instincts, with a little brainstorming thrown in for good measure. It may sound a little simplistic or elementary, but often the gut feelings are the right ones and if one does not follow through with them they just continue to haunt you. If they work--great, if not--on to the next one.

The illustrative technique chosen for each cover was a combination of some earlier experimentation, that desire to be challenged, and those gut feelings.

I was at this point surprised to realize that all of these things had previously been decided upon. Somewhat unknowingly I had formed preconceived visual ideas as to how these cover stories would appear. I suppose that it was only natural that a visually oriented person would form a picture when some verbal stimulus or inspiration was presented and that again, gut feelings would prevail. I was even more surprised however to discover that I had actually

thrown away everything that I had previously been taught as a student of graphic design for a radically different and to many, totally unacceptable approach to design. One that did not involve hundreds of thumbnails, roughs, sketches, and grids on 100% rag layout paper, but rather one that involved careful thought and analysis both visual and verbal. A more internal than external search. A more cerebral approach as it were. These ideas were transformed into full size sketches (on 100% rag layout paper) followed by corrections or revisions. These were the right illustrations and designs because they had gut feelings and good design instincts to back them up.

Now that the internal thought and analysis, as well as the conceptual and visual process had taken place with the results being a clear idea or image, both mental and physical, of each cover, it was time to execute the finished pieces.

MEDICATIONS EXECUTION

Rather than describe the technique in execution of each individual cover in detail, I prefer to speak of the body of work as a whole and to site individual examples briefly.

As with any design problem, once the preliminaries have been taken care of and the thought process and problem solving developed to the point in which it yields a visual image (mental and physical), it is time to complete the chain of events by calling on all of one's patience, artistic skill, and craftsmanship in executing the finished art.

With Medications, the execution of most of the covers did not take nearly as long as the development. It required more physical control, more rigid concentration and mental intensity but far less time involved (although still many hours at the table). The conceptualizing and development were more unrestrained and open to internal and external stimuli. The execution although cut and dry was the final step to the completed cover and could influence how I as the artist as well as others as the viewers felt about the piece. Therefore careful control of my medium for each particular cover, or the work as a whole, was extremely important to achieve the effect of a clean, precise, yet creative, clinical body of medical journalism.

In the development stage, I made my design decisions and could mentally visualize the appearance of the finished work. In the execution stage, the best medium was chosen in order to physically match the mental image.

In the covers marked Medications #1 (Fig. 4), Medications #2 (Fig. 5), Medications #5 (Fig. 8), and Medications #6 (Fig. 9), a mixed media technique was appropriate. The use of the airbrush gave these pieces a crisp, precise, and often eerie or surreal appearance. The use of colored pencil and/or graphite added to the surrealism as in the case of Medications #1 and #6, or a more lighthearted or whimsical feel as in Medications #5. The colorful pills of #1 float in a blue airbrushed sky free of all restraints or stress while a mouth carefully rendered in carbon dust and screaming in pain is uneasily and harshly placed over this serene setting. It causes an uncomfortable feeling or tension that is partially due to layout or placement and partially due to mixture of media.

In the cover marked Medications #3 (Fig. 6), again the media marked the mood of the subject matter. This piece was executed from a sketch I had done in the operating room at Strong Memorial Hospital. The pace of the surgery was fast to avoid infection. I felt that pastels used quickly and somewhat loosely would best reflect this concern for time.

Medications #4 (Fig. 7) was a straightforward informational piece that would best be served by giving equal attention to type and illustration. To add interest and creativity, a common medical illustration technique of using color aid paper cutouts and shading with colored pencil was used.

When the execution of all six covers was finished and the body of work completed, I wondered if the project worked artistically as a whole. Could each individual illustration stand alone as an illustration without the magazine?

MEDICATIONS CONCLUSION

This project not only worked artistically but also professionally. The pieces not only appear as actual magazine covers, due to good design and quality craftsmanship, but the project as a whole is entirely feasible.

The illustrations could easily stand alone as illustrations for that was all they were before the type was added identifying the work as magazine covers. The art was somewhat editorial or journalistic in appearance, but that certainly did not make it any less a creatively conceived and artistically rendered illustration or group of illustrations (as opposed to covers).

I also wondered at this point, what the body of work said and had my professional and artistic expectations been fulfilled? Had I succeeded?

The work speaks of quality education and positive experience; of meaningful relationships between art and artist; and of a more complete understanding of not only the physical tools of the trade but of the mental capabilities and complexities within the artist.

The project was approached with the spirit of experimentation and a fierce determination to "succeed" artistically, creatively, intellectually, and personally.

Success can be measured by the impact of ideas and

creativity on others. It is the artist's impulse to assert himself. Success celebrates the growth of the inner self and the human spirit finding individual shape and meaning. Success is a standard of performance to achieve the highest degree of personal freedom and expression. It is the qualitative element in the artist's work and the quantitative passion for that work. Success is measured in a positive mental state that causes reflection on experience and realization of self-worth. I'm just about there!

APPENDICES

**The Journal of
Applied Medicine
for the Primary Care
Physician**

Postgraduate Medicine

EDITORIAL

Private clinics:
Their role in
American medicine

NEW SERIES

Optimizing drug
therapy

ARTICLES

Removing the mystique of acupuncture

Anorexia nervosa: Thinness as illness

Update on asbestos-related diseases

Acute MI: Tactics for the first hours

Diabetic renal failure: Is it inevitable?

Complete contents beginning page 5

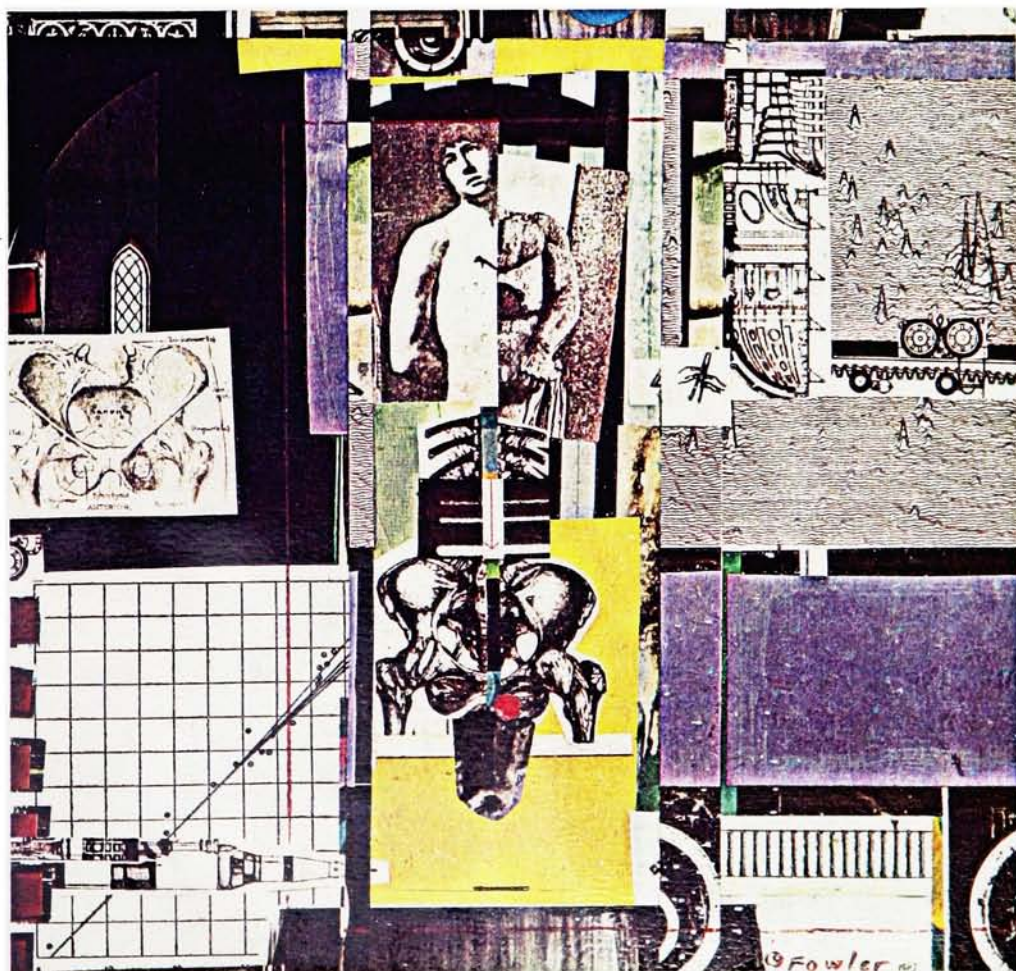
Impotence symposium

Evaluation

Endocrine causes

Psychiatric aspects

Treatment



POSSIBLE COVER STORIES

Lead Poisoning: Detection and Chelation Therapy

Toxicologic Emergencies: Rodenticides

The Prophylaxis and Treatment of Surgical Infections

Various Agents Help Duodenal Ulcer Healing

Nitroglycerin Ointment in Heart Failure

Therapeutic Use of Cannabis is Plagued with Problems

Controlling the Higher Ranges of Pain

Management of the Patient With Chronic Pain

Nutrition During Pregnancy

New Drug May Lower Cholesterol

Quarantined Medicine: The Drug the Government is Trying to Hide

Healing a Hole in the Stomach

Fish Powder: Fish Protein Concentrate (FPC)

Medicine Then and Now

Mannitol--Reaching the Brain's Barrier

Dark Paradise: Opiate Addiction in America Before 1940

Marijuana as Medicine

Folk Medicine and Herbal Healing

Medications

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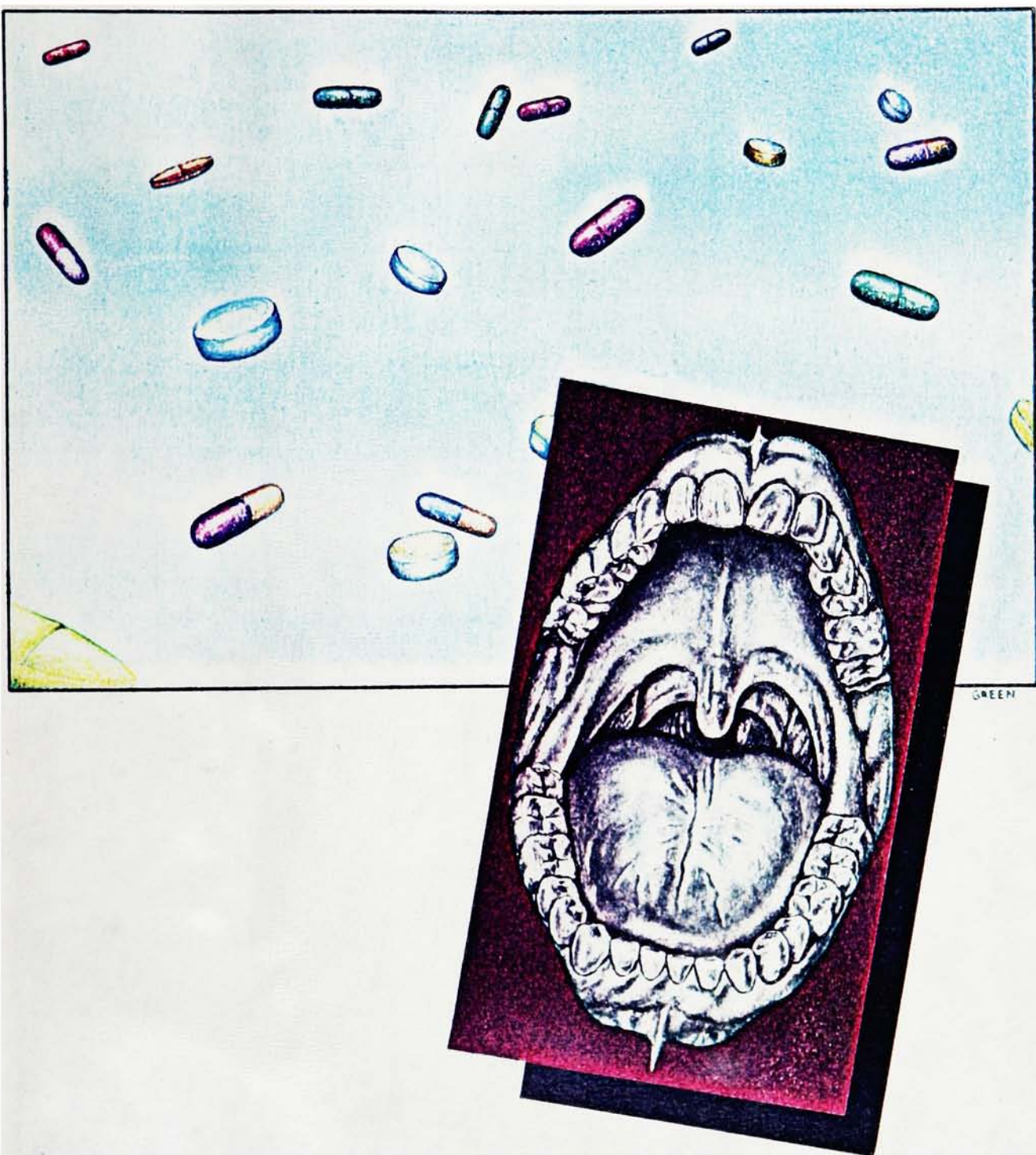
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JOURNAL OF THE PHARMACEUTICAL TRADE



Controlling the Higher Ranges of Pain

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JOURNAL OF THE PHARMACEUTICAL TRADE

Mannitol: Breaching the Brain's Barrier



Medications

JOURNAL OF THE PHARMACEUTICAL TRADE

The Prophylaxis and Treatment of Surgical Infections



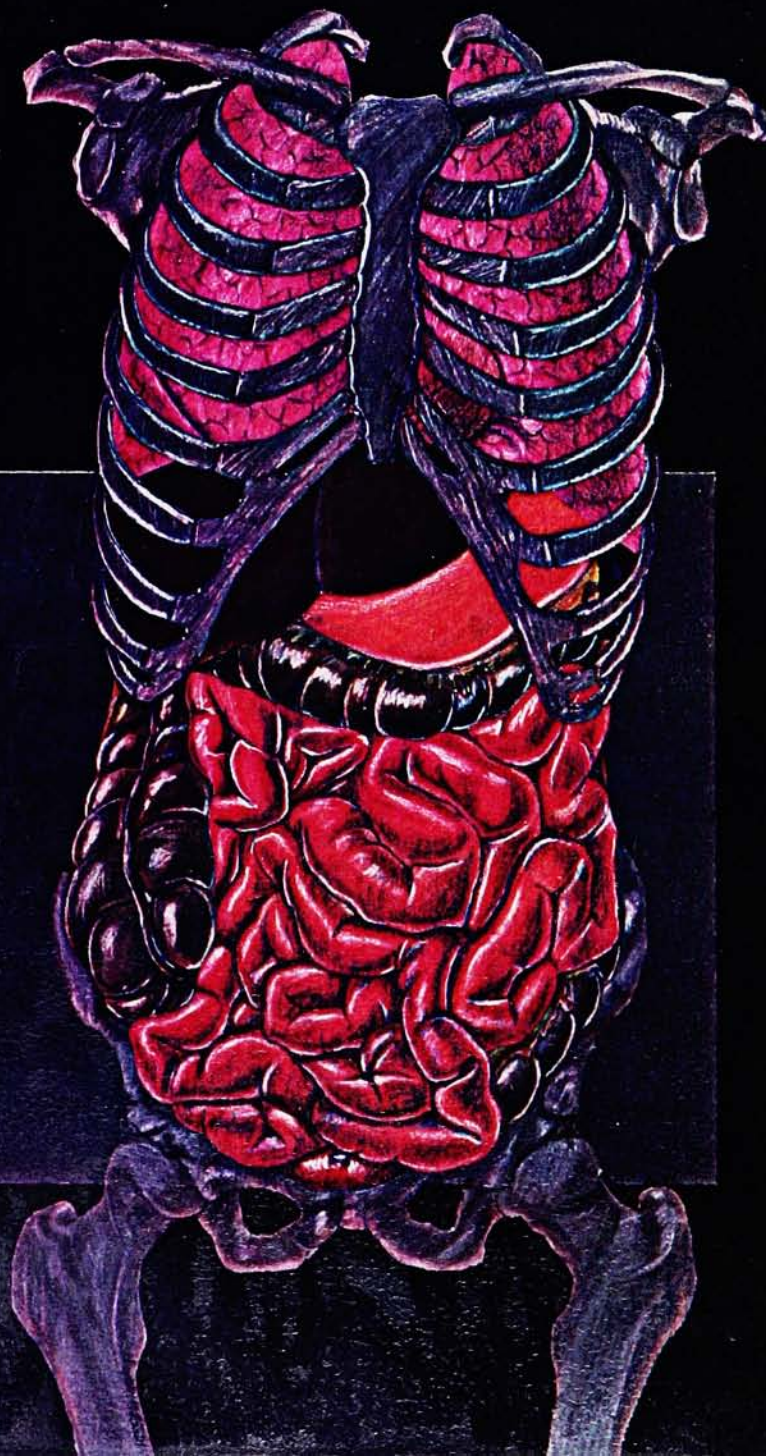
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Various agents help
duodenal ulcer
healing

Repairing a hole
in the stomach

**Update: New
Abdominal
Medications**



Medications

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The
Pharmaceutical
Illustrator

Medications

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Medications

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Medicinal Plants and Herbal **Medications**

