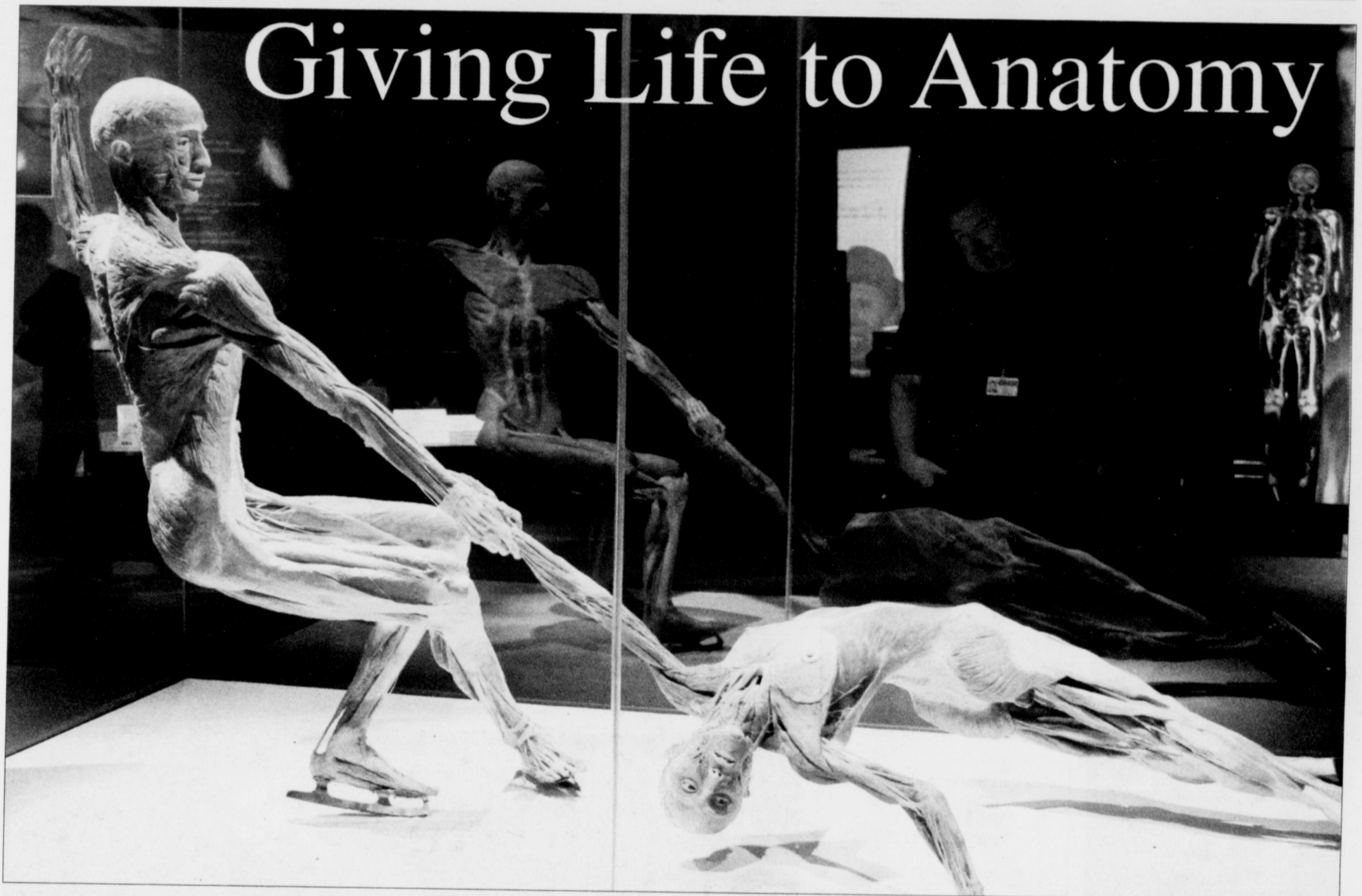


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## Giving Life to Anatomy

A pair of ice dance skaters is posed in their athletic form in *Body Worlds and the Brain*, an exhibit currently on display at OMSI, which uses a revolutionary human preservation method called *Plastination*.

PHOTO BY CARI HACHMANN/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

### Exhibit a marvel of bodies, organs and body slices

BY CARI HACHMANN

Perched in a glass box at the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry in Portland, the human figure of a beautiful ballet dancer poses mid-air.

Her back is arched with arms outstretched like wings of an elegant bird. One slipped toe touches the floor while the other points to the sky, yet there is something eerie about this dove-like dancer—she is dead. Her skin has been removed, revealing blood-red muscles and white ligaments that secure her in perfect muscular balance. Chin lifted, her eyes gaze ahead, popping from an exposed skull and half-hallowed face of cartilage and muscle tissue. Her buttocks muscles are flayed open, wing-like, exposing female reproductive parts.

This utterly delicate yet gruesome form called *The Dancer* is one of 200 real human specimens preserved by Gunther von Hagens through his revolutionary method of *plastination* and on display at OMSI's *Body*

*Worlds and the Brain* exhibit, open through December.

"This exhibit presents an unparalleled opportunity to learn about the anatomy of the human body, both its resilience and fra-

gility," said OMSI President Nancy Stueber.

In the all-new show, the German anatomist brings to life the anatomy of the human body in a way textbooks never could, featuring entire bodies, individual organs, transparent

body slices, and original works of art from years past.

Von Hagens' exhibit, artistically designed and co-conceptualized by his wife Dr. Angelina Whalley, features current research on neuroscience, brain development, and performance.

A smiling ligament skeleton sitting cross-legged welcomes visitors inside the two-story exhibit. Like the other forms, he gave permission during his lifetime to contribute his body after death for 'the medical enlightenment of lay people'.

Meandering throughout the dim-lit rooms, guests can view wall texts about marvels of the brain: consciousness, intelligence, personality, learning, memory, creativity, emotions, and the effects of music, stress, sleep, and love on the brain.

"The brain is an incredible marvel of engineering. I wanted people to recognize what is known about this amazing gem inside our heads, and be awed by its possibilities and capacities," said von Hagens.

Upstairs, visitors are taken on a textual journey of the brain from an infant to the child, teenager, adult and finally aging brain.

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PHOTO BY CARI HACHMANN/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

This figure, in a yoga pose is one of many that display both the flexibility of the human form and the details of human anatomy.