

'Hokes Medical Arts' on display at Reece

"Hokes Medical Arts," the latest traveling exhibition by Beauvais Lyons, is on display at the Reece Museum through April 23.

Lyons is a University of Tennessee art professor known for creating various mock-documentary projects. In the past, he fabricated and documented such imaginary cultures as the Apasht and the Aazud; created "The George and Helen Spelvin Folk Art Collection," a selection of contemporary folk art; and was instrumental in bringing a "centaur specimen" to the library at UT as a permanent display.

For his current project, Lyons has created a collection of anatomical prints and drawings from the Hokes (pronounced "hoax") Archives. These elaborate works appear to be authentic depictions of abnormal human anatomy, but are instead works of fiction that comment on science and the representation of the body.

These prints are also an outgrowth of Lyons' interest in the history and visual conventions of scientific illustration. His style is informed by 19th century color lithography and reflects his appreciation for the vernacular print while "walk(ing) a line between ideas of beauty and the grotesque." Critic Arthur Blade has stated that these works "serve as a bridge between the scholarship of Dr. Gray and the whimsy of Dr. Seuss."

Theories about the body have been a subject that numerous artists have addressed in recent decades. Barbara Stafford's 1991 book *Body Criticism: Imaging the Unseen in Enlightenment Art and Medicine* (MIT Press) offers a history of medical and anatomical science that has evolved since the advent of the Enlightenment. Feminism,

Lyons points out, "called into question issues of the body as a contested territory in relation to ideas of beauty and personal liberty. "Given the size of the medical profession as a percent of the gross national product of industrialized nations, and our increased cultural attention to health and beauty, the subject has other levels of meaning and interest."

The exhibit is free and open to the public. Regular hours are 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Thursday. For more information, contact the Reece Museum at 439-4392 or reecemus@etsu.edu.

