

By nature, surgeons are creative people; strongly visual with great attention to accuracy and detail. While these attributes make them gifted operators, it's also precisely why illustration is such an excellent medium, with which to communicate surgical techniques. Good art will draw the viewer in and bridges language issues. Where photographs may flatten vital variations in depth of field and limit the view of landmarks, well-crafted illustrations step in to tell the entirety of the story.

All the figures in this book have been meticulously drawn by Beth Croce. Beth pursued a bio-artistic career through her postgraduate Art as Applied to Medicine program at the Johns Hopkins Medical School in Baltimore, USA. She has been the primary illustrator for several key surgical texts, including preparing over 500 illustrations for 'Ischemic Heart Disease: Surgical Management', a comprehensive textbook that provides detailed up-to-date coverage for cardiac surgeons. By closely collaborating with surgeons and anatomists, Beth's illustrations combine anatomic accuracy with clinical significance to reflect the most pertinent and realistic surgical details. As the Annals of Cardiothoracic Surgery's chief medical illustrator, Beth's attention to detail has drawn praise from contributors and readers alike.

In this book of 'Art of Operative Techniques', we have put together a collection of illustrative articles to detail the critical steps in contemporary cardiothoracic surgical procedures. We hope that you will find this book to be informative and educational. I would like to express my deep appreciation to all contributors for their expertise and knowledge, which has enabled us to put together a seminal piece of work. I hope you enjoy appreciating the elegance and the art in our amazing specialty.

Tristan D. Yan, BSc. MBBS. MS. MD. Ph.D. FRACS.

Professor of Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgery
Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia

Clinical Professor of Surgery, University of Sydney,
Royal Prince Alfred and Sydney Adventist Hospitals
Sydney, Australia