The Cardiac Dance — the Spirals of Life

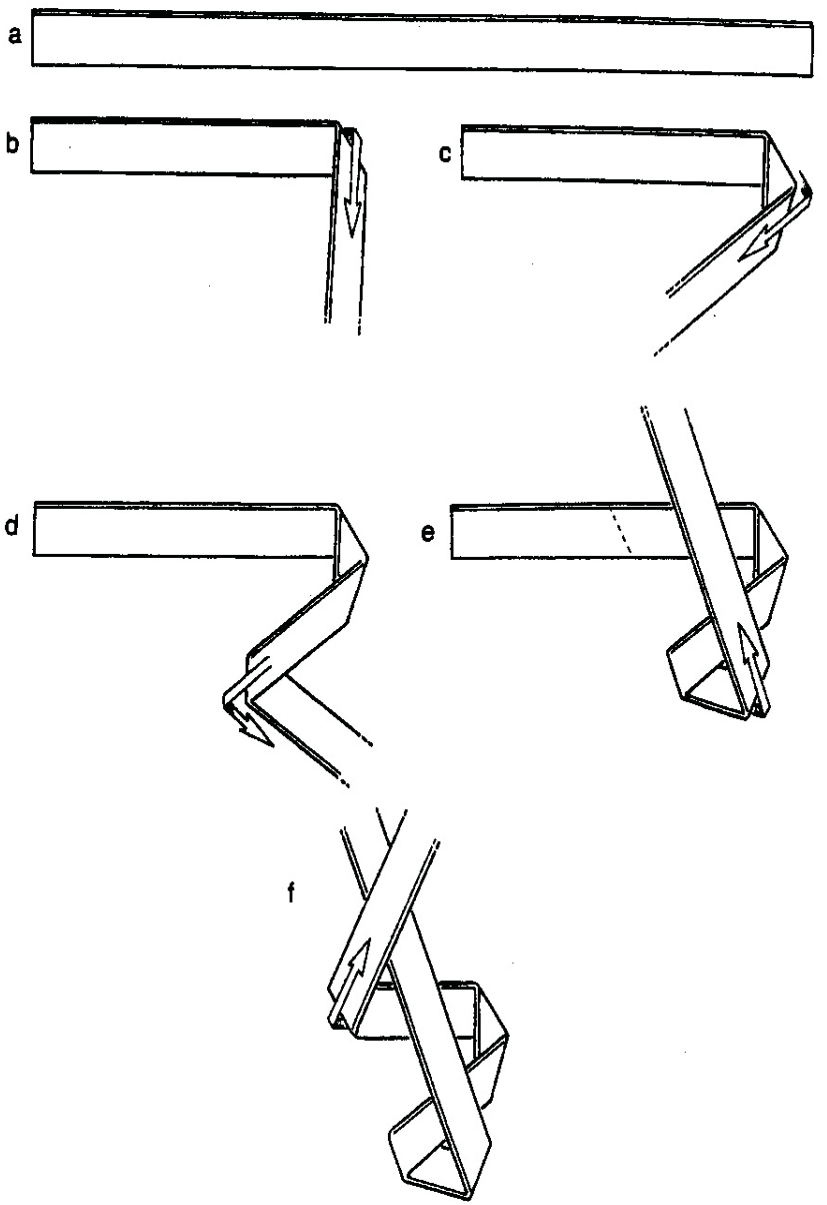
The "cardiac dance" is the twisting, pulsing rhythms of the human heart in motion. Through the work of Drs. Francisco Torrent-Guasp and Gerald Buckberg, a new approach to dealing with congestive heart failure has been developed. What you will see on stage is our attempt to depict this revolutionary concept through dance, music and multimedia.

The piece begins with dancers demonstrating the notion that the spiral is a recurring formation throughout nature. This formation, as Dr. Torrent-Guasp discovered, also exists in the underlying architecture of the heart. He demonstrated that the heart unwinds like one continuous piece of rope (this can be reproduced easily with a strip of paper, as shown on the reverse side of this insert). The helical shape of the heart was also the inspiration for the hanging set piece.

Scene One continues by mimicking the motion of a healthy heart. When the heart is healthy, it is conical in shape, like a football. In this shape, the heart is able to beat normally in a twisting/untwisting motion. Scene Two begins with a heart attack, and is followed by a progression into heart failure. When the heart becomes unhealthy, it loses its helical shape and becomes round like a basketball. Once the heart has lost its helical shape, it can no longer twist and untwist very well, thereby getting tired easily and losing its synchronous rhythm. Scene Three represents the real lives that are affected by the tragedy of heart failure and ends with the decision to have the surgical procedure pioneered by Dr. Buckberg. In Scene Four, the surgery is performed, effectively transforming the basketball back into a football. Scene Five represents the joy in the restoration of this natural spiral formation and the conclusions that can be drawn from these recent discoveries.

For more information on the science behind the cardiac dance, please see www.helicalheart.com. There is also an introductory film playing in the theater lobby and a corresponding brochure that provides more information from a historical and medical perspective, including the nature of heart disease and how this new information regarding the anatomy of the human heart led to Dr. Buckberg's revolutionary new heart procedure.

—Shellie Cash and Jennifer Merkowitz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