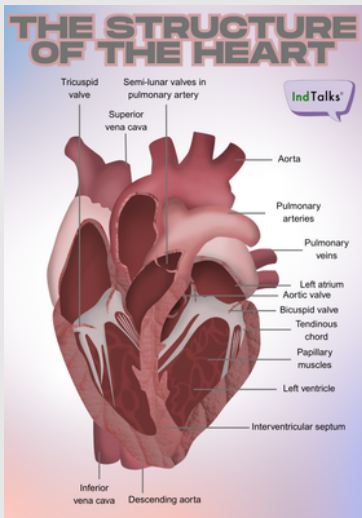




the anatomy diaries - part 1

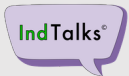




Heart cross-section study

07 — 12 July 2025 | Affinity Designer 2 | 2D Anatomical Illustration

A detailed frontal cross-section of the human heart — four chambers, valves, major vessels, and chordae tendineae, rendered in a muted anatomical palette with photo texture overlays and a labelled diagram finish.



July 2025 →

Timeline

07 — 12 July 2025 | Affinity Designer 2 | 2D Anatomical Illustration

A detailed frontal cross-section of the human heart — four chambers, valves, major vessels, and chordae tendineae, rendered in a muted anatomical palette with photo texture overlays and a labelled diagram finish.



DAY 1

Basic 2D sketch — proportions, four chambers, septum curve, major vessels.



DAY 2-3

Added chordae tendineae and valves; muted reds and pinks for internals forms.



DAY 4

Papillary muscles in deeper red, segmented to reflect deeper form.



DAY 5

Vessel specific lighting — warm highlights on aorta, cooler tones on vena cava.



DAY 6

Royalty-free leaf texture overlay for organic cardiac tissue feel.



DAY 7

Anatomical labels added — clean diagram for educational use.



Key techniques and reflections

07 — 12 July 2025 | Affinity Designer 2 | 2D Anatomical Illustration

Key techniques

Affinity Designer 2

Primary illustration software.

3D References

Used for internal structure accuracy.

Muted colour palette

Reds and pinks to separate forms anatomically.

Photo texture overlay

Leaf image via adjustments tools for tissue realism.

Adjustments used

Lens filter - Recolour - Shadows & Highlights - Brightness & Contrast

What I learnt

Left ventricle wall should be significantly thicker than the right — proportions were prioritised over this anatomical detail.

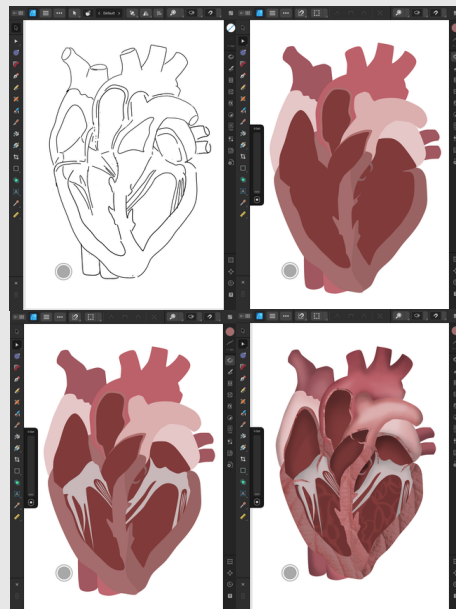
Focus on shape accuracy came at the cost of wall thickness ratio.

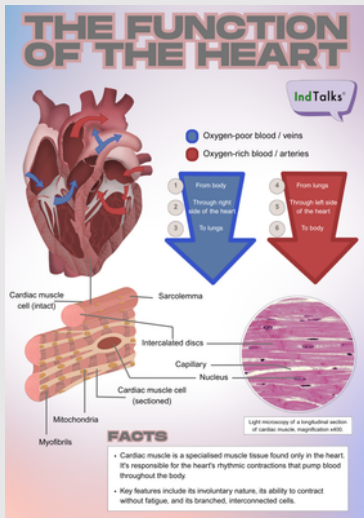
Future development

Layer in muscle fibre direction to increase anatomical depth.

Include surrounding structures such as pericardium and lungs.

Greater reference study of ventricular wall proportions before starting.





Cardiac tissue cross-section study

18 July 2025 | Affinity Designer 2 | Semi-realistic infographic

A companion infographic to the heart cross-section — depicting cardiac muscle tissue in a semi-realistic style, highlighting branching fibres, intercalated discs, and striations.

Artistic decisions

18 July 2025 | Affinity Designer 2 | Semi-realistic infographic

Intercalated discs at edges only

Placed only along the outer edge of the drawing to keep the central area uncluttered and focused on the fibre flow pattern. Their placement hints at presence without overwhelming the composition.

Coulour choices for warmth and realism

Muted pinks for myofibrils and yellows for mitochondria to suggest organic warmth. Deep red highlights to nucleus for visual clarity and contrast.

Sponge texture for disc detail

A royalty-free sponge photo was used as a texture overlay. The porous texture echoes the irregular pattern of intercalated discs. Lens filter from Adjustments kept the effect subtle.

3D FX overlay for dimensionality

A 3D FX layer was applied to bring added depth and surface texture to an otherwise 2D composition, giving the piece a more tactile, biological feel.

Reflections

18 July 2025 | Affinity Designer 2 | Semi-realistic infographic

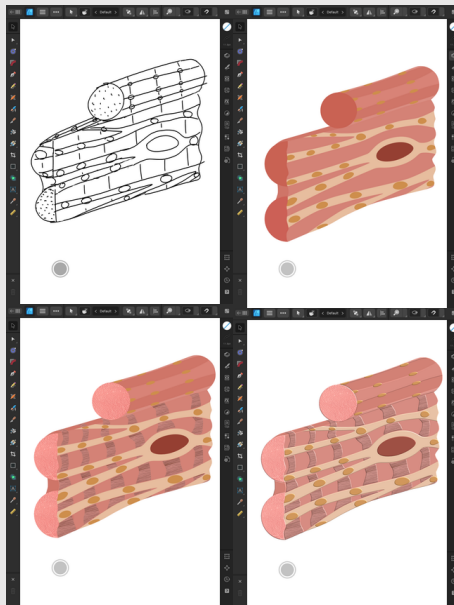
What I gained

Confidence in using photo textures creatively to imply biological structure without overcomplicating the illustration.

Understanding of how to stylistically limit complex features (intercalated discs) to preserve compositional clarity.

Future development

Test ways of subtly integrating intercalated discs throughout the tissue without overwhelming the composition — possibly through a more transparent texture layer or finer line work.

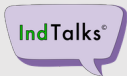




Skeletal head study

23 — 25 July 2025 | Nomad Sculpt | First 3D study

A first real attempt at 3D digital sculpting — studying the human skull using SketchFab references and Nomad Sculpt. Built over 3 days, from basic cranial proportions through to cranial sutures, teeth and hand-painted depth.



3-day sculpting process

23 — 25 July 2025 | Nomad Sculpt | First 3D study

Day 1

Proportions & basic form

- Mapped cranium shape, zygomatic bones (cheekbones), and jaw structure.
- Blocked in major planes — orbitals (eye sockets) and refined cheekbones.
- Carefully rendered nasal cavity before pausing at a natural breakpoint.

Day 2

Mandible, teeth & bone texture

- Continued downward — zygomatic process of maxilla, then the mandible via Layer tool.
- Used Smooth tool to soften accidental sharp mandible edges.
- Used Flatten tool to clear excess clay before sculpting the teeth — the most challenging area.
- Applied royalty-free bone texture to base layer; blended with Smudge tool.

Day 3

Depth, sutures and lighting

- Hand-painted muted brons and reys into orbits, vomer bone sphenoid and teeth gaps.
- Used Crease tool to portray cranial sutures (fibrous joints).
- Experimented with Nomad Sculpt lighting to add a cool atmospheric tone.

Reflections

23 — 25 July 2025 | Nomad Sculpt | First 3D study

What I learnt

Teeth require far more structure than expected — volume and texture, not flat surfaces.

Zygomatic arch and jaw interaction took multiple attempts to sculpt correctly.

New appreciation for how 3D tools (Layer, Smooth, Flatten, Create) each serve a specific sculptural purpose.

Future development

Deepen research into cranial proportions — specifically the underside of the occipital, vomer, and sphenoid bone.

Plan more thoroughly before sculpting to allow greater anatomical accuracy.

Attempt a full skull with correct zygomatic arch and jaw interaction from the outset.

