



Physician, artist, but above all — philosopher

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[This article was published in Art of Medicine (Gydymo Menas), Vilnius, Lithuania, February 2002, vol. 78, pages 4, 120. Translated from the original Lithuanian.]

That is how art critics have commented upon our guest from the United States of America, Dr. Audrius V. Plioplys.

Dr. Audrius V. Plioplys is one of the most renowned child neurologists working in the United States. For 12 years he has been the Director of Child Neurology at Michael Reese Hospital, has led many nationally important medical research projects, and is the Medical Director of four long-term care facilities for children with severe neurologic disabilities. Dr. A. V. Plioplys is the Founder and Chairman of the Pediatric Long-Term Care Section of the American Medical Directors Association. Previously, he directed the Alzheimer Disease Centers at Michael Reese and Mercy Hospitals, and was the Director of the Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Research Center at Mercy Hospital.

Please comment about your academic work.

I have written 59 medical research articles and authored 51 published abstracts. For two years I worked full-time doing neuroimmunology research at Quebec City's Laval University. At that time I was investigating neuroimmunologic aspects of brain growth and development. Later, at the University of Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children, I studied the neurobiologic causes of Alzheimer's disease and of autism. I continued these lines of research investigation upon my return to Chicago. Subsequently, I was one of the principal investigators of the epidemiology of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome in Chicago. To accomplish this research investigation, we were fortunate to have been awarded a \$2.5 million grant from the National Institutes of Health.

In Lithuania, we first learned of you as an artist, and as an art historian studying the works and biography of M. K. Ciurlionis.

In 1978, the Lithuanian art magazine Literatura ir Menas (Literature and Art) published by articles about M. K. Ciurlionis's art exhibits in Paris in 1910, and in London in 1912. I started painting with oil paints during my medical school days. This artistic activity fascinated me and totally overcame my spirit. When I completed my medical internship, I dropped out of medicine entirely for three years to do my art full-time. I had many art exhibits and received very complementary art reviews. My commitment to art eventually transformed itself into a desire to blend my artistic, medical and neurobiologic research interests. Over the past ten years my art

has concentrated on artistic-metaphorical investigations of thinking and the thought process. My installation pieces about the origins of consciousness were exhibited in Chicago and in Cleveland. I have had many individual exhibits in the USA and Canada. I have also participated in many group shows "Copy-Art", "Inch-Art", "Foot-Art" and many more. While doing my residency in neurology at the Mayo Clinic, I had my electroencephalogram ("brain waves") recorded, as I was thinking artistic thoughts, and remembering the works of other artists. These conceptual electroencephalographic art works were entitled, "Thinking about Rembrandt", "Thinking about Ciurlionis", and "Thinking about Robert Morris's mirrors." The exhibit "Forms of my Life" was shown in 1995, in Vilnius, at the Contemporary Arts Center. My most recent art work deals with the emergence of thought, consciousness, philosophy and theology, from the functioning of the fine structure of central nervous system cerebral cortical neurons. I named this series of emergent thoughts and theological concepts "Neurotheology". The photographic exhibit "Foto Op '02" took place during the Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, and I was fortunate to have one of my pieces included in this show. This exhibit was part of the Winter Olympic Committee's Arts Festival.

Were you able to artistically catch the beginnings of human thought within the central nervous system?

The most difficult part of my work was trying to blend medicine and art. Initially I thought that would be impossible. After all, medicine is a very practical science, and art is purely expressive. In those three years, having withdrawn from active medical practice, I was able to find a means of blending these spheres of my interest into a cohesive whole: neurologic clinical work, the most important neurobiologic research questions, and artistic expression. As it turned out, each aspect fully reinforces and strengthens the other. I was able to accomplish this on my own, without teachers or role models.

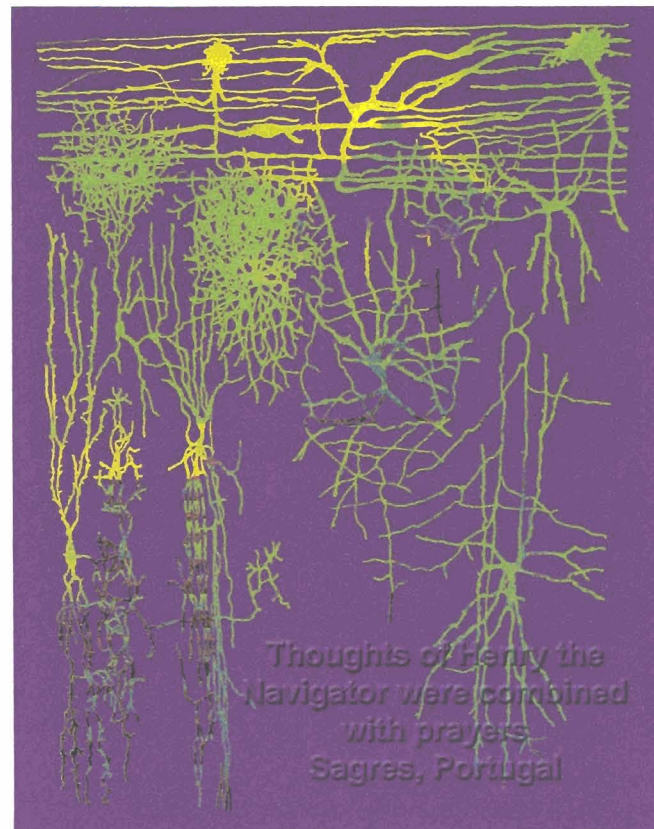
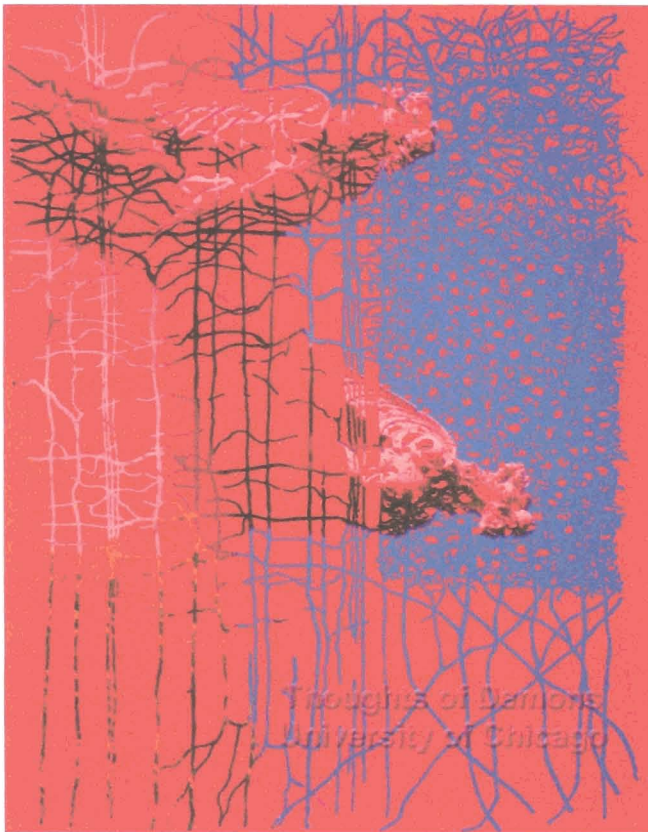
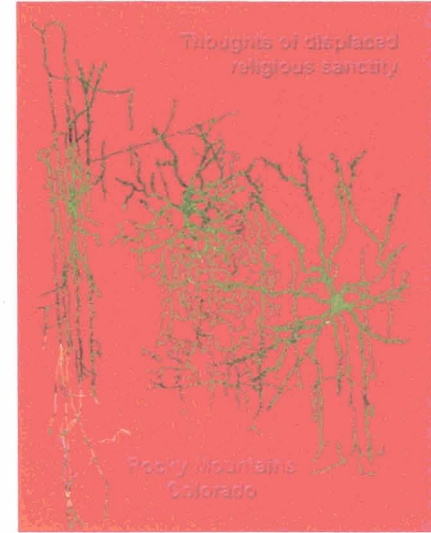
Is it correct to state that you are investigating the relationship between physical matter and thought?

The artist / photographer, Algimantas Kezys, in reviewing my artwork, wrote: "...the material world is not everything, above it floats another existence. Eventhough we approach it as if through a fog, it is nevertheless real. The neurons and neuronal networks that we see through the microscope produce a whole that is considerably more than the sum of its individual parts." Our thoughts and thought processes determine how we, as individuals, perceive and understand ourselves, and our role in society and history. Our thoughts, through symbolic representations, color our world-view. The letters of the alphabet, which we use to form words and language, just as the traces of an electroencephalogram, catch, document and transmit our ideas. The thought process is constantly ongoing—goes back and forth, between noncomparable, different and contradictory concepts. For each "pro" there is a "con", for each "con" there is a "pro". Thought pushes away, brings together, welds together, and creates new understanding and meaning. Education is a form of thought process that extensively uses repetition—like a never-ending echo (an echo which first sounds out within ourselves, and only later, beyond us), like a needle on a scratched record continuously repeating the same melody, until that melody finds itself emblazed in our memories. Reality is a reflection of our thought processes; consciousness is the road into our souls.

Next page: Several reproductions of Dr. A. V. Plioplys' art works from the exhibit "Neurotheology 2000 / 2001, from Christ to Cajal". Each piece is large format (48 inches by 60 inches), archival, acrylic digital prints on canvas.

Keletas dr. A.V.Plioplio darbų reprodukcijų iš jo autorinės parodos

"Neuroteologija 2000/100. Nuo Kristaus iki Cajalo"



Didelio formato (48x60 colių) spalvoti skaitmeniniai paveikslai ant drobės. (1 colis – 2,5 cm)