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On the Cover

What's the diagnosis? Nomal and horseshoe kidney, Anatomic Cabinet of Palazzo Poggi Museum, University of Bologna, 1742. Horseshoe kidney is a congenital nephrological disorder and the most common type of renal fusion, affecting 1/400-500 people, mainly male adults (M:F 2:1). This anatomical malformation is chiefly asymptomatic, although it is subject to a whole spectrum of clinical complications, namely hydronephrosis, infection, cancer (e.g. Wilms tumour) and renal calculi. People with this anatomical trait often conduct perfectly normal lives yet recognition of this anomaly via imaging is very important in terms of potential future renal or abdominal surgery. This historic model showing two kidneys connected at their lower poles was the first anatomic wax model by renowned artist Ercole Lelli (1702-1766), and closely followed the discovery of this pathological fusion by prosector Lorenzo Bonazzoli during a public dissection. The art and science of modeling human organs from wax was founded at the University of Bologna as the supply of human cadavers for medical education was limited, and the preservation of human specimens was problematic. A pioneer in anatomical wax modeling, Lelli produced the core of the world's first and greatest collection of anatomical waxes for medical education. Such ceroplastic models provided a valuable three-dimensional alternative to human dissection, and are an important element in the history of anatomy education. Works by Lelli and other renowned anatomic artists are on display at the University of Bologna where their artistic beauty and scientific importance can be appreciated. (Images and text provided by Dr. Francesco M. Galassi and Emeritus Prof. Alessandro Ruggeri, University of Bologna, and Prof. Kevin Petti, San Diego Miramar College. Special thanks go to Mr. Fulvio Simoni, the Palazzo Poggi Museum and the SMA - Sistema Museale d'Ateneo of the University of Bologna.)