

## The Certification Examination for Medical Illustrators

### Requirements for Part II: Portfolio Review

#### SUBMISSION DETAILS:

When you are ready to submit your portfolio **please contact** the Portfolio Chair of the Board of Certification, **Thomas Nowacki, CMI** ([tnowacki@cia.edu](mailto:tnowacki@cia.edu)) for delivery instructions.

Unless otherwise noted, you will submit your Portfolio as a single PDF file (or compressed file, see below) through DropBox link emailed to the Portfolio Chair. You may need to install the DropBox file proxy in order to include your link.

Each applicant will be assigned a number in order to maintain anonymity during the scoring process. Only the Portfolio Chair and BCMI Chair will know the applicant associated with each number.

#### Additional Submission Details:

- Be sure the email you submit your portfolio with is one that you can be reached by. (Be aware that sometimes your DropBox email isn't the one you normally use.)
- Along with your portfolio please include by email: your portfolio due date, your current contact info (mailing address and email), and your current name if it has changed since your written exam.
- Please remove any identifying signatures or marks from the portfolio and individual pieces. Corporate marks are acceptable.
- If Submitting multiple files (see below), compress all files into a single .ZIP file then email the DropBox link to the Portfolio Chair.

***Please remember your Part II submission deadline (contained in the accompanying letter), and the information about the time involved in the portfolio review process. Scoring tends to take longer if you submit in January, due to the high volume of portfolios we receive at the beginning of each year. Should one or more submissions in your CMI Portfolio receive failing scores, you will have 6 additional months from your date of notification to submit replacements. Should any of those replacements fail, you will again be given 6 months to resubmit, and so on, until all 8 Portfolio pieces earn passing scores.***

## CREATING YOUR PORTFOLIO:

**Eight (8) pieces are required**, each including a detailed narrative, citing the following:

- Technique and Content (e.g. Line/Surgical, or Color/Anatomy)  
*See required techniques and content in below section.*
- Title or subject
- Viewing audience
- Intended purpose / Narrative
- Media used (Photoshop, Illustrator, Vector, Raster, 3d models, ZBrush, Maya, etc.)
- Specific references used (Including any 3d models *not your own* used for reference.)
- *Optional:* Static image of your animation(s). (In addition to animation files.)

Compile your portfolio into a single PDF file for delivery. The narrative may be created as part of the portfolio or separately (as if in a Word .doc) but should be included as part of the portfolio PDF.

### **For Animations:**

If animation files are part of the portfolio, include them in their native format (.mp4, .mov, etc.) at the smallest possible file size without sacrificing details.

Compress the files together along with the narrative and any other illustrations for delivery as a single file via DropBox link.

Animation entries must be between 30 seconds and 3 minutes in length. It is not necessary to submit animation pieces in their full form. If possible, submit a clip that represents solid medical illustration principles as it pertains to the intended purpose.

### **Labelling:**

Relevant labels are required for all pieces. If the original piece did not include labels, provide a clearly labelled copy of the same piece.

If an orientation view would help clarify the narrative to your audience, include one as well.

### **Additional Guidelines for Portfolio Creation:**

- Nothing created for any curriculum requirements is allowed.
- You may create pieces specifically for this examination.
- All work must have been created in the last FIVE years.
- All work must be original.
- Storyboard art is not acceptable.
- All Portfolio pieces must have an audience of **high school level** or above.
- Depictions of molecules without associated story-line or relevant anatomical structures are unacceptable.

***Tip:** Illustrations must be fully explained as to purpose and content. You need to teach/convince reviewers of the image or procedure illustrated. This is even more critical for molecular illustrations. If you are presenting one panel or frame pulled from a sequence of images, it may be helpful to our understanding if you include that sequence as well as any relevant labeling. If you are submitting any full animations, interactive sequences, or 3D rendering, we need to know specifically what part of the work is yours.*

## TECHNIQUES DISPLAYED:

**Required:** You must show at least one example of each of the following using either traditional or digital technique:

- **Line:** Lines must be crisp and solid. Pencil lines are not acceptable. Limited use of flat color and tone **is acceptable** in a line piece. However, color or tone (e.g., gradients) should not be used to depict forms. Line submissions must rely **primarily on line** to depict the form.
- **Color:** Vector or Raster is accepted. Traditional techniques are acceptable, though not advised.

**Optional** (*only in addition to above*): Medical sculpture.

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## CONTENT OF PORTFOLIO:

Each of your 8 CMI Portfolio pieces needs to demonstrate skills unique to a trained medical illustrator. Therefore, infographics, journal covers and other works (of which medical illustrators are often called upon to create) which don't contain detailed anatomical or scientific imagery—which could typically be created by graphic designers—are not appropriate CMI submissions. Please evaluate your portfolio with that restriction in mind, before submitting.

**Required:** Using the above required techniques you must include at least:

- Two anatomical or cellular, non-surgical pieces, showing more than just surface anatomy.
- One surgical piece.
- At least one illustration depicting steps in a sequence, surgical or otherwise.

**All 8 submissions must be predominantly anatomical (gross or cellular) or surgical in nature, although the distribution is up to you. Therefore, if you choose to submit only 2 anatomical, non-surgical pieces, the other 6 must be surgical. Likewise, if you only want to submit one surgical piece, the other 7 must be anatomical/cellular in nature, and so forth.**

**Optional:** Other pieces may be histological, molecular, or physiological.

*Portfolios may contain or be entirely veterinary. Depictions of molecules without an associated storyline and/or relevant anatomical structures are unacceptable.*

**For Animated Submissions:** You may submit 8 animated pieces, or a combination of animated and 2-d/static illustrations. However, if you submit 8 animated works, one must be in Line (as specified above). Additionally, if your animated work includes models you did not build, please cite your sources. All animated works will be evaluated based on the same principles of which all static pieces are held, including the above requirement to be “medical, surgical or anatomical in nature.”

**Uses:** Acceptable pieces may have been created to serve the following (but not limited to) purposes:

- Patient/consumer education
- Medical legal
- Textbook
- Professional education
- Advertising
- Editorial work

## PLEASE NOTE:

*Only medical illustrations are allowed. No graphics or design work is permissible. A rendering of an isolated surgical instrument will not qualify as a medical illustration, unless the instrument is included in a larger medical/surgical piece.*

Use of purchased anatomical 3D models in your CMI Portfolio is not allowed, unless it is clearly demonstrated that the model was used in a transformative way (and explained clearly) to make a unique image, and represents only a secondary element to the main story.

Photographs and photographs manipulated in Photoshop are not appropriate portfolio pieces. Photographs may be incorporated into an illustration, but only as a secondary element.

Derivative pieces are not acceptable. Each illustration must be substantially different from the other seven. Works illustrating the same body region, procedure, pathology, process or cellular interaction are permissible.

If anatomical identification is integral to understanding, and labels are not part of the original image, please include a duplicate image that does include labels, handwritten or typed. To be clear: your labels will only be scored as a graphic element of the piece if labels are part of the original image.

Be cautious of inspiration taken from another medical illustrator's work. If the BCMI considers that a submitted work is too "heavily inspired" (borderline infringement) it will not be accepted.

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## SCORING YOUR PORTFOLIO:

Your portfolio will be evaluated and scored based on these criteria. Each illustration can earn a maximum of 100 points but must receive a minimum of 70 points to be accepted.

### Objectives:

- Are the stated objectives or ideas met? **(10 points)**
- Is it appropriate for the stated audience **(5 points)**

### Content:

- Is it medically/scientifically accurate? **(30 points)**
- Is the information clear **(10 points)**

### Technique:

- Is the medium suitable for the stated purpose? **(5 points)**
- Is the medium handled with proficiency and skill? **(15 points)**

### Drafting and Composition:

- How well are the illustrated components drawn (proportions, perspective, etc.)? **(20 points)**
- How well designed (arrangement, labels, etc.)? **(5 points)**

These instructions were last modified June 2021