

# MEDICAL PEEPSHOW

Take a trip through Cleveland's booming Health Museum. You'll learn some things about yourself you never knew before . . .

*Photographs by Joe Cavella*

by Jack Pollack

**H**ow would you like to learn how to stay healthy and live longer? People living in Cleveland can do it easily, thanks to a unique institution, a Health Museum — the first in the Western Hemisphere. The latest wrinkle in health education, it has helped Cleveland become one of America's healthiest communities. Besides thousands of local people, the museum attracts enthusiastic visitors from all over the globe — including busy government health officials.

Unlike most museums — which usually resemble mausoleums — this lively 39-room former mansion has no hawk-eyed guards, roped-off exhibits or "Hands Off" signs. Instead, you are invited to push buttons, pull levers, twirl knobs and turn cranks of some 4,000 mechanical and electrical exhibits, designed to show you how you tick, from birth through old age.

These tricky but instructive models make you stop, look, listen and remember. Aware that the average American knows more about his automobile than his body, and that countless deaths and diseases stem solely from ignorance, the museum uses dramatic devices, advertising techniques and even gimmicks to get across its health message.

## **Lowdown on Baby's Teeth**

You are urged to test your eyes, lungs, heart, head, hands and — thanks to a mailman's recommendation — your feet. You press a foot treadle to straighten the slumping Posture Lady. You turn a crank and discover in what order baby's teeth usually come. To save your own remaining molars and bicuspids, a mechanical apparatus shows you how to brush them correctly.

To judge who has tuberculosis, you look at photographs — and learn that only X-rays can really tell. Another peepshow previews your possible 4B future: **Bulges, Bifocals, Bridges and Baldness.**

One man, while waiting for his wife, amused himself with an eye-testing machine. To his surprise, he found he could see only faintly out of his left eye. He visited a specialist the following day who scolded him: "You've been almost blind in one eye and didn't even know it!"

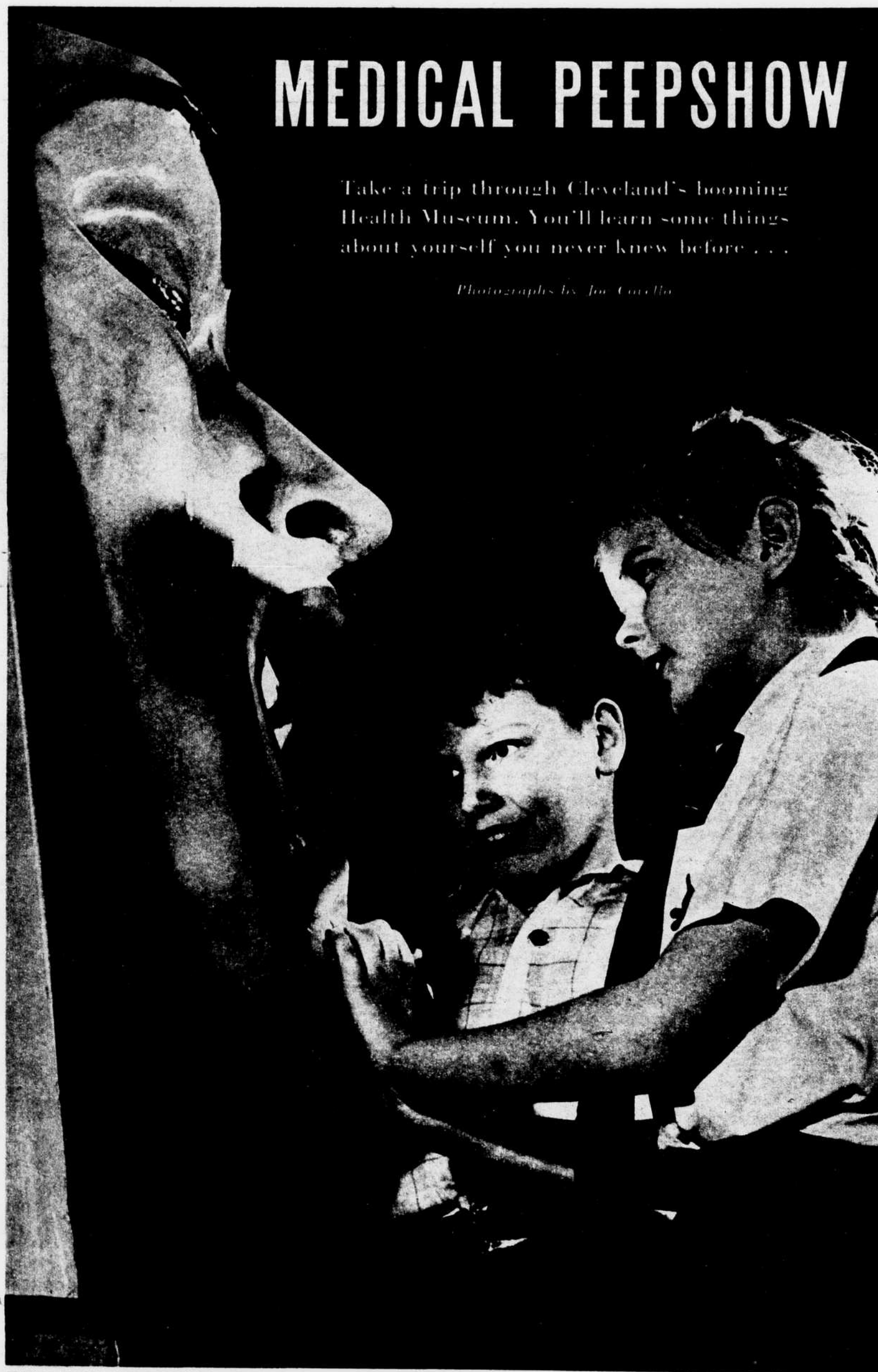
Several Metropolitan stars recently spent a noisy afternoon playing the museum's voice organ, discovering exactly how high — if not how well — they could sing. When I took a deep breath to test my own lung capacity and "blowing power" on the Vitalometer, I made a belated New Year's resolution to smoke less, sleep and exercise more.

## **70 Ticks to the Minute**

You can even dial your life expectancy based on insurance company tables — as a spry 92-year-old woman recently did. Afterward she grumbled, "Young man, according to your machine I should be dead by now."

But the museum wants you to "live long and like it." Its huge foyer clock — aided by a hidden metronome — ticks 70 heartbeats instead of 60 seconds per minute. Your own delicate ticker, you are told, beats 100,000 times a day.

To see how your blood circulates, you flick a switch and watch a moving red light make a complete circuit through the human body. Observing how his 31 trillion blood cells, spread in a single layer, could cover a square city block, a college student confessed,



**"BAY AN":** Two youthful dental experts examine bicuspids in the mouth-and-throat exhibit, see why teeth need brushing