

ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

How Pan's Rejection Led to the Syringe's Injection



As she fled the amorous satyr Pan, a chaste wood nymph named Syrinx rushed up to the River Ladon's edge (*left*) and prayed for rescue. Her "watery sisters," the river nymphs, transformed her into river reeds (*syringes*, in Greek), which piped out plaintive, hollow tunes with each of Pan's lecherous sighs. Clutching the reeds, Pan wove them into the raft-like Pan's pipe (*high right*), a musical instrument also known as the syrinx. So reeds (of different length) in parallel formed this musical syrinx; reeds (of different diameters) in series formed the aspirating syringe (*low right*), which needed only the hollow needle's invention for use as an injector. And that is how Pan's rejection led to the syringe's invention ... and injection. (The image on the left is adapted from the author's print of Michel Dorigny's *Pan et Syrinx*.) (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists, Inc.)

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