Adriaan van den Spiegel was born to a medical family in the Low Countries and studied medicine at the Universities of Louvain, Leiden, and Padua. He, like William Harvey, studied under the successor of Vesalius, Hieronymus Fabricius, and the renowned anatomist Guilio Casseri. Following an itinerant period for his medical practice, Spiegel returned to Padua and assumed the professorship in anatomy and surgery in 1616, holding that position until his death.

*De Formato Foetu* was published posthumously with the help of his physician son-in-law, Liberale Crema. Crema obtained nine copperplate engravings that had been commissioned by Casseri for another publication and he incorporated them into *De Formato Foetu*.

In Plate “IIII” from *De Formato Foetu*, a life-like female figure is posed before a background that resembles the illustrations of Vesalius in *De Humani Corporis Fabrica*, published over eighty years earlier. The dissection of the woman’s abdomen depicts the incisions as a flower with the fetus as the stigma or flower center.