

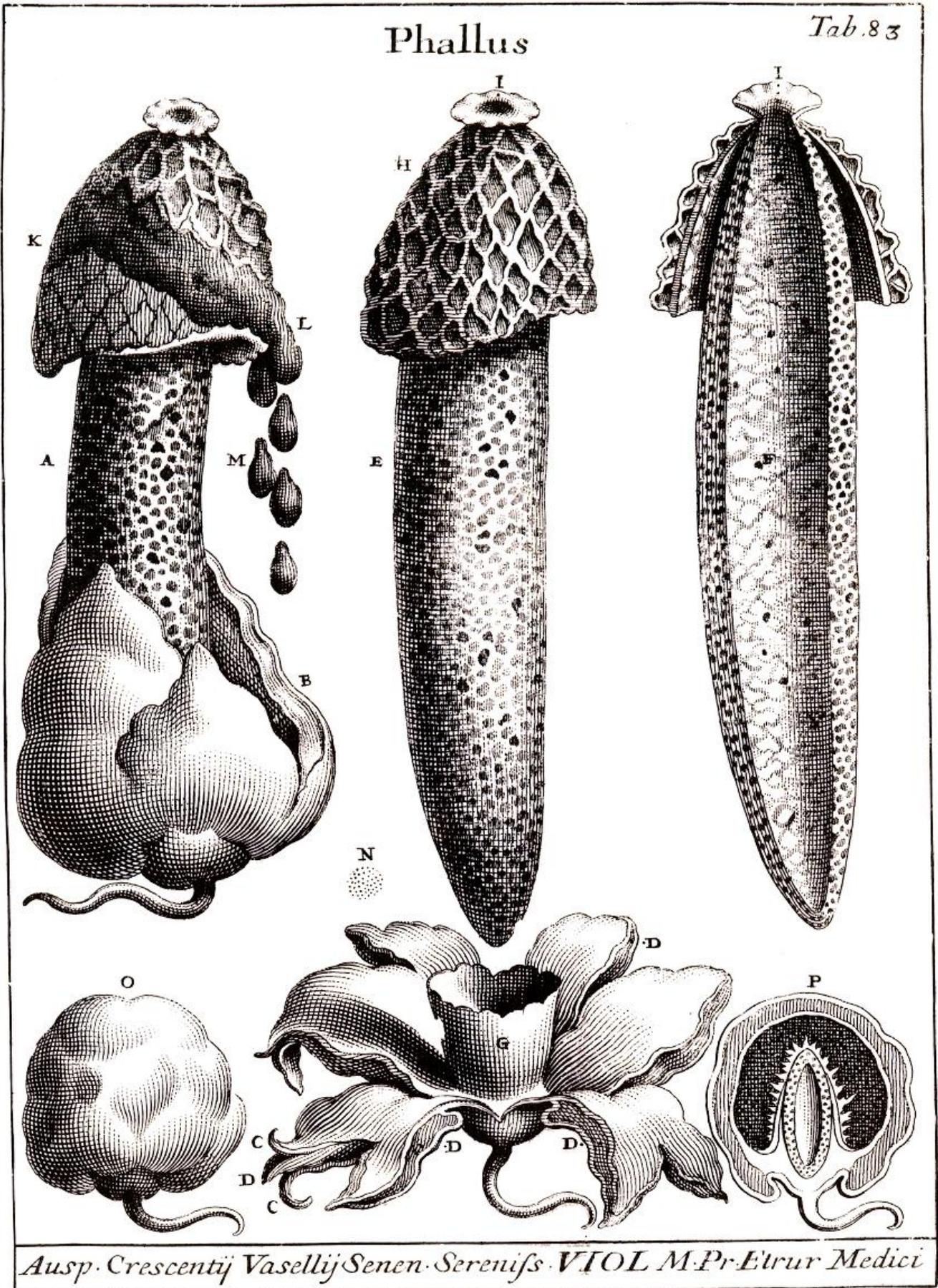
# Phallus, a Stinkhorn

from

Pier Antonio Micheli's *Nova plantarum genera*

published in 1729

There is an explanation after the plate



*Ausp. Crescentij Vasellij Senen. Serenijs. VIOL M-Pr-Etrur Medici*

Pier Antonio Micheli (1679-1737) put much intelligent effort into the study of fungi. He observed them carefully and illustrated many species in great detail. The above plate is a good example of the visual record to be found in *Nova plantarum genera*.

Below is Micheli's text about the genus *Phallus*, followed by an explanation in English, which aims to make Micheli's thoughts clear rather than to follow the Latin literally. Square brackets enclose some explanatory comments of my own.

## P H A L L U S .

**P**HALLUS est plantæ genus capitatum A, emergens e volva crassissima B, ex duabus membranis constructa CC, inter quas humor gelatinosus concluditur D, cujus pediculus spongiosus est E, ac fistulosus F, & tubulo cuidam membranaceo G, volvæ centro adnexo velut artificiose arte inseritur, sustinet verò pileolum galericulatum, ac undique instar favi, aut interioris bovilli ventris partis cellulosum H, in nonnullis autem speciebus umbilico pervio I donatum; in omnibus vero crassa callosa obductum K, quæ per maturitatem in fœtidissimum liquorem paulatim colliquescit L, & guttatim fluit M, in quo semina minutissima continentur N. Liquor prædictus in aquam demersus cum ipsa commiscetur, & semina in vasis fundo deponit. Corpus rotundum, quod ad dexteram imæ partis Tabulæ sub litera O reperitur, est volva, antequam inde Phallus erumpat, alterum vero, quod ad sinistram exhibetur P, est idem corpus, per verticem sectum, & Phallum in sinu suo latentem demonstrat. Tab. 83.

*Phallus*, A, emerges from a very thick integument, B, that is composed of two membranes, C, that have a gelatinous layer, D, in between. The spongy stem, E, is hollow. [There's an F in the central hollow of the rightmost stem, sectioned and showing an internal view.] The stem is carefully inserted into a tubular membrane G, that is attached centrally to the integument. At the top there is a skull-cap, H, and this resembles honeycomb or tripe [the Latin text refers to the inside of a cow's stomach] and sometimes has a 'navel', I. There is a thick skin, K, which dissolves bit by bit yielding the most foul-smelling liquid at maturity, L (also the falling droplets, M) which holds the tiniest of seeds, N.

When this liquid is stirred in water the seeds drop to the bottom of the container. The figure labelled O shows the integument before the *Phallus* bursts out and P shows a vertical cross-section, the *Phallus* still concealed.