



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

[Frontispiece to Mercurii Philosphi Firmamentum Firmianum]

Stock#: 79468
Map Maker: Fleischmann
Date: 1730
Place: Augsburg
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 6.4 x 5.7 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Eye-catching Eighteenth-Century Celestial Atlas Frontispiece

Striking allegorical image, which was the frontispiece to *Mercurii Philosphi Firmamentum Firmianum*, a celestial atlas by Corbinianus Thomas.

The atlas, first published in 1730, was dedicated to Leopold Anton von Firmian, whose portrait is held up in the image by Fame. Von Firmian was the Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg. The portrait radiates light onto a magnificent standing celestial globe below. Strewn at the foot of the globe are the instruments of mapmaking, including dividers, compass, and back-staff.

An adoring female figure, Urania, the muse of astronomy, is adorned in a star-strewn shroud. She exclaims, "Apollo will be great to me." Looking on is Mercury, the messenger, who is whispering to Jupiter, who strokes an imperial eagle.

The scene was drawn by August Christian Fleischmann, a German engraver who flourished from 1694 to 1732.

Thomas was a Benedictine monk about whom little is known. His *Firmamentum* includes 54 small etchings of constellations. Thomas is best known for his unusual nomenclature system that combined a Bayer Greek letter, a Roman numeral for magnitude, and an Arabic numeral for reference to a star catalog. He also



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named a constellation, Corona Firmiana, after his patron, but the name was not taken up more broadly.

Detailed Condition: