

# Nicolaus Copernicus portrait at the Astronomical Observatory of Padua

*Thursday, 28 September 2023 16:50 (30 minutes)*

The Astronomical Observatory of Padua is the only one in the world to present a pictorial cycle telling the progress of astronomical knowledge from antiquity to the 18th century. It was designed by the first director, Giuseppe Toaldo (1719-1797), to make the observatory a beautiful place for study and research and to transmit educational and historical-scientific notions to a broad public. The pictures were carried out by the Vicenza painter Giacomo Ciesa (1733-1822) between 1767 and 1777, and include a full-length, life-size portrait of Nicolaus Copernicus. This portrait refers to the chalcography by Gerard Hoet (1648-1733) and Joseph Mulder (1658-1742) inserted before the frontispiece of the “Astronomica Institutio” by the Dutchman Joannis Luyts (1655-1721), published in 1692. In this communication, we illustrate the portrait and the monochrome mythological scene above it and provide an attempt to decode some of their iconographic details.

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