

Science provides an understanding of a universal experience. Arts provide a universal understanding of a personal experience.

-Mae Carol Jemison, NASA Astronaut

Russell Gordon

Artists throughout history have drawn inspiration from the captivating beauty and complexity of the solar system, often integrating celestial motifs, planetary symbols, and cosmic themes into their works. Intricate models of the solar system, such as orreries and planetariums, have not only fascinated artists with their mechanical ingenuity but also served as muse, influencing artistic expressions that reflect humanity's connection to the cosmos.



The Orrery
28x36 (34x42 framed)
oil on linen

or·rer·y

noun

noun: orrery; plural noun: orreries

a mechanical model of the solar system, or of just the sun, earth, and moon, used to represent their relative positions and motions.



detail of
The Orrery by
Russell Gordon

Orreries have been used since ancient times to help people understand and predict astronomical phenomena, aiding in the study of planetary motion and the delicate dance of celestial bodies.



detail

These intricate devices often feature gears, rotating arms, and precise calibration to accurately depict the complex motions of the planets as they revolve around the Sun.

detail

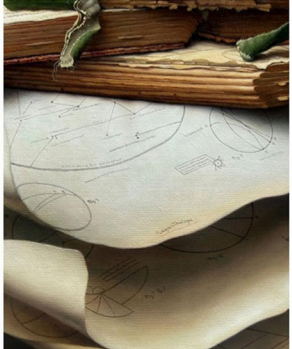


detail

Orreries come in various sizes and designs, from handheld models to large, intricate sculptures, showcasing the beauty and wonder of the cosmos in a tangible and artistic form.

While modern technology and digital simulations have taken over many astronomical tasks, orreries remain cherished artifacts, reminding us of humanity's fascination with the cosmos and our relentless pursuit of knowledge about the universe.

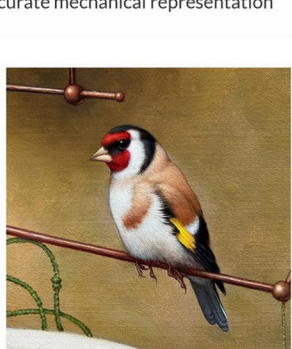
detail



detail

The first known orrery is attributed to the ancient Greek philosopher and mathematician, Archimedes, who created a rudimentary model to demonstrate the motion of the Moon around the Earth. However, it was the elaborate orrery built by the English clockmaker George Graham and his associate Thomas Tompion in the early 18th century that is often considered the first fully functional and accurate mechanical representation of the solar system.

Russell's use of lighting and the engagement of the items in the composition highlight the awe and wonder inspired by the the solar system's mechanics. His inclusion of the goldfinch represents the natural world meeting the celestial world.



detail

This artwork beautifully captures the intersection of science, philosophy, and art.