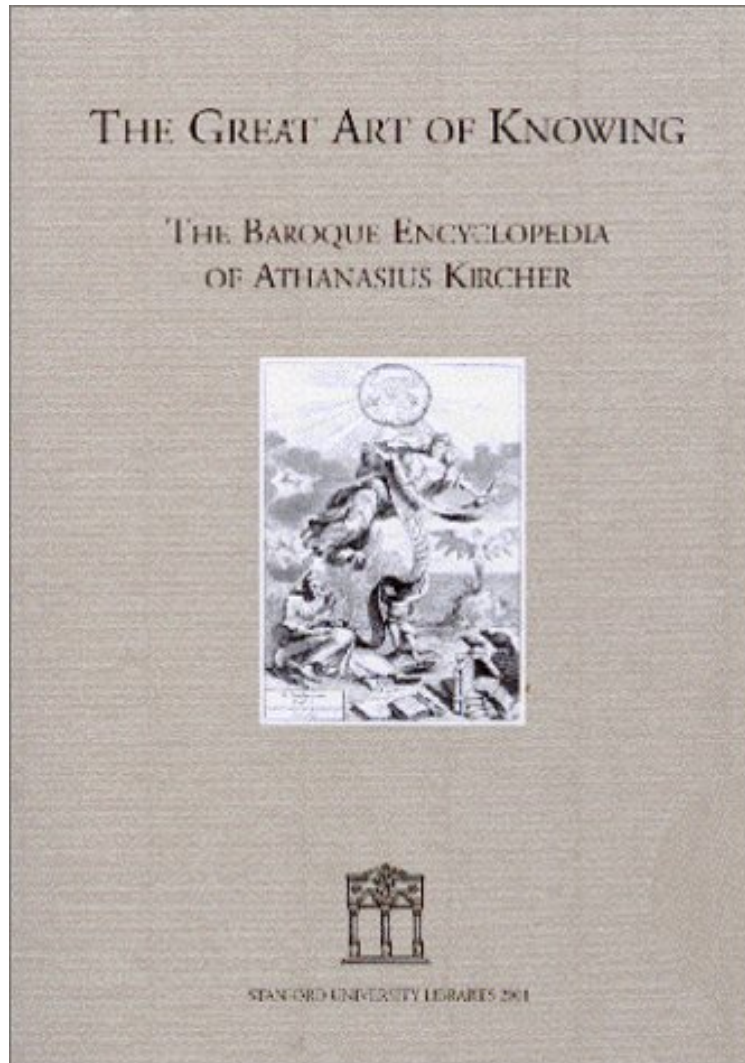


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The Great Art of Knowing: The Baroque Encyclopedia of Athanasius Kircher

Daniel Stolzenberg

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Daniel Stolzenberg : The Great Art of Knowing: The Baroque Encyclopedia of Athanasius Kircher before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Great Art of Knowing: The Baroque Encyclopedia of Athanasius Kircher:

11 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Athanasius Kircher - Baroque polymath By Liam Devlin Not so much a book as a collection of essays of first-rate quality about the 17th century Jesuit polymath Athanasius Kircher. The range of academic disciplines of the contributors is a testimony to the egregious intellect of Kircher - music,

Egyptology, code-writing, Astronomy, acoustics, the kabbala and hermetic knowledge, medicine - the range is astonishing. It was the synthesis of all these disciplines made possible in a colossal intellect inspired by the Jesuit doctrine that God can be found in all things which made Kircher so unique in his time and in these times of excessive specialisation so unlikely to be found again. The book is highly recommended.

In conjunction with a groundbreaking exhibit and international conference, the Stanford University Libraries are proud to announce the publication of *The Great Art of Knowing: The Baroque Encyclopedia of Athanasius Kircher*. Regarded by many as one of Europe's most inventive and versatile scholars of the Baroque era, Athanasius Kircher (1602-1680) published more than thirty works on such topics as astronomy, magnetism, cryptology, numerology, Egyptology, geology, and music. A contemporary of Newton and Descartes, Kircher was also the creator of one of Europe's earliest and most famous museums at the Collegio Romano in Rome. As a tribute to Kircher, his museum was recently reconstructed in the Museum of Jurassic Technology in Los Angeles, and also in an exhibit that opened this winter at the Palazzo Venezia in Rome. Commemorating the 400th anniversary of the renowned Jesuit's birth, this volume features eleven original, captivating and highly readable essays by Kircher scholars at Stanford, Stonehill College, and the University of Manchester, England. This special 160-page volume, edited by Daniel Stolzenberg, features over 120 elaborate illustrations photographed directly from Stanford's 17th and 18th century Kircher holdings. The book is a metaphorical "guided tour" of Kircher's encyclopedia, touching on many aspects of intellectual, scientific, cultural, religious, and artistic life in the Baroque era. The essays are supplemented by two appendices; the first focuses on a project to place Kircher's correspondence on the World Wide Web, and the second is a bibliography of the Stanford University Libraries' holdings of books by and related to Kircher. A must buy for Kircher enthusiasts, those interested in the history of science and the culture of the Baroque, polymaths, general readers, and more!

About the Author Daniel Stolzenberg, editor, is a doctoral candidate in the History Department at Stanford University. His research focuses on the history of occult sciences in early modern Europe. Contributing author Paula Findlen is Professor of History and Director of the Science, Technology and Society Program at Stanford University. She is the author of *Possessing Nature: Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy* (Berkeley, 1994), which was awarded the 1995 Marraro Prize in Italian History and 1996 Pfizer Prize in History of Science, and many other publications on science and culture in early modern Italy. Her most recent books include *Merchants and Marvels: Commerce, Science, and Art in Early Modern Europe* (New York, 2001), co-edited with Pamela H. Smith, and *A Fragmentary Past: The Making of Museums in Renaissance Italy* (forthcoming).