



Engraved broadside, three dimensional flap illustrating the perihelion, complete comet cut-outs, text on either sides.

THE TRANSIT OF HALLEY'S COMET IN 1758

A View of the Solar System and Orbit of the Comet, (with its proper Elevation,) which will next return; truly representing all its Appearances for any Part of the Year.

Author

MARTIN, Benjamin

Publication date

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Publisher

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Publication place

London,

Physical description

Engraved broadside, three dimensional flap illustrating the perihelion, complete comet cut-outs, text on either sides.

Dimensions

255 by 372mm. (10 by 14.75 inches).

Notes

The instrument shows the probable transit of Halley's comet in 1758.

The plane of the comet, with the various comet tails, can be tilted at an angle above the ecliptic

plane in order to simulate the inclination of the cometary orbit. At the end of the accompanying text, Martin warns: "At its descending Node, it will be very near the Earths Orbit; and should that happen the 12th of May we should be in a dangerous Situation, as the denser Part of its blazing Tail would then envelope the Earth, which God forbid."

Edmond Halley, in his 1705 'Synopsis of the Astronomy of Comets', used Newton's Laws to calculate the effects of the gravitational pull of Jupiter and Saturn on cometary bodies. He calculated that the comet of 1682 was the same as those observed by Petrus Apianus in 1531 and Johannes Kepler in 1607, returning every 76 years. Halley correctly predicted its return for 1758, although it was not spotted until 25 December 1758, and did not pass through its perihelion until 13 March 1759 on account of the aforementioned gravitational pull.

Bibliography

Waff, Comet Halley's First Expected Return, p.12

Provenance

Price: £12000

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