

# Notes from the John Martin Rare Book Room July, 2011

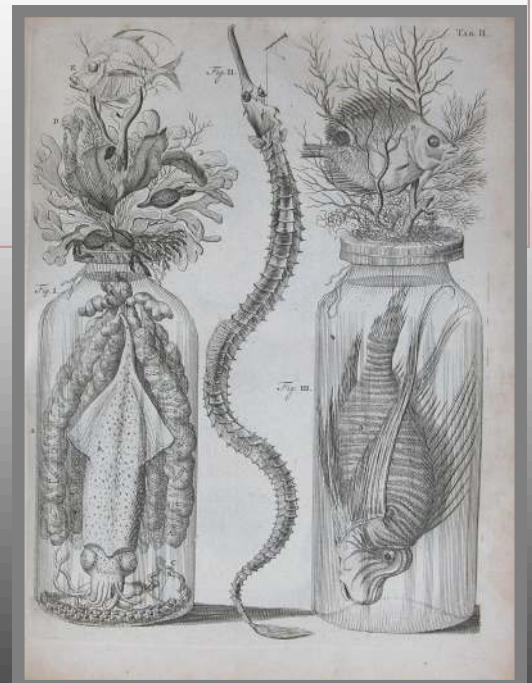
## Frederik Ruysch (1638-1731)

FREDERIK RUYSCHE (1638-1731). Thesaurus anatomicus. 10 pts. Amsterdam: Apud Janssonio-Waesbergios, 1726-1744. Plates (part fold.). 24.1 cm. diam: Apud Janssonio-Waesbergios, 1729-1737.

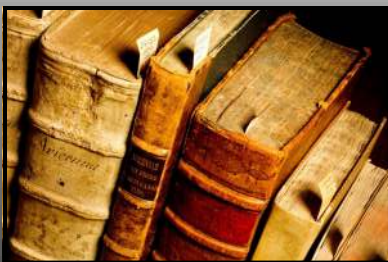


Ruysch, a Dutch surgeon, anatomist and professor of anatomy at Leiden and Amsterdam, mastered (and probably invented) a method of minute injection of anatomical structures allowing detailed studies. The recipe for the injected substance has been lost, however. He made many anatomical investigations, including those of the valves in the lymphatics, the bronchial arteries, and the vascular plexuses of the heart, and was the first to point out the nourishment of the fetus through the umbilical cord. Hardin Library owns eight publications by Frederick Ruysch. This work by and about Ruysch was apparently bound together by a contemporary. While they do not constitute his complete works, the ten parts of his Thesaurus anatomicus are especially noteworthy, and the engraved illustrations which accompany them deserve special mention for their whimsical, almost surrealistic, quality: quaintly posed skeletons

surrounded by stuffed monsters, strange reptiles, dried plants, and sea creatures. Three supplementary parts and two indices to the Thesaurus, and several shorter papers involving controversies in which Ruysch was involved, complete the collection.



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