

François Rigaud, *Portrait of Dr. Johann Reinhold and his son Georg Forster* (c. 1780)

Abstract

This double portrait by François Rigaud shows the German travelers Johann Reinhold Forster (1729-98) and his son Georg Forster (1754-94). The two had participated in James Cook's second expedition (1772-75) as official naturalists, and the portrait shows them going about their daily work during the voyage. Johann is shown holding a bird, while Georg seems to be preparing to sketch it. The two are outdoors, in an idyllic Tahitian landscape. It is important to note, however, that in most cases the Forsters identified, described, and sketched the specimens they had shot, caught, or collected during their excursions on board the ship, where they had access to necessary instruments, materials, and books. It appears that Rigaud's portrait aimed to highlight the empirical nature of the naturalists' fieldwork.

Source



Source: François Rigaud, *Portrait of Dr. Johann Reinhold Forster and his son George Forster*, c. 1780. National Portrait Gallery Canberra. Available online at:

<https://www.portrait.gov.au/portraits/2009.55/portrait-of-dr-johann-reinhold-forster-and-his-son-george-forster/>

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