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From Chloroform to Urania, Liebig's Muse of Astronomy



In Greek mythology, Zeus bedded the Titaness of Memory (Mnemosyne), and she conceived nine daughters, the Muses. Each Muse advanced her respective art by (1) prompting humans' memorization of her art and (2) inspiring memorable, original art for future generations. Memory, the daughter of Sky (Ouranos or Uranus), gave birth to Urania, the Muse of Astronomy (*above*), who graces this Italian card advertising a company cofounded by chloroform pioneer Justus von Liebig (1803 to 1873). Astronomy ("star arranging") for many ancients reflected or foretold efforts by divinities. For example, Homer's account of Odysseus' rescue from Calypso's island by Hermes, the speediest god, might have been reflected in the *Odyssey* by the astronomical path of Mercury, the speediest planet. (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists' Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology.)

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