

Globe, 12 hand-coloured engraved gores, over a papier mâché and plaster sphere, with metal pins, supported by a wooden structure of four arms with a circular band with partially applied graduated paper, set into a modern wooden base.

THE SKY ACCORDING TO PLANCIUS

In hac coelestis Sphaera stelle Affixae majore. De integro addidi: quae omnia secundum Astronomorum Principis Thyconis Brahe... observationem verae suae Longitudini, ac Latitudin.

Author
PLANCIUS, Petrus

Publication date
1625.

Publisher
Petrus Plancius,

Publication place

Physical description
Globe, 12 hand-coloured engraved gores, over a papier mâché and plaster sphere, with metal pins, supported by a wooden structure of four arms with a circular band with partially applied graduated paper, set into a modern wooden base.

Dimensions
Diameter: 245mm (9.75 inches).

Notes

Biography

Petrus Plancius (1552-1662), a theologian and geographer, was one of the most influential cartographers of his day. He was forced to flee to Amsterdam in 1585, for fear of persecution as a Protestant minister. There he began his cartographical career, studying Portuguese charts and becoming friends with the explorer Henry Hudson. He issued his impressive world map in two hemispheres entitled 'Nova et exacta terrarum orbis tabula geographica ac hydrographica' in 1592, which likely influenced both Blaeu and Hondius in the preparation of their masterpieces published in 1605 and 1611, respectively.

In addition to his world map, Plancius turned his eyes to the skies. In 1589, he collaborated with the Amsterdam cartographer Jacob Floris van Langren on a 325mm (12.75 inches) celestial globe incorporating the limited information available about southern celestial features, which included Crux (the southern cross), Triangulum Australe (the southern triangle) and the Magellanic Clouds (Nubecula Major and Minor).

On a quest to expand knowledge of the southern hemisphere, Plancius commissioned Pieter Keyser, to record as many southern stars as possible on his voyage of the Indies in 1595. Although Keyser died at sea in 1596 before his return, he was able to record about 130 stars alongside his colleague Frederick de Houtman, and the records reached Plancius when the surviving voyagers returned. Plancius took these new discoveries and divided the stars into 12 new southern constellations, which mostly referred to animals and subjects described in natural history books and travellers' journals of his day. The constellations are: Apis the Bee (later changed to Musca by Lacaille), Apus the Bird of Paradise, Chamaeleon, Dorado the Goldfish (or Swordfish), Grus the Crane, Hydrus the Small Water Snake, Indus the Indian, Pavo the Peacock, Phoenix, Triangulum Australe the Southern Triangle, Tucana the Toucan and Volans the Flying Fish.

Plancius plotted these southern constellations on a 350mm celestial globe in late 1597 (or early 1598) in collaboration with the Amsterdam cartographer Jodocus Hondius the Elder. No copies of this globe survive, but in 1602 Blaeu produced a copy of the globe, now in the Maritime Museum. These constellations, together with the constellation Columba that Plancius included on his 1592 map of the world, were then incorporated by Johann Bayer in his sky atlas of 1603, the 'Uranometria'.

Plancius created another globe in 1612-1614, published in co-operation of Pieter van den Keere with updated celestial cartography. The celestial globe is inscribed with the following: "In hac coelesti sphaera stellae affixae majore quam hactenus numero ac accuratiore industria delineantur. Novos Asterismos in philomathēom gratiam de integro addidi: quae omnia secundum Astronomorum Principis Tychonis Brahe, ac meam observationem verae suae Longitudinis ac Latitudinis ad annum Christi 1615 restitui. Petrus Plancius" (translation: "In this celestial sphere the fixed stars to a greater number than previously and with more exactness are depicted. I have added for the use of the student some entirely new star readings according to the prince of astronomers Tycho Brahe, and also my own observations of their true latitude and longitude adapting these to the year of Christ 1615. Peter Plancius"). Plancius includes a portrait of Tycho Brahe in the southern hemisphere. On this updated globe, Plancius introduced the following eight constellations: Apis the Bee, Camelopardalis the Giraffe (often interpreted as a Camel), Cancer Minor the Small Crab, Euphrates Fluvius et Tigris Fluvius the Rivers Euphrates and Tigris, Gallus the Cock, Jordanis Fluvius the River Jordan, Monoceros the Unicorn and Sagitta Australis the Southern Arrow. Of the latter constellations, only Camelopardalis and Monoceros are still found on modern star charts, and recognized by the International Astroninomial Union (IAU).

Astronomy

The names of the constellations are given in Latin along with alternative names, some in Greek. The 48 Ptolemaic constellations appear along with Antonious, Coma Berenices, Cruz ("Cruzero Hispanis, at Ptolomeo Pedes Centauri"), and Columba ("Hemame. Columba Noachi"). The 12 constellations of Plancius appear as well as a number of contellations that appear on the globe for the first time: "Apes", "Gyraffa Ca-melopardalis", "Monoceros, Callus", "Cancer minor", "Jordanis fluv:", "Sagitta

Aust:" and "Euphrates fluv en Tigris flu". The magnitude chart is drawn and labelled "Magnitudo Stellarum". One nova is shown and is labelled with the following notation: "Stella mirabilis quae insolito prae alijs fulgore a[nn]o 1571 per an[num] et tri-entem appa-ruit" (translation: The wondrous star, which shone with an uncommon shine compared to the others in the year 1571 for one and one-third years".
A portrait of Tycho Brahe appears below the figure of Cetus.

Bibliography
van der Krogt KEE I; Science Museum Group 1986-427; for reference see Stevenson vol. II, pp.46-50.

Provenance

Price:

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