

Geared tellurian with globe, 12 engraved paper gores over wooden sphere, mounted on wooden orrery, painted and gilded, with brass gears and bone decoration.

THE REASONS FOR NIGHT AND DAY

[Geared tellurian].

Author
[FORTIN, Jean].

Publication date
1773.

Publisher
J. Fortin at the Rue de la Harpe],

Publication place
[Paris,

Physical description
Geared tellurian with globe, 12 engraved paper gores over wooden sphere, mounted on wooden orrery, painted and gilded, with brass gears and bone decoration.

Dimensions
Diameter: 55mm (2.25 inches).

Notes
Biography
Jean Fortin (1750-1831) was a scientific instrument-maker born in Picardy, France. Chiefly remembered for designing a barometer that ensured more accurate readings, he also produced

celestial atlases, scales and was commissioned by the French royal family to make globes. He made terrestrial and celestial globes of 32 and 22cm diameter, as well as a terrestrial globe of 5.5cm to go into his armillary spheres.

Fortin operated in Paris, with a shop in the Rue de la Harpe, where referred to himself as “Ingenieur-Mechanicien pour les Globes et Spheres”. He is also known for publishing the new celestial atlas of John Flamsteed (1646-1719) in 1762, which was highly influential as a source for celestial cartography throughout the rest of the century. His business was continued by his son Augustin, grandson Michel and great-grandson Augustin.

Geography
This tellurian is designed to demonstrate astronomical phenomena related to the diurnal rotation of the earth, the annual revolution of the earth around the sun, and the monthly revolution of the moon around the earth, namely the reasons for day and night, seasons and eclipses.
The globe is typical of early seventeenth century cartography, but very simplified. Australia and New Zealand are missing and there is a hypothetical southern continent with “Nouvelle Guinea” connected to it.

Bibliography
Dekker ZAA0589; Stevenson fig.129.

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 15690

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