



THE Renaissance



MUSEUM of the
HISTORY of
SCIENCE

Globe Project

Globes in the Collection

Celestial Globe, by W. J. Blaeu, Netherlands, 1603 Inventory No. 23709

By the early 17th-century, the Netherlands had become a significant centre of scientific instrument making which went hand in hand with Dutch trading ambitions and seafaring adventurism.

Willem Janszoon Blaeu was the son of a wealthy salesman in the herring industry, but his interests lay more in Mathematics and Astronomy. He qualified as an instrument and globe maker and after a period working with the astronomer Tycho Brahe, he returned to the Netherlands to make country maps and world globes using his own printing works. In 1633 he was appointed map-maker of the Dutch East India Company.

[ref: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Willem_Blaeu]



Globes were often made in pairs in the Early Modern period, celestial and terrestrial, and this is the celestial globe of a pair of globes made by Wilhelm Janszoon Blaeu (1571-1638), a celebrated Dutch cartographer and instrument-maker. The terrestrial globe is also on display at the museum alongside this one. A celestial globe shows the constellations, the ecliptic and other features of the celestial sphere. Blaeu was a pupil of the Danish astronomer, Tycho Brahe, with whom he worked for a time at his observatory at Uraniborg, and this globe incorporates Tycho Brahe's discoveries to which have been added those of Frederick Houtmann. The globe is dated 1603 and is dedicated to the Prince of Orange.