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[Orion]

Stock#: 27222
Map Maker: Bayer
Date: 1603
Place: Augsburg
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 15 x 11 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Fine example of the map of the Constellation Orion, from Bayer's *Uranometria*.

Perhaps the most illustrious of all celestial atlases is Bayer's *Uranometria*, the forerunner of all star atlases which contained 51 star charts, of which 48 were Ptolomeic constellations. Each plate has a carefully engraved grid, so that star positions can be read off to fractions of a degree. These positions were taken from the catalog of Tycho Brahe, which had circulated in manuscript in the 1590s, but which was only printed in 1602.

Another important feature of the atlas was the introduction of a new system of stellar nomenclature. Bayer assigned Greek letters to the brighter stars, generally in the order of magnitude, so that the bright star in the Bull's eye became alpha Tauri (and the brightest star in the Centaur became our familiar alpha Centauri.) These letters were placed on the charts themselves, and also in a table that accompanied each chart.

Orion, often referred to as "The Hunter," is a prominent constellation located on the celestial equator and visible throughout the world. It is one of the largest, most conspicuous, and most recognizable in the night sky. Its name refers to Orion, a hunter in Greek mythology. Orion's name derives from Greek mythology, in which Orion was a gigantic hunter of primordial times. Some of these myths relate to the constellation; one story tells that Orion was killed by a giant scorpion; the gods raised him and the Scorpion to the skies, as Scorpio/Scorpius. Other stories say Orion was chasing the Pleiades.

Detailed Condition: