



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

[Lepus]

Stock#: 83169
Map Maker: Bayer
Date: 1624 circa
Place: Augsburg
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 15 x 11 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Fine example of Johann Bayer's map of the constellation Lepus.

Lepus is most often represented as a rabbit being hunted by Orion, whose hunting dogs (Canis Major and Canis Minor) pursue it. The constellation is also associated with some lunar mythology, including the Moon rabbit.

Perhaps the most important of all celestial atlases is Bayer's *Uranometria*, the forerunner of all star atlases which contained 51 star charts, of which 48 were Ptolemaic 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. Bayer's charts are rarely offered separately on the market.

Detailed Condition: