



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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(Southern & Northern Skies) Zuidlyk Halvront | Noordlyk Halvront

Stock#: 95854
Map Maker: Van Keulen / Nieuwland
Date: 1798
Place: Amsterdam
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 26 x 25 inches (each)
Price: \$ 9,500.00



Description:

A Pair of Celestial Rarities By The Dutch Isaac Newton

Extremely rare and unusually large pair of celestial hemispheres, which were the work of a collaboration of notable Dutch astronomers and the Van Keulen publishing house, and most notably, the Dutch prodigy Pieter Nieuwland.

In the rich tapestry of cartographic history, some maps are not just notable for their geographical detail but also for their artistic and scientific significance. Among these, the extremely rare pair of separately issued maps of the Northern Sky and Southern Sky, published by originally conceived by Pieter Nieuwland and ultimately published by Gerard Hulst Van Keulen in Amsterdam, are masterpieces that capture the vastness of the cosmos from an 18th-century perspective.

Illustrating the modern constellations of both hemispheres, these maps are a confluence of careful observation, precise calculation, and elegant artistry. They serve not only as astronomical tools but also as chronicles of the time's understanding of the heavens.

The genius behind the original designs of these celestial maps was Pieter Nieuwland (1764-1794). Nieuwland, often referred to as the "Dutch Isaac Newton", was a polymath excelling in various fields from nautical science to poetry. Recognized as a child prodigy, his insights and talents in chemistry, mathematics, and especially astronomy were unparalleled during his time.

However, these maps' existence is tinged with a touch of tragedy and the perseverance of those who followed in Nieuwland's footsteps. While he conceptualized the design, Nieuwland's untimely death at the age of 30 meant the maps were ultimately completed by Dutch mathematician and astronomer Jan Frederik Van Beeck Calkoen. His interactions included eminent personalities like Bernhard von Lindenau,



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the astronomer Johann Elert Bode, and numerous other leading scholars of the era, including Franz Xaver von Zach (see below).

The observations that form the basis of these celestial illustrations are a testament to the collaborative spirit of the scientific community of the era. Data was gathered from multiple renowned observatories. Notably, the Felix Meritis Observatory in Amsterdam, which had only recently been completed, played a pivotal role. Additionally, observations from the Leiden Observatory and the observatory of Count Franz Xavier von Zach in Gotha, to which Nieuwland traveled in the summer of 1792, contributed to the maps' precision and depth. This latter relationship likely resulted Jan Frederik Van Beeck Calkoen's becoming involved in completing the work, as Van Beeck Calkoen has spent significant time in Gotha, where he frequented the observatory of Duke Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg and forged a long time relationships with its director Franz Xaver von Zach.

Beyond their scientific merit, the maps are also artefacts of the era's broader cultural movements. They were crafted during the Enlightenment, a period marked by an unquenchable thirst for knowledge, where science and art often intermingled. Thus, while they offer an insight into the known constellations, they also showcase the era's aesthetic sensibilities, with intricate illustrations that transform scientific observation into visual art.

Jan Frederik Van Beeck Calkoen also translated and posthumously edited Pieter Nieuwland's *Verklaring der Gronden van de Zeemans Tafelen van Cornelis Douwes, Of der manier om uit twee waargenome Hoogten der Zon buiten den Middag, de Breedte eener Plaats te vinden. Uit het Hoogduitsch vertaald, en met Aanmerkingen uitgegeeven*. (Explanation of the Foundations of the Sailor's Tables by Cornelis Douwes, or the method to find the Latitude of a Place from two observed Altitudes of the Sun outside of noon), which was published by Gerard Hulst van Keulen, in Amsterdam in 1800.

Rarity

The maps are extremely rare.

We note only the example at the University of Utrecht (uncolored). As noted below, the maps were likely intended for inclusion in Jan Frederik van Beeck Calkoen's 1798 Treatise ... published by Van Kuelen, but the examples located at the University of Utrecht and University of Amsterdam seemingly lack the plates.

A note with the Utrecht copies states that the maps were:

"Published in: Jan Frederik van Beeck Calkoen, 'Verhandeling over de manier om door



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waarneming van twee sterren op een gelyke doch onbekende hoogte, de middelbaare en waare tyd te vinden: Benevens de tafelen welke hier toe vereischt worden, geschikt ten dienste der Nederlandsche zeelieden' (Amsterdam: Gerard Hulst van Keulen, [1798]) (pl. II)./ This map of the southern starry sky (and the corresponding map of the northern starry sky) was originally designed by Pieter Nieuwland (1764-1794), but due to his premature death, it had to be completed and published by Jan Frederik van Beeck Calkoen (1772-1811)./ At the bottom of the map, it is noted: 'NB. an announcement regarding the use of this Plan is to be included with this.'

Detailed Condition:

Crunched at bottom edge, with tear at bottom right corner.