



For Immediate Release
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Cornelis De Jode's Terrestrial Globe (1594) and Rare Paper Astrolabe (1668), Recently Acquired by Florence's Ministry of Culture, on Display at Museo Galileo

Florence, Italy... **Cornelis De Jode's terrestrial globe**, an extremely rare example of historical cartography made in Antwerp in 1594, and a **paper astrolabe**, dated 1668 and possibly made in northern France, are now on view at Museo Galileo in Florence, Italy. On September 6, 2023, the exquisitely crafted scientific instruments were presented to the public by **Stefano Casciu**, Regional Director of Museums for Tuscany, **Roberto Ferrari**, Executive Director of the [Museo Galileo](#), and **Polissena Brandolini d'Adda**, representing [Friends of Florence](#). The Friends of Florence foundation supported the globe's restoration thanks to a generous contribution from the Eric and Maxine Greenspan family.

Florence's Ministry of Culture recently acquired the objects on behalf of the Regional Director of Museums for Tuscany which, in turn, loaned them to the Museo Galileo on a permanent basis. The Museo Galileo conducted the scholarship certifying their impact on the development of scientific discovery.

The two instruments are on display in a dedicated showcase alongside Philippe-Claude Le Bas's Gregorian reflecting telescope (c. 1720), another item acquired by the Ministry of Culture in 2022. They will then be incorporated as new highlights of the museum's permanent collection.

Cornelis De Jode's terrestrial globe

The extremely rare terrestrial globe is the sole surviving globe made by Flemish cartographer and printer Cornelis De Jode (c. 1568–1600), whose remaining work is limited to a set of cartographical globe segments now in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris.

The globe was in a critical condition when it was acquired by the Ministry of Culture in November 2022, revealing signs of serious deterioration including a number of breaches on the paper's surface. Following an in-depth diagnostic examination, it was subjected to a delicate and highly complex cleaning and restoration process funded by the Friends of Florence and performed by the Florence-based *Officina del Restauro*.





The restoration was supervised by Stefano Casciu in conjunction with Lucia Nucci, the Direzione Regionale Musei's resident restorer. Additional supervision regarding historical and scientific aspects was provided by Giorgio Strano, the Museo Galileo's Collections Manager.

Manuscript planispheric astrolabe

Possibly made in France, this paper and wood astrolabe came complete with its original case. The Soprintendenza Archeologica Belle Arti e Paesaggio per la Città Metropolitana di Milano received an export request from its owner but, in view of its rarity and singular position in the history of science, the Ministero della Cultura purchased it on behalf of the Direzione Regionale dei Musei della Toscana for the Museo Galileo.

The solar clock on the back of the instrument shows the latitude $49^{\circ}30'$, which suggests that it was designed for use in the far north of France or, more probably, in Bavaria. Nuremberg, at $49^{\circ}27'$ N, was renowned for the manufacture of scientific instruments. The date, 1668, is compatible with the handwritten inscriptions.



The instrument is extraordinarily accurate from a scientific standpoint, the graduated scales having been drawn with the utmost precision. The date of the spring equinox is typically set on March 21, which points to a Catholic environment compatible with either location (within which the Nuremberg enclave was an exception: the Gregorian Calendar was only officially adopted there in

1699). Only a handful of manuscript planispheric astrolabes on paper or card dating to earlier than the 18th century survive today. The Museo Galileo, for example, has only a few fragments, most probably dating back to the 17th century.

For more information about the Museo Galileo, visit www.museogalileo.it/en/.

For more information about The Friends of Florence Foundation, visit www.friendsofflorence.org.

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Cornelis De Jode (c. 1568–1600), Terrestrial Globe (1594), paper mache and wood. Courtesy of Museo Galileo Florence

Paper Astrolabe (1668), paper and wood. Courtesy of Museo Galileo Florence

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Cornelis De Jode (c. 1568–1600), Terrestrial Globe (1594), paper mache and wood. Before restoration. Courtesy of Museo Galileo Florence

Cornelis De Jode (c. 1568–1600), Terrestrial Globe (1594), paper mache and wood. After restoration. Courtesy of Museo Galileo Florence

Paper Astrolabe (1668), paper and wood. Front after restoration. Courtesy of Museo Galileo Florence

Paper Astrolabe (1668), paper and wood. Back after restoration. Courtesy of Museo Galileo Florence