

## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction: Celestial Globes .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Celestial Globes.....</b>	<b>1</b>

## Introduction: Celestial Globes

The Museum looks after a fine collection of celestial globes from the Islamic World.

Celestial globes are spherical maps of the sky. With the Earth at their imaginary centre, they show the stars and constellations seen from outside the celestial sphere looking back at the Earth i.e. a “God’s eye” view. They often have the star names engraved and the constellations drawn in to make them easy to identify.

On celestial globes made in the Islamic World, the head of every human figure is turned towards the observer while the rest of the body “looks” inside. This makes right-handed figures appear to be left-handed, and vice versa (look out for Perseus wielding a sword in the left hand rather than the right).



To explain this difference between a constellation as seen from the Earth and as seen on a globe, the Persian astronomer al-Sufi (903-986 CE) drew two pictures for each constellation in his *Book on constellations*: one for the terrestrial view with front-facing, right-handed figures, and the other for the mirror-image celestial version — still facing front, but now left-handed.












When in use, globes are usually mounted in a frame, so users can rotate and tilt them to different latitudes.

But these instruments are more than astronomical tools and teaching instruments. The technical skill and artistry used to engrave the stars and zodiac signs mean they stand as artworks in their own right.

## Celestial Globes

[Back to the top](#)

Image	Object details	Inventory number
	<a href="#">Celestial Globe</a> by 'Abd ar-Rahmân b. Burhân al-Mawsilî Syro-Egyptian?, 1318/19	54471
	<a href="#">Celestial Globe</a> by Ja'far ibn 'Umar ibn Dawlatshah al-Kirmani Persian, 1362/3	44790

	<a href="#"><u>Celestial Globe</u></a> Indo-Persian Lahore, 17th Century	36638
	<a href="#"><u>Celestial Globe</u></a> Indo-Persian? 17th Century	37195
	<a href="#"><u>Celestial Globe</u></a> Indo-Persian? 17th Century?	36129
	<a href="#"><u>Celestial Globe</u></a> Persia 17th Century?	53793
	<a href="#"><u>Celestial Globe</u></a> by Diya al-Din Muhammad, Lahore, 1663/4	45247
	<a href="#"><u>Celestial Globe</u></a> Islamic 18th Century?	36224
	<a href="#"><u>Celestial Globe</u></a> Indo-Persian? c. 1700?	47262
	<a href="#"><u>Celestial Globe</u></a> Persian? c. 1700?	33466
	<a href="#"><u>Celestial Globe</u></a> Indo-Persian? 1709/10	98115
	<a href="#"><u>Celestial Globe</u></a> Indo-Persian? Modern?	38934
	<a href="#"><u>Celestial Globe</u></a> Indo-Persian? Modern?	46262
	<a href="#"><u>Celestial Globe</u></a> Indo-Persian	40716

[Back to the top](#)

