



Globes in the Collection

Lodestone Terella, English, mid 18th Century Inventory No. 54076

A terrella (Latin for "little earth") is a small magnetised model globe representing the Earth. It is thought to have been invented by the English physician William Gilbert who carried out a study of magnetism suggesting that the Earth could be considered to be a giant lodestone. Since then, the terrella has been used to investigate effects of the Earth's magnetic field including, 300 years later, the "Northern Lights" or aurora by the Norwegian scientist and explorer Kristian Birkeland. [Ref: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrella>]



This globe is a sphere of magnetite with inclusions of pyrite. Engraved on the surface are lines of 'longitude' and 'latitude' every ten degrees, together with lines representing the polar circles, the tropics and the ecliptic circle. It is enclosed in a case covered in black fish skin and lined with green velvet.