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The celestial Weigel Globe in the Stibbert Museum: restoration and valorisation

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Erhard Weigel (1625-1699) was professor of mathematics at the University of Jena from 1653 until his death. As a convinced and passionate educator, he conceived instruments for the popularization of astronomy including a celestial globe that was produced in several copies. These celestial globes were made of copper and had certain peculiarities, the most obvious of which was the series of new figures used to represent the constellations. Instead of traditional constellations, Weigel offers heraldic figures, symbols of corporations, cities and European countries.

Today eighteen of these globes have been surveyed that are still extant, one of which was purchased in the late nineteenth century by Frederick Stibbert (1838-1906) and is preserved in Florence in the museum that bears his name and preserves his collections composed mainly of valuable arms and armor from various eras and origins. Preserved probably without comprehend its meaning, the globe shows signs of many improper repairs and was mounted in a way that did not allow it to be properly understood.

Thanks to a funding from association YOCOCU (Youth in Conservation of Cultural Heritage) a conservation treatment was undertaken. The presentation will outline crucial aspects of the restoration and strategies now possible for more effective enhancement.

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