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HIP 88866

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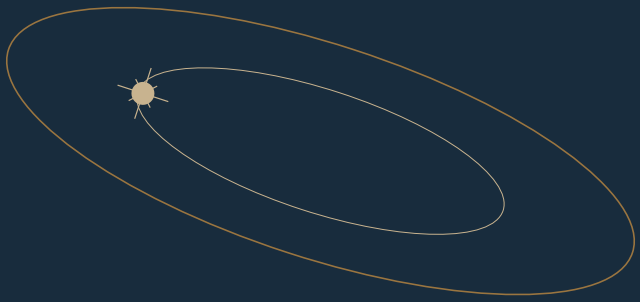
A light for our story



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A story among the stars

Celestial Library edition

HIP 88866

Every light holds a story. These pages follow its journey, from the heart of the star to the sky we share.

The sky, page by page

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HIP 88866

One light among many

Some nights begin when we stop hurrying. The day withdraws, our eyes learn the darkness and, little by little, the stars appear. Among them is HIP 88866. Until now it may have been another distant light; pausing to look is the beginning of giving it a place in our own story.

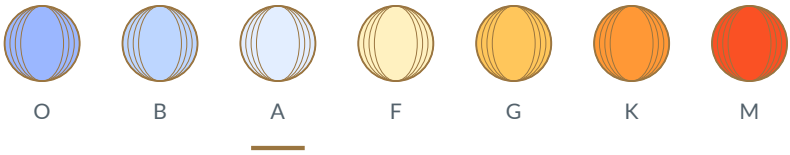
A dedication begins with that simple gesture: choosing something beautiful and wanting to share it. The star will continue on its way, beyond our calendars, while here below its light can accompany a date, a name or words we wish to keep. Immensity takes on an intimate measure: the measure of what matters to us.

The colour of its fire

The light of HIP 88866 has a character of its own. In the A family, brightness has a whiteness that invites comparison with a jewel. The surface is hotter than the Sun's; colour is a way of hearing that difference through our eyes. A tiny detail opens a door into the star.

To the unaided eye, a stellar colour can be little more than a whisper. The atmosphere makes it tremble and our eyes receive it in their own way. Beyond that point we can imagine a living surface of hot matter: the visible beauty of processes working on a scale far greater than ours.

SEVEN FAMILIES OF LIGHT



Light keeps the colours of its origin.

The journey ending here

The light of HIP 88866 crosses approximately 138.5 light-years to reach us. The brightness we receive has therefore spent about 138.5 years on its way. Distance becomes time: looking at this star means meeting light that began travelling before this moment. When it set out, the Sun and its planets already shared a history billions of years old. On their scale, this journey is barely a breath.

Its light has crossed the time of several generations. We can imagine hands writing letters, lit windows and voices that now live only in other voices. Through all that passing on, the brightness kept travelling; tonight it reaches us.



From its sky to our night.

A landscape for imagination

HIP 88866 lies in the region of the Peacock. The Peacock invites beauty to unfold slowly. In the imagined sky, each light can be a feather, and each feather a reason to pause and look.

Figures in the sky are a human way of approaching immensity. In our gaze they join lights that may lie at very different distances. Imagination stretches the thread; the stars provide the brightness. A single landscape can therefore keep old images while receiving a story that begins tonight.



Its light, among other lights of the constellation.

An address written in light

In 1997, ESA's Hipparcos Catalogue gave HIP 88866 a precise place in a map built from light. Behind that line of figures lay years of looking from space: the patience of returning to a star and recognising its tiny change of position. Its entry keeps a parallax of 23.55 ± 0.71 milliarcseconds, V magnitude 4.33 and spectral type Am. These are the traces by which a distant presence becomes recognisable, an address to which our gaze can return.

We can imagine that small entry resting on a desk while another night gathered outside. A few written marks were enough to keep a meeting with the sky from passing entirely away. Reading them now, we receive a little of that attention. The star becomes more than a point on a chart: it offers a place where an earlier gaze and our own can quietly meet.

The time of stars

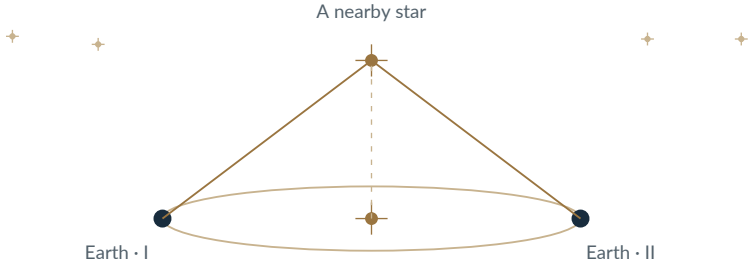
Every star has a rhythm shaped by the matter with which it was born and the stage of life it is passing through. Some spend their light intensely; others sustain it for much longer ages. We can imagine them as a library of different times, where no story needs the same length to deserve being told.

To approach HIP 88866, we can let that scale widen our imagination. A stellar age is unlike a birthday: it speaks of changing matter, of energy finding a way out, of a balance sustained and transformed. Tonight's light is one page of that time, and we happen to be here to receive it.

Measuring with two glances

To begin measuring a stellar distance, Earth offers us a movement. We observe from one side of its orbit and look again about six months later from the other. A nearby star seems to shift slightly against more distant ones. That small change of perspective is called parallax.

We can feel the principle by looking at a finger with one eye and then the other. What fits between two glances at home requires our planet's journey in the sky. There is something beautiful in that patience: to learn how far a light is from us, we first learned to look from somewhere else.



Two positions of Earth, six months apart.

Nothing stands still

Although it seems still, HIP 88866 belongs to a moving sky. Stars travel through the galaxy and our own home moves with the Sun. The distances are so great that many of these changes need years of observation to become visible. The serenity we see is really keeping a journey.

We can imagine every night as a meeting between travellers. We arrive with one more day of memories; the star arrives with its light and its path. The meeting seems to repeat, yet it is never quite the same. Perhaps that is why looking again can be such a simple way to celebrate shared time.

The night of finding it

We can begin with something simple: looking into a starry sky and letting our eyes grow used to darkness. The dedication page lets us choose a place and time to find where to look. Recognising the constellation first turns a distant map into a familiar landscape.

If a telescope joins the evening, a wide field is a gentle beginning. As a reference, a 114 mm Newtonian with a 500 mm focal length gives 20× with a 25 mm eyepiece. The star remains a point of light; the instrument gathers more of its brightness. The best memory may be the moment we leave the eyepiece and say: there it is.

Somewhere to return

We can close this booklet and let HIP 88866 become a small light in an enormous night again. Something, though, will have changed. We now know part of its journey, a shade of its colour and a way to find it. What seemed far away has a place in our memory.

There will be clear nights and others when clouds keep the sky. Not every night will allow observing, but each can bring back the memory of this gesture. Sometimes a name is enough to return to a date, a voice, a few shared words. And when the light appears again, we will have one more reason to pause and look.

The traces of this story

NASA · The lives of stars
https://science.nasa.gov/universe/stars/

NASA · Our Sun
https://science.nasa.gov/sun/facts/

ESA · Measuring stellar distances by parallax
https://www.esa.int/ESA_Multimedia/Images/2013/06/Measuring_stellar_distances_by_parallax

ESA 1997 Hipparcos Main Catalogue · HIP 88866
https://vizier.cds.unistra.fr/viz-bin/VizieR-5?-source=I/239/hip_main&HIP=88866

Original ISDORA prose and illustrations. Images are artistic evocations or diagrams, not to scale. Distances are approximate. Constellation figures include contemporary literary readings.

To keep discovering

NASA · What is a light-year?
https://science.nasa.gov/exoplanets/what-is-a-light-year/

IAU · Constellations and their names
https://iauarchive.eso.org/public/themes/constellations/

Celestron · Choosing eyepieces
https://www.celestron.com/blogs/knowledgebase/how-to-determine-which-eyepieces-to-use-with-your-telescope

ESA · The Hipparcos and Tycho Catalogues (1997)
https://cdsarc.cds.unistra.fr/viz-bin/ReadMe/I/239?format=html&tex=true



May there always be a night to look again.

HIP 88866

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A STORY OF LIGHT