



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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[Spectacular Set of Wall Maps of the Continents Dedicated to King Charles II of England, &c.]

Stock#: 93614
Map Maker: Visscher II / Allard
Date: 1677 - 1682 circa
Place: Amsterdam
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 71.5 x 55.5 inches (approximate sizes for each map)
Price: \$ 950,000.00



Description:

The Height of Dutch Decorative Cartography -- Heightened in Gold and Lapis Lazuli

One of Only Two Complete Sets in the World (the other at the Swedish National Library).

The Only Set in the First State.

A spectacular set of wall maps of the continents (Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas), published at the apex of Dutch decorative cartography by two of the most important mapmakers of the era, Nicolaes Visscher II and Hugo Allard.

In the pantheon of European wall maps published between the end of the 16th century and the beginning of the 18th century (when this art truly flourished), this set stands out for its extraordinarily elaborate engraved decorations: each map is imposingly embellished with piles of figures - representations of local flora and fauna, and of local peoples, of allegorical vignettes, and of scenes of trade and conquest.

These maps are also unique among Dutch wall maps for their focus on the English-speaking world; the set is dedicated in English to Charles II, with his portrait and inscription on the map of Europe. Furthermore, an elaborate cartouche on the map of Asia centers the coat of arms of Charles II, perhaps indicating the ascendancy of the East India Company.

Any one of these maps individually would be the cornerstone of a collection, but here we have only the second complete set of the four maps anywhere in the world. Intriguingly, while this set comes from Eric'sberg Palace in Sweden, the other known set is at the Swedish National Library, a short distance



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away in Stockholm. Moreover, the two sets are both lavishly colored, heightened in gold and finished with Lapis Lazuli. Links to the individual maps in high resolution can be found here:

- [*America / Exacta Totius Americae Tabula*](#)
- [*Asia / Exacta Totius Asiae Tabula*](#)
- [*Europe / Exacta Totius Europae Tabula*](#)
- [*Africa / Exacta Totius Africae Tabula*](#)

The maker of the maps, Nicolaes Visscher II (1649-1702), came from one of the all-time most important mapmaking families in the Netherlands. His grandfather, Claesz Jansz. Visscher (1587-1652), was a foundational early mapmaker and engraver of the Dutch Golden Age, and Nicolaes's father, Nicolaes Visscher I (1618-1679), continued that tradition. Nicolaes Visscher II focused first and foremost on the opulence of his cartographic creations; in addition to these wall maps, he was responsible for one of the greatest Dutch atlases ever produced, [the 226-map *Atlas Minor*](#).

Visscher used the standbys of second-half-of-the-17th-century Dutch wall maps for the cartography. In Africa and Europe, he closely follows Joan Blaeu's 1659 wall maps ([*Novissima Africae Descriptio*](#) and [*Europæ Nova Descriptio*](#), respectively). Burden (555) notes that the Americas closely follows De Wit's wall map of 1672. There may be no direct antecedent for the map of Asia; the inset of Australia is unusual, and we can find no other wall map in which this has been done. In that case, the map could be an original compilation based on sources such as Blaeu's 1659 Asia and his wall maps of Australia and Southeast Asia.

A Note on Dating and States

The maps were, from the outset, intended as a set, with a remarkable dedication to Charles II, the King of England, which is found on the map of Europe:

To The Most Illustrious and Puissant Monarch, Charles the II, By the Grace of God of England, Scotland, France and Ireland King Defender of the Faith &c. This Geographical and Hydrographical Map of Europe Together with three other Parts of the World, to wit Asia, Africa, and America, composed with great Experience and Labour, is with all Submission Dedicated, By His Majesties most humble and obedient Vassal. Nic. Visscher.

These maps have traditionally been dated 1682-1685 in the literature (Betz and Burden). To this, we can



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offer a few minor corrections:

The set in Stockholm (KB) on which previous studies have been based should be dated to 1688 or later, as the map of Europe has been revised with a portrait and dedication to William III, and the map of Asia has been updated with his coat of arms. Thus the present set represents the maps in their first state (with dedication and iconography of Charles II, who died in 1685.)

We also propose that the maps might have been completed at the end of Nicolaes Visscher I's career, between the granting of his first privilege (July 1677) and his death in 1679. It is also plausible that this map pre-dates the earliest known privilege.

Rarity

This is the only known example of the first state of this set, which was unknown to scholars until it was offered for sale at the Ericsson Palace Sale II, in June 2022.

There is 1 known set of the second state (Swedish National Library), with revised portrait on the map of Europe (William III) and revised English Coat of arms on map of Asia.

We locate a single example of the map of Europe (state 1), lacking the decorative panels (Bibliothèque Nationale de France)

Individual examples of the map of America are known to survive in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (lacking decorative panels) and a private American collection (for decorative panels).

Individual examples of the map of Africa are known to survive in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France and a German National Library (each lacking decorative panels).

Provenance

Ericsson Palace, Katrineholm Municipality, Södermanland County, Sweden.

Detailed Condition:

Four large wall maps with original hand-color in full, heightened with lapis lazuli and gold. Each engraved map on six sheets joined, with hand-colored engraved title banner sheet at the top and letterpress Dutch descriptive panel at the bottom. On the sides, each map has six engraved city views (the righthand panel of Europe reinstated in expert facsimile). The maps have some wear and small losses, often verdigris-



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related. They have been expertly conserved to stabilize them.