



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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(First Edition) L'isole piu famose del mondo. [The most famous islands in the world.]

Stock#: 86706
Map Maker: Porcacchi
Date: 1572
Place: Padua
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 8.5 x 11.75 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Rare First Edition of Porcacchi's Isolario, with the First Obtainable Map of North America.

One of the finest Italian island books of the 17th century and the first to be illustrated with copperplate engraved maps.

The book includes thirty fantastic maps showing all parts of the world, starting with the Mediterranean but expanding to Asia and North America. The book terminates with two lovely world maps, one of which is a classic oval-shaped world map and the other a navigational map of the world. The maps are supplemented by lengthy and interesting Italian text that always opens with an attractive historiated initial.

The style of the maps is following the distinct Lafreri School Italian tendencies of the latter half of the 16th century. Mountains are noticeably rounded (rather than the pointier style of the 17th century), and the seas are uniformly stippled. Sea monsters, sailing ships, and cartouches appear on many of the maps.

This is the rare first edition of the work, published in 1572 in Venice by the Paduan Tomas Porcacchi.

Porcacchi's *Mondo Nuovo*

The map includes a nice example of the earliest obtainable map of North America, which is preceded only by Paolo Forlani's rare 1565 map of North America.

The Forlani map includes many firsts which were repeated in the Porcacchi map, including the first detailed depiction of the Straits of Anian. The map reflects the second Cartier voyage and early Spanish



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explorations in the Southwest, most notably Coronado's expedition. The treatment of the West Coast of North America, Baja California, and the misdirected lake at the head of the St. Lawrence River are noteworthy.

A Brief History of Isolarii

The *Isolario* genre dates to the 1420's, when Cristoforo Buondelmonti first executed his *Liber insularum archipelago* following six years of travels through the eastern Mediterranean. While not always the most accurate, Buondelmonti's work was widely reproduced, with some changes made, and dominated the market for island-books for most of the rest of the 15th century. The first printed *isolario*, by Bartolomeo da li Sonetti, was heavily derived from Buondelmonti's work.

The sixteenth century saw the *isolario* genre expand out of a Mediterranean focus, with the first "global" *isolario* appearing in Venice in 1528. It was this genre of *isolario* that dominated into the 17th century and it is to this genre that Porcacchi's work belongs.

These island-books were remarkable for a number of reasons. Firstly, they displayed a remarkable interplay between manuscript and printed versions, with each format heavily influencing the other. Secondly, the books were not intended as a purely geographical work, and many were staggeringly inaccurate. They were, instead, supposed to be objects of contemplation from their inception, meant to spur the Medieval and Renaissance mind into imagining far-flung portions of the world. This was apparent in the earliest manuscript and printed *isolarios*. Da li Sonetti's incunable version of Buondelmonti's text was published in *terza rima* following Dante's *Commedia*, and Porcacchi's *Isolario* reflects this tradition with its poetic descriptions.

Collation

[22]; [117]; [3 including printer's mark].

Detailed Condition:

Quarto. Rebound in 17th- or 18th-century vellum over modern boards. (Boards moderately cocked.) Complete with thirty engraved maps. (Staining to corners and top edges of front few and final few leaves. Minor thumbing internally. Ink burn-through in the upper corner of leaves P1 - P4. Inscriptions to title and to final blank.)