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[World Map]

Stock#: 37581
Map Maker: Petrini
Date: 1700 circa
Place: Naples
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 40 x 47.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Exceedingly rare separately-issued wall map of the World, by the Neapolitan mapmaker Paolo Petrini.

This large-scale double-hemisphere world map represents the high point of geographic printing in Naples at the end of the 17th Century. Petrini's world map is one of the finest and most fascinating of his many rare works and the only one of his rare wall maps of the World and Continents that can be called truly original and unique to Petrini.

The hemispheres are set aloft amidst a finely engraved allegorical tableau. Importantly, unlike much of Petrini's work, this map is an original composition, although his cartographic sources can be traced to important French and Italian sources. Cartographically, the depiction of the Americas is in good part based on Vincenzo Maria Coronelli's maps of North and South America, from his *Atlante Veneto* (Venice, circa 1690). Eastern North America is reasonably well-defined, with all five of the Great Lakes delineated. The Mississippi River is present, although its mouth is located far southwest of its true location. In the west, California is shown to be a large island, while in the Pacific Northwest, the coast curves inwards to include the mythical Strait of Anian. South America takes on an exaggerated, widened form, although the Andes and major rivers are depicted with a broad degree of accuracy.

The depiction of much of the rest of the world, including the choice of nomenclature, is derived from the monumental 1694 wall map of the world by the French Geographer Royale, Nicolas de Fer. Europe is naturally well-defined and Africa assumes a conventional depiction for the period, with well-conceived coastlines, but a largely conjectural interior. Much of Asia is also well-charted, based largely on Dutch (for



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Southeast Asia) and Jesuit sources (for areas such as China), although the coastlines north of Korea (which is correctly shown here to be a peninsula) curve northward into oblivion.

Regarding Australia, which is said here to have been "discovered in 1644" (referring to Abel Tasman's 1642-3 voyages, although the continent had actually been first encountered in 1606), Petrini delineates much of the coastlines of western and northern Australia and the southern tip of Tasmania. The east coast of Australia remains a complete enigma.

The pageant of allegory that surrounds the map includes images of Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus and Mercury, after Cassini, along with zodiacal signs and figures from classical mythology. Below are finely conceived allegorical depictions of trade, industry, science and art. The cartouche in the lower-center features a dedication to one of Petrini's key patrons, Cesare d'Avalos, who reigned as the Marchese of Pescara from 1697 to 1729.

The biography of Paolo Petrini remains something of mystery. Based in Naples, then one of Europe's largest cities, he published the very rare atlas, the *Atlante Partenopeo* (1700-1718). However, his greatest works included the present world map and a set of wall maps of the four continents, which in modern times have proven virtually unobtainable to collectors.

Petrini's wall map of the World is extremely rare. Writing in the early 1980s, Rodney Shirley, had great difficulty tracking down even a single example. He was eventually able to cite a heavily-damaged example that was sold by a dealer in Germany in 1980. Since then, another example was offered at Christie's New York in 1997, followed by another at Sotheby's London in 2006 (offered along with Petrini's four maps of the continents). We have not been able to locate any further examples. The map's rarity is likely accounted for by the fact that there were very few examples ever issued, and that the survival rate of large wall maps of that period is very low.

The present example is a striking example of this virtually unobtainable map.

Detailed Condition:

Copper-engraved map, on four unjoined sheets, which have been removed from an old backing, cleaned, deacidified and conserved. The map has been archivally backed to support paper weakness and some occasional loss of image, which has been expertly repaired. Some minor manuscript restoration in a few spots, but generally a remarkable survival.