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[Plan of the Emperor's Capital of Moscow] Plan Imperatorskago Stolichnago Goroda Moskvy. Sochinennoi pod smotreniem arkhitekтора Ivana Michurina v 1739 godu.

Stock#: 38306
Map Maker: Michurin
Date: 1739
Place: St. Petersburg
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 21 x 27 inches
Price: \$8,500.00



Description:

Fine example of the first plan of Moscow made to scientific specifications, by the architect Ivan Fyodorovich Michurin, published in St. Petersburg in 1739.

Michurin's plan of Moscow is a scientific milestone in the modern history of Moscow, being the first geodetic plan of the city. The map is quite detailed and shows all of the city's inner and outer wards, military constructions, streets, squares, parks, rivers, canals and the outline of major edifices. The perspective is centered on the Bely Gorod (the oldest central part of the city, which is dominated by the Kremlin) and the Kitay Gorod (the district to the east of Red Square), both bound by old walls, moats and the Neglinnaya and Moskva Rivers. Outside of the city center, the outer wards are bound by the initial traces of what would become the Boulevard and Garden Rings, amongst the most majestic thoroughfares in Moscow. The elegant composition is adorned by a title cartouche featuring the allegorical personification of the Moskva River, who bears the city's shield with the image of St. George slaying the Dragon.



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During the time that the survey was made, Moscow was essentially a medieval city of narrow labyrinthine streets, mainly wooden buildings and relatively few open spaces. While much effort had been dedicated to carefully designing the new Russian capital, St. Petersburg (founded in 1703), the concept of urban planning had been an anathema in Moscow, the former capital. Building codes were few and far between and when on the books, they were rarely followed. The city had a terrible problem with public hygiene, as garbage dumps were allowed to accumulate right next to densely packed residential areas. This led to a series of fires and plagues, most of which would not have occurred had there been even half-decent urban planning. Prior to Michurin's endeavors, no accurate survey of t Moscow existed, ensuring that the chaotic city of around 150,000 residents was almost impossible to effectively govern.

In response, in 1731, Empress Anna Ioannovna (reigned 1730-40), commissioned Ivan Aleksandrovich Mordvinov to oversee the first scientific and systematic survey of Moscow. After Mordinov's, sudden death in 1734, the project was entrusted to the promising young architect, Ivan Fyodorovich Michurin, who assembled an expert team that included Sava Kashintsov, Maksim Enkuvatov and Aleksei Kertsov. Once finished, Michurin's survey became the 'blueprint' on which all development in the city was to be planned for almost 40 years.

As noted in by Albert Schmidt in *The Architecture and Planning of Classical Moscow: A Cultural History* (American Philosophical Society, 1989) at page 22:

As early as the spring of 1731, an edict appeared [stating] "as there is no accurate plan of Moscow, our residences and houses are built without order; therefore we require that an accurate plan of Moscow, of large streets and small, be drawn. This task eventually fell to two young and talented Petersburg architects, Ivan Aleksandrovich Mordvinov, and, after his premature death in 1734, to Ivan Fedorovich Michurin.

The Plan of 1739 offered an entirely new perspective for transforming Moscow and its suburbs as far as the Kompeneiskii Wall. Based on a geodesic survey and thereby exhibiting the actual topography of the city, the plan showed streets, alleys, blocks, fortress walls and towers, chruches, large estates, groves and fields. Although small in scale, the plan served as a basis for regulating streets, issuing permits and approving plans for new construction until 1775.

Michurin's map was printed by the Imperial Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg in 1739. While first issued separately, some examples were included in the Academy's *Atlas Russiscus* (1745), a groundbreaking work that was the first atlas of the Russian Empire. Michurin's plan would not be superseded for 60 years, until the publication of Ivan Marchenkov's *Plan stolichnago goroda Moskv* (Moscow: T. Polgaev, 1789).



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Ivan Fyodorovich Michurin (1700-63) was a leading Russian architect whose designs marked a transition of the empire's architecture from early Muscovite Baroque to accord with the mature style introduced by Michurin's colleague, Francesco Bartolomeo Rastrelli (1700-71). Michurin studied at the Imperial Naval Academy (1718-1720) and was apprenticed to Nicola Michetti before completing his education in the Netherlands (1723-1729). He worked primarily in Moscow, devising the present first general plan of that city. He later designed several important churches in both Moscow and Kiev.

The present map is rare and seldom appears on the market. It is an essential map for any serious collection of the mapping of Moscow or Russian urban design, being the single most important modern plan of the city.

Detailed Condition: