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**Carte De La Mer Du Sud et des Costes D'Amerque et D'Asie, Situees Sur Cette Mer . . .
1713 / Carte De La Mer Du Nord et des Costes D'Amerique, D'Europe et D'Afrique
Situees Sur Cette Mer . . . 1713**

Stock#: 56621mp2
Map Maker: de Fer / de Fer
Date: 1713
Place: Paris
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 75 x 46 inches (including text)
Price: SOLD



Description:

A Masterpiece of Baroque Cartographic Decoration and Among The Rarest Separately-Issued 18th Century Wall Maps of America

Attractive example of Nicolas De Fer's monumental 15 sheet wall map, emphasizing commerce, trade and exploration with the New World, published in Paris in 1713. The present example is all the more remarkable, including text panels describing the discoveries, commerce and trade in the Americas below the map which are present in only 2 other recorded examples.

De Fer's map is a pictorial encyclopedia of the history of discovery in the Western Hemisphere and the most lavish map of the Pacific published in the first quarter of the eighteenth century.

The end of the War of the Spanish Succession brought renewed French interest in the western hemisphere. Spain's debts from the war offered an opportunity for French imperialism in the region, with speculative riches in Louisiana, lucrative Spanish mining interests in South America, as well as a profitable trans-Pacific silver trade between Acapulco and Manila. William Dampier's successful expeditions on behalf of England, as well as Dutch exploration in the Pacific, prompted curiosity among the French and the present landmark map was published.

At the time, Nicholas de Fer was the most accomplished cartographer in France. In 1690, he became the official geographer to Louis, Dauphin of France and with support from the Spanish and French Royal Families, de Fer later became official geographer for Philip V and Louis XIV. Known particularly for the artistic quality of the decoration on his maps, the present wall map is without question his cartographic



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masterpiece and would be used as the basis for Henri Chatelain's slightly reduced and more commonly found *Carte des Tres Curieuse de la Mer du Sud*, published six years later.

The map is centered on America, with the coasts of Europe and Africa shown at the far right, and the Japan and coast of Asia, including parts of Australia shown at the far left. Cartographically, the mapping of America follows contemporary mappings, with a large depiction of California as an island based on information gathered by Father Eusibio Kino before 1695 and with the Mississippi River entering the Gulf far to the west of its true Delta. Across the Pacific, the routes of explorations are shown, as are the principal Spanish trade routes.

Perhaps most remarkable are De Fer's elaborate insets, vignettes, and embellishments. At the top of the map, nine circular portraits of famed explorers, including Columbus, Vespucci, Magellan, Drake, La Salle Schouten, Olivier Du Nord, Hermites and Dampier.

In the upper left corner is a large vignette scene of beavers constructing a dam at the base of Niagara Falls, adapted from Hennepin and which would famously serve as the inspiration for Herman Moll's "Beaver map" of the British Colonies in North America the following year. Moll, further used de Fer's map as a source for his "Cod Fish" map of North America, copying a vignette in the upper right corner showing the cod fishery off the Grand Banks.

Along the entire bottom of the map are insets of various harbors and towns, with separating borders comprised of vignette scenes of natives and local flora and wildlife, including birds, reptiles and animals. Included among these scenes are images of gold and silver mining, hunting, cooking, sugar refining, human sacrifices, and more. De Fer's panoramic map is a visual encyclopedia of geographic information and history.

De Fer's map of the Americas offers an iconographic feast of imagery for those trying to grasp the implications of European colonial intrusion into societies whose otherness was their most defining feature. The map seems to suggest both economic opportunities (resources to exploit) and cultural clashes (among peoples whose customs, rites, and mores were so vastly different). The decorative vignettes are adapted from illustrations in various accounts of the first European encounters in the New World

(Harvard Library, Going for Baroque: The Iconography of the Ornamental Map, online exhibition).



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Rarity

As noted in the Sotheby's catalog entry for the map in January 2018, "the map is very rare, with only one other copy recorded in the auction records and only a handful of copies located in institutions" We note examples at Harvard (with Title Page/Key Sheet), Bibliotheque National de France (3 copies without text, 1 with text), University of Michigan (with text), Sachsische Landesbibliothek, Library of Congress (1 complete copy and 1 copy of top half only). No copy in the British Library.

The present example is even rarer, being the only example we have ever seen on the market with the text panels below the map. We note only the examples at the BNF and University of Michigan include the extra text panels. The Harvard copy includes a title page with an index (key sheet) map.

Detailed Condition:

15 sheets, joined. The map has been cleaned, with color retouched, tears repaired and some small areas of restoration.