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(Lunar Orbiter 2) Copernicus Crater

Stock#: 67378
Map Maker: NASA / Boeing

Date: 1966
Place: n.p.
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG+
Size: 19.5 x 15.5 inches

Price: SOLD



Description:

A picture looking obliquely across Copernicus Crater, in which we see nearly sixty miles across a deep impact zone, with hundreds more miles of lunar surface in the foreground and background. Except for the jet black sky, one could nearly picture a similar scene on earth. This was part of a series of photos that achieved instant popular success for the unique way in which they pictured the moon. One of the twelve photos from this series was called "one of the great photos of the century" by Time Magazine and published in their issue.

Surprisingly, this image was only taken as a means to advance the film between the surveying of possible landing sites. The footage was never intended to be used, but the perfect images that happened to be captured so impressed scientists and the public that they became an immediate hit.

These photos were unique due to the low angle at which they were taken and the high detail of the moon's surface shown. They were taken approximately 45 kilometers from the surface of the moon, about one to two kilometers miles from the target. This allowed for the perfect image showing the moon's relief over a large area, something the public had never before witnessed.

The Copernicus Crater was formed as a result of a relatively young meteorite impact, with guesses for the age of formation of around 800 million years before present. Samples from Apollo 12 from part of the Oceanus Procellarum believed to be formed by ejecta of the impact were unsuccessfully used to try to better constrain the age of formation. Dating attempts Lunar Orbiter 5 surveyed the crater in greater detail, and Terry Offield of the USGS described the formation as having "a hummocky crater rim,

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numerous large slump blocks on the crater wall, and a complex of central peaks. Sets of parallel fractures, aligned with the lunar structure grid, formed after the crater wall took its present form, but before the smoothest floor materials were emplaced. The smooth floor materials show a swirling pattern of cracks like those seen on terrestrial lava flows. These materials are associated with numerous hills that have summit craters and are probably small volcanoes. Several low places on the rim and wall are partly filled by what appears to be ponded volcanic material, or possibly fluidized impact debris."

Provenance

From the collection of a veteran of Boeing's Public Relations and Advertising Department who joined the company in 1961.

Detailed Condition: