Barry Lawrence Ruderman
Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
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Nova Europae Descriptio

Stock#: 91930
Map Maker: Hondius

Date: 1606 circa
Place: Amserdam
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 19.5 x 15 inches

Price: SOLD



Description:

Fine Map of Europe from the Famous Mercator-Hondius Atlas

Handsome old-color example of Hondius' second map of Europe, initially issued in 1606 as part of Hondius' first edition of Mercator's atlas.

The map shows the continent surrounded by Anatolia, the Eastern Mediterranean, the Barbary Coast, a sliver of Greenland, and part of Labrador. Iceland is depicted with many place names.

Although a suggested Northeast Passage is obscured by the cartouche in the upper right corner, the search for the waterway is nevertheless represented by the coastline of Nova Zembla. This archipelago was the subject of much speculation in Europe at the time thanks to the reports of the three voyages of Willem Barentsz in the 1590s.

The specious island of Frisland is also included here. Another mythical landmass is the wandering island of Hy Brasil, which is included west of Ireland. The latter island is an enduring Atlantic chimera that came from Celtic folklore. It ranges on maps from just off the west coast of Ireland to the area around the Azores. The island was initially described as a rich paradise not unlike Atlantis; it emerged from the depths for a short period and then would disappear. It started to appear on portolan charts in the fourteenth century and continued to be a stalwart of maps and charts into the nineteenth century. The island was the subject of a fanciful pamphlet by Richard Head in 1675. Despite no accurate reports of its whereabouts, the island appeared on Admiralty charts and other reputable maps for centuries, usually in the latitude of 51°N and at a longitude of 17°W.

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The map is complemented by attractive strapwork cartouches carrying the scale bar, title, author, and a description of Europe’s geography and the peopling of the world by Noah’s sons. There are also decorative ships in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, as well as sea creatures surfacing in several places.

Detailed Condition: