

Large engraved wall map on 12 sheets, border of city views on six sheets, and text along lower margin on three sheets, joined, outline hand colour. As is almost invariably the case with large seventeenth century wall maps, a certain amount of conservation work has been undertaken. A full conservation report is available on request.

DE’ ROSSI’S MONUMENTAL WALL MAP OF THE WORLD

Nova Totius Terrarum Orbis Tabula

Author
DE ROSSI, Giacomo Giovanni; after Frederick DE WIT

Publication date
1675

Publisher
Formis Io: Iacobi De Rubeis propre Templum S. Mariae de Pace, ad Insigne Lutetrae Parisiorum, apud quem eliam veneunt uarij generis Tabulae, Urbiumque delineationes, et ueterum, ac recentiorum artificum illustriora monumenta

Publication place
Rome,

Physical description
Large engraved wall map on 12 sheets, border of city views on six sheets, and text along lower margin on three sheets, joined, outline hand colour. As is almost invariably the case with large seventeenth century wall maps, a certain amount of conservation work has been undertaken. A full conservation report is available on request.

Dimensions

1480 by 2358mm. (58.25 by 92.75 inches).

Notes

In 1675, the same year that De' Rossi secured the prestigious and valuable commission of decorating the papal summer residence, the Castel Gandolfo, with nearly two hundred engraved maps of Europe, America and the city of Rome, he also created this magnificent and elaborate wall map of the world, published with the privilege of the Pope.

De' Rossi dedicated the'Nova totivs terrarvm orbis' to Queen Christina of Sweden, beneath a portrait of her, that appears just above the two celestial hemispheres, at the bottom edge of the map: "Christinae Reginae Svecorum, Gothorum et Vandalor. Universi Orbis Terrarum Tabulum meis typis editam Augustissimo maie statis Tuae Nomini Sacro; ut quae Heroicis virtutibus inclyta, Hoc mundi Theatrum Famae Fulgore Imples, et exornas Imo cum Iltimos Terrae, Marisque Fines, Immenso Gloriae itinere, excedas, te minor est orbis, caelum: que mereris. Submiss humillime Io. Iacobus de Rubeis Typographus". Having converted to Catholicism, abdicated, and now living in Rome, she was a great patron of the 1675 Holy Year Jubilee celebrations, many other artists, and also of de' Rossi, with whom she remained close until her death in 1689. All fifty-five plates in de' Rossi's 'Imagines Veteris ac Novi Testamenti (1675), reproducing Raphael's Vatican Loggia decorations, are also dedicated to the queen. After her death, De' Rossi was commissioned to record her funeral.

Engraved by Georgio Widman, the main imprint appears in a long panel below the twin hemispheres of the globe, in which de' Rossi acknowledges his debt to De Wit: "Olim a Friderico de Wit in lucem primum edita nunc vero novis relationibus auctor atique correctior studio, et impensis Ioannis Iacobi de Rubeis typis mandata Romae prope Templium Dirae Mariae de Pace, anno Iubilaei 1675 cu. priv. S. Pont.. At each side, the map is flanked by eleven town views (making twenty-two in all, these include Rome, Seville, Prague, London, Copenhagen, Cracow, Cologne, Lisbon, Madrid, Suratte, Amsterdam, Paris, Venice, Gdansk, Stockholm, Frankfurt, Antwerp, Constantinople, Moscow, Jakarta, Ormus) and below the map are panels of text in Italian.

The size of the map approximates to that of De Wit's earlier twelve-sheet map and the geographical correspondence is very close. De Rossi has added the tentative coastline of "Terra Jessi" between North America and Japan and has brought back, in part, the coastline of the Antarctic continent. There are two other changes which suggest an additional source: the large island in Hudson's Bay is now divided into three and the "Desertum Amo" (pocked to resemble sand) has been added in northern China. The positioning and style of the many small ships in the sea have been directly copied from De Wit, and there are similar ornate decorations around the hemispheres. The corner scenes depict personages of Europe, the Orient, Africa and South America against typical landscapes and hunting scenes. There is a large solar diagram at the top between the two main hemispheres: at the bottom are two celestial hemispheres, north and south polar projections, and circles representing the hypotheses of Ptolemy and Tycho Brahe. The design and engraving are of the highest standard.

From a prominent family of publishers, Giovanni Giacomo de' Rossi, or Io. Iacobus de Rubeis (1627-1691), was the son of Giuseppe, and the younger brother and successor (in 1653) of Giovanni Domenico. By 1648, at the tender age of twenty-one, he had his own business producing and publishing engravings in Rome. In 1657 de' Rossi married a rich widow, and his business began to really flourish. His publications include four books of engraved plates of fountains, five books illustrating modern Rome, and two books of architectural elevations of Roman palaces. A papal privilege, granted to him by Alexander VII Chigi, for 1664–1674, effectively gave him a monopoly in the market.

In 1666 de' Rossi issued a set of wall maps of the four continents, after Blaeu, and from 1669,

published an atlas, the ’Mercurio Geografico ouero guida geografica in tutte le parti del mondo conforme le tauolegeografiche del Sansone, Baudrant e Cantelli’, edited by Giacomo Cantelli da Vignola. De’ Rossi and Vignola engaged the most prominent engravers working in Rome: Antonio Barbey, Jan L’Huillier, Giorgio Widman, Vincenzo Mariotti, and Giovanni Battista Falda.

During the course of an industrious lifetime, De’ Rossi made a fortune, and built a casino on the Janiculum after a design by Baratta. He was succeeded by his own son, Domenico, who continued to publish the ’Mercurio Geografico…’ until 1738.

Only one other example of the De Wit-De Rossi map is known (sold at Sotheby’s London sale, 15 April 1980, lot 551).

Bibliography
Shirley 471.

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 17982

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