

Folio (510 by 370mm), engraved map on 12 sheets, each sheet trimmed to image and remargined to fit folio, sheets 3, 10, and 12 with some loss skilfully repaired in facsimile, later half green buckram, overs green marbled paper boards, title to green buckram label pasted to upper cover.

“THE LAST WORD IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY IMAGERY OF ROME” (MAIER)

Nuova Pianta et alzata della citta di Roma.

Author
FALDA, Giovanni Battista

Publication date
1705.

Publisher

Publication place
Rome,

Physical description
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Dimensions
1560 by 1500mm. (61.5 by 59 inches).

Notes
The finest of the seventeenth century maps of Rome, known to have adorned the home of Samuel

Pepys, no less, appearing in an ink-wash drawing of his library, in 1693.

Falda's map was first published in 1676, with subsequent editions published in 1697, 1705 (as the present example), 1730, and 1756. At once colossal in scale and dense with minute detail, landmarks visible on the map, engraved with fastidious architectural precision, range from Bernini's Fontana dei Quattro Fiumi, whose obelisk rises in the Piazza Navona, and the Pantheon, with its magnificent rotunda, to the Villa Medici, its gardens elaborately manicured, and the Jewish ghetto, walled and confined, near the Tiber Island.

To accompany this level of detail is a 484-item index, which spans a box bottom-left, detailing (in alphabetical order) Rome's titular and diaconal churches, a cartouche centre-right, which lists the city's palaces, and a cartouche bottom-right, which lists the remaining churches, monasteries, and convents. From this last cartouche are suspended surveying instruments, including a ruler, a compass, and a mason's level.

Top-left is a representation of Religion, wearing a papal tiara, with the Keys of Heaven in her left hand and the papal cross in her right, resting on a temple. Beside Religion is Justice, with her scales and the fasces, symbol of authority. Next to them, putti hold the arms and the tiara of the Pope, Innocent XI Odescalchi, while, below them two putti unfurl a banner, on which is a dedication to the Pope. Top-right are the shields of the 14 districts of Rome. Bottom-centre are vignette illustrations of nine of Rome's major pilgrimage churches, including the Basilica di San Pietro and the Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore, as well as the Chiesa delle Tre Fontane and the Chiesa dell'Annunziata, both of which are outside Rome's city walls. Centre-left is an inset map, set within a scroll, of the area surrounding Rome.

Giovanni Battista Falda (1643-1678) was an architect and engraver, one of the most skilled makers of architectural views in the late-seventeenth century. Born in the Piemontese village of Valduggia, he came to Rome as a teenager, where he became a pupil of Giovanni Giacomo de Rossi, under whom he trained in architectural drawing. He was known, in particular, for his topographical prints of Rome (ancient and contemporary), which became popular with gentlemen undertaking the "Grand Tour", and would be forebears of the "Vedute" of Piranesi.

Rare
We have only been able to trace four institutional examples of this map: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Sachische Landesbibliothek, Library of Congress, and Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Roma.

Bibliography
Maier, 'Rome Measured and Imagined', 2015; McPhee, 'Falda's Map as a Work of Art', The Art Bulletin (2019), pp7-28.

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 21814

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