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Atlas Maior of 1665

Joan Blaeu

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The Atlas Maior, the cartographical masterpiece of the Baroque, was brought out in 1662 and 1665 by the Amsterdam publisher Joan Blaeu, one of Holland's leading cartographers. Originally appearing in Latin, the atlas comprised 594 maps in 11 volumes, which depicted the whole of the world as known to early modern Europe. It was the largest and most expensive book to be published during the seventeenth century. For more than 100 years it remained the definitive atlas of the world, and today is one of the most sought-after and valuable antiquarian rarities. TASCHEN's bibliophile reprint of this costly atlas is based on the hand-colored copy with gilt highlights now in the Austrian National Library in Vienna. Alongside original quotes from Joan Blaeu relating to the individual maps, the new text by Peter van der Krogt explains the historical and cultural associations and introduces the reader to the fascinating world of early modern cartography. The author: Peter Van Der Krogt, the leading expert in the field of Dutch atlases, is a collaborator on the Explokart Research Program for the History of Cartography at the University of Utrecht's Faculty of Geosciences. Since 1990 he has been working on Koeman's Atlantes Neerlandici, the carto-bibliography of atlases published in the Netherlands. His second project is the compilation, in co-operation with Nijmegen University, of an illustrated and annotated catalogue of the Atlas Blaeu-Van der Hem, the most important multi-volume atlas preserved in the Austrian National Library, which was added to Unesco's "Memory of the World" register in 2004.

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