



104 East 25th Street • New York, NY 10010
Telephone: 212.254.4710 • Fax: 212.979.1017
swanngalleries.com

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Contact: Alexandra Nelson
Communications Director
212-254-4710 ext. 19
alexandra@swanngalleries.com

Historical Mathematical Texts and Navigational Works at Swann Galleries' Early Printed Books Auction

New York— On **Tuesday, October 18**, Swann Galleries will hold an auction of **Early Printed, Medical, Scientific & Travel Books**, featuring works of major theoretical and historical importance with a focus on mathematics and exploration.

The top lot of the sale is a copy of Euclid's *Elementa geometriæ*, printed in Venice in 1482. This first edition of the foundational text of geometry and the first major mathematical work to appear in print is a Latin translation by Adelard of Bath from an Arabic version of the original Greek. The present volume, printed by Erhard Ratdolt, is notable for its innovative printing of extensive and often complex geometrical diagrams, which influenced the design of subsequent editions and similar works into the sixteenth century. This copy is estimated at \$60,000 to \$80,000.

Another highlight of the sale is the first edition, first issue, of Sir Isaac Newton's *Opticks*, London, 1704. The work concerns the renowned mathematician's discoveries on color theory and the spectrum of light. This excellent example, in contemporary paneled calfskin, is estimated at \$15,000 to \$25,000.

From the travel section of the sale comes *Compendio del Arte de Navegar*, the standard Spanish navigational manual of the period, by cosmographer and pilot Rodrigo Zamorano. Estimated at \$20,000 to \$25,000, is the 1588 fourth edition of the manual; all editions are extremely rare. Also on offer is the 1735 first edition of the most comprehensive European work on China at the time, the *Description Géographique, Historique, Chronologique, Politique, et Physique de l'Empire de la Chine*, by Jean-Baptiste du Halde. This four-volume set boasts 65 engraved plates and maps, including the first appearance of Vitus Bering's report and map of his expedition to northeast Asia and northwest America. The set, in good condition in contemporary calf gilt, is expected to bring in \$15,000 to \$20,000.

Also from the travel section is mountaineering literature from the estate of California collector Timothy Treacy, comprising early works that stimulated the growth of interest in mountain climbing as well as later classics. Among highlights are Horace-Bénédict de Saussure, *Voyages dans les Alpes*,

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Neuchâtel, 1779-96, estimated at \$2,000 to \$3,000; Albert Smith, *The New Game of the Ascent of Mont Blanc*, London, 1852 (\$2,000 to \$3,000); Edmund Thomas Coleman, *Scenes from the Snow-Fields*, London, 1859 (\$4,000 to \$6,000); Douglas Freshfield, *Across Country from Thonon to Trent. Rambles and Scrambles in Switzerland and the Tyrol*, London, 1865, the author's first book, inscribed (\$3,000 to \$5,000); and Oskar Eckenstein and August Lorria, *The Alpine Portfolio*, London, 1889 (\$2,500 to \$3,500).

Early printed books include *Dat boek dat men hiet Fasciculus temporum*, the first Dutch edition of the popular world history book by Werner Rolewinck, printed in Utrecht in 1480 (\$8,000 to \$12,000). William Shakespeare's *A Winters Tale*, extracted from the first folio, is expected to fetch \$6,000 to \$9,000. Printed in London in 1623, this early example of the Bard's work is bound in red morocco by Sangorski & Sutcliffe.

From a private collection comes a diverse selection of sixteenth to eighteenth century Greek books including the first edition of Hesychius of Alexandria, *Dictionarium*, Venice, 1514, estimated at \$6,000 to \$9,000. Another highlight from the collection is the second edition in the original Greek of Pindar's *Olympia. Pythia. Nemea. Isthmia*, 1515, the first book in Greek printed in Rome, estimated at \$3,000 to \$5,000.

The auction will be held Tuesday, October 18, beginning at 1:30 p.m. The auction preview will be open to the public Friday, October 14 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday, October 15 from noon to 5 p.m.; Monday, October 17 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Tuesday, October 18 from 10 a.m. to noon.

An illustrated auction catalogue is available for \$35 from Swann Galleries, Inc., 104 East 25th Street, New York, NY 10010, or online at www.swannalleries.com.

For further information or to make advance arrangements to bid by telephone during the auction, please contact Early Printed Books Specialist Tobias Abeloff at 212-254-4710, extension 18 or tabeloff@swannalleries.com.

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