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### **Rich Offerings of Early East Indies Charts at Swann Galleries' Maps & Atlases Auction**

New York— On **Thursday, December 8**, Swann Galleries will hold an auction of **Maps & Atlases, Natural History & Color Plate Books** featuring early navigational charts, descriptions of newly discovered plants and animals, celestial maps and scarce impressions of important nineteenth-century views.

There is a strong selection of items relating to the East Indies in this sale, including a very rare English edition of *Insulae Moluccae Celeberrimae*, 1598, Petrus Placius's "spice map," engraved by Richard Becket for Jan Huygen van Linschoten's *Discours of Voyages into ye Easte & West Indies*. The map is based on secret Portuguese manuscript charts, and highly decorated with ships, sea monsters and valuable spices from the region (Estimate: \$20,000 to \$30,000). Also available is one of the first printed maps of the area, Claudius Ptolemaeus's *Undecima Asiae Tabulae*, [1478], a masterful early example of printed mapmaking. The double-page engraved map depicts a land-locked Indian Ocean and points out a "habitat of tigers and elephants;" it is estimated at \$4,000 to \$6,000. The top lot of the sale is Robert Laurie and James Whittle's *The Complete East India Pilot, or Oriental Navigator*, a premier navigational guide of the eighteenth century. This is the most complete copy of the landmark atlas ever to come to auction, containing 113 of the 114 plates; it is expected to sell between \$40,000 and \$60,000.

A previously unrecorded first state of Frederick de Wit's wall map *Belgii XVII Provinciarum Tabula*, circa 1670, is also available, and expected to sell between \$10,000 and \$15,000.

There is a large selection of maps tracing the growth of New York City from village to industrial metropolis. One unusual lot is the *Sanitary and Topographical Map of the City and Island of New York*, a hand-colored lithograph depicting the streets of Manhattan as they were in 1865, overlaid onto the original streams and waterways of the island. The map, still used by engineers today, is expected to fetch \$2,000 to \$3,000. Also included are two panoramic views of New York City; one, drawn from life by Frederick William Billing in 1865, shows recognizable landmarks and is expected to fetch \$4,000 to \$6,000; the second is a 1840 first-state aquatint with hand coloring by Robert Havell, Jr., executed shortly after finishing his work on John James Audubon's *Birds of America* (\$3,000 to \$5,000).

Further selections relating to *Birds of America* include several elephant plates by John James Audubon. In addition to his *Mocking Bird*, *Large Billed Puffin*, *Spotted Grouse*, *Black Bellied Plover* and other favorites, there are two scarce specimens: uncolored versions of *Passenger Pigeon*, 1829, and *Three-Toed Woodpecker*, 1832 (\$8,000 to \$12,000 and \$3,000 to \$5,000, respectively). These two plates offer a rare glimpse into the process behind *Birds of America*, showing the engravings with untrimmed deckled edges and before the addition of color.

**MORE**

The Natural History section of the sale includes William Roscoe's *Monandrian Plants of the Order Scitamineae*, of which only 150 were printed. This fine copy, which focuses on *Zingiberales* flowers, was passed through Roscoe's family and is currently valued at \$20,000 to \$30,000. Also available is the first edition of Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker's *The Rhododendrons of Sikkim-Himalaya*, with 30 hand-colored lithographs made from drawings done on location, with many species being described for the first time. This important early work on botany is expected to bring \$10,000 to \$15,000.

One peculiar lot in the sale is a scarce 1846 set of six engravings comparing the heliocentric and geocentric model of the solar system as it relates to Muggletonian beliefs, estimated at \$1,000 to \$1,500. Other celestial maps include *Haemisphaerium Stellatum Boreale Cum Subiectio Hemisphaerio Terresti*, a resplendent engraving depicting the beasts of the zodiac lumbering above the earth (\$3,000 to \$5,000).

Finally, a very special offering: the complete original deluxe edition of Thomas Shotter Boys's *Original Views of London As It Is*, 1841, considered the finest lithographed plate book on nineteenth-century London. This is only the third copy of this edition to come to auction in the last fifty years and it is estimated to sell between \$5,000 and \$7,500.

The auction will be held Thursday, December 8, beginning at 1:30 p.m. The auction preview will be open to the public Saturday, December 3 from noon to 5 p.m.; Monday, December 5 through Wednesday, December 7 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Thursday, December 8 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.swanngalleries.com](http://www.swanngalleries.com).

For further information or to make advance arrangements to bid by telephone during the auction, please contact specialist Caleb Kiffer via [caleb@swanngalleries.com](mailto:caleb@swanngalleries.com) or at 212-254-4710, ext. 17.

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