



WONDER OF THE WORLD

Joan Blaeu's *Atlas Maior of 1665* was the greatest atlas of its day. Its eleven volumes of 600 exquisitely printed and hand-coloured maps defined global geography in Europe for more than a century. The scale and physical beauty of Blaeu's atlas are staggering, as editor Peter van der Krogt, the world's leading expert on the cartographer, argues in his deft introduction. The atlas's hundreds of thousands

of copperplate pages rolled off Blaeu's nine Amsterdam printing presses (then the largest in the world) at a time when the Dutch East India Company was dominating Asian trade and mapping its territories. Taschen's reproduction is outstanding, with crisp reproductions and elegant, fold-out plates. This is a book of great beauty – the ultimate gift for any map connoisseur. Blaeu would have approved and, considering his contemporaries would have paid the equivalent of €20,000 for the atlas, it's a snip at £100.

Jerry Brotton

Atlas Maior of 1665 by Joan Blaeu, edited by Peter van der Krogt (Taschen, £100)