

Atlas Maior of 1665

by Joan Blaeu (Taschen, 593 pages, hardcover, \$US200)
Considered one of the most precious books of the 17th century and certainly history's most comprehensive Baroque atlas, Joan Blaeu's *Atlas Maior* is now available as a reprint.

The publishers used the National Library of Vienna's original gold-heightened copy to ensure the best possible detail and quality. The original work contained 596 maps covering Arctica, Europe, Africa, Asia and America. Originally, a total of 1550 copies were printed in Latin, French, Dutch and Spanish. To complete this project, 950,000 copperplates were used as well as 5,440,000 text pages for all four editions. It took a typesetter over seven hours per page. Add to that headers and corrections, and it's believed that five typesetters worked full-time for six years to print the atlas. The reprint is stunning: it's a massive 42-centimetres high and its colourful, hand-drawn maps are printed on heavy paper. Truly a tribute to one of history's finest atlases. [AS]

