

# *Leen Helmink Antique Maps & Atlases*

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*Stradanus*

*[ Untitled ] Navita Erythraeum ...*

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## *Certificate of Authentication*

This is to certify that the item illustrated and described below is a genuine antique map, print or book that was first produced and published in 1578, today 446 years ago.

May 28, 2024

**Dr Leendert Helmink, Ph.D.**

**Cartographer(s)**

Stradanus

**First Published**

Antwerp, 1578

**This edition**

1578 first edition first state

**Size**

19.5 x 27 cms

**Technique**

Copper engraving

**Stock number**

19493

**Condition**

excellent



104. Nauta Erythraeum pauidus qui nauigat aequor,  
In prora et puppis summo resonantia pendet

Tintinnabula: eo sonitu praegrandia Cete,  
Balenas, et Monstra marina a nauibus arret.

## Description

Legendary and iconic engraving by Philip Galle after a drawing by Jan van der Straet (ca. 1575), showing the animals and the dangers of the Indian Ocean.

The print is one of the most famous and dramatic maritime prints from the early age of exploration.

Of utmost rarity. The final print and climax from Stradanus' seminal print series of animals *Venationes Ferarum, Avium, Piscium*. (The Hunting of Wild, Birds, and Fishes), first published in 1578. The print is however nearly always lacking in copies of that book.

## Condition

Here in the first edition first state of 1578, with the plate number "104" in the lower left, engraved and published in Antwerp by Philip Galle. Early strong and even imprint of the copperplate.

## Ship types

The ships are typical Portuguese carracks, the work horses of the 16th century. They explored and opened up the world's oceans for trade. As the old proverb goes: *If the world had been ten times the size, the Portuguese would also have discovered it*. Vasco da Gama used carracks on his epic first voyage to Asia in 1497-99, and Columbus and Magellan used very similar vessels on their voyages of exploration.

## Transcription and translation

We have not been able to find in the literature or online a translation of the accompanying text at the bottom of the print, so we give ours:

*Navita Erythraeum pavidus qui navigat aequor,  
In prorae et puppis summo resonantia pendet  
Tintinnabula : eo sonitu praegrandia Cete,  
Balenas, et monstra marina a navibus arcet.*

**The fearful sailor who navigates the Indian Ocean,  
Above the prow and stern hangs ringing Bells :  
the sound for warding off attacks on ships by  
huge whales and the monsters of the sea.**

Interestingly, and as can be seen from the ship's depiction, this means these ships were equipped with dozens of large bells all around, with the purpose of scaring away the big whales and the monsters of the sea.

**Erfindungen und Entdeckungen des Mittelalters und der Renaissance in Kupferstichen des ausgehenden 16. Jahrhunderts.**

The illustrator of the sheet is Bruges-born Jan van der Straet (1523-1605), who in Latin was called Stradanus and in Italian Stradano (or della Strada). Stradanus, painter and draftsman, worked mainly in Florence, where he belonged to the circle of the artist and art writer Giorgio Vasari. Like Vasari, Stradanus moved in the path of late Renaissance mannerism. Characteristic of the mannerism of Stradanus is the abundance of juxtaposed details, the extensive joy, the fragmentation of the space, the narrowness and compression of the images, the use of the picture in picture and the contortion of the figures.

From his Flemish motherland Stradanus brought with him the strong inclination for the powerful and the realistic depiction. Vasari praised Stradanus' great drawing skills, his excellent ideas and his ingenuity. In the extensive work of Stradanus comes out a variety of pasteboards, which he delivered to the wall carpet manufacturer for the Medici family in Florence. Especially his hunting scenes made Stradanus famous. We encounter his paintings and frescoes mainly in Florence, such as in Palazzo Vecchio.

(Klemm)

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## Johannes Stradanus (1523-1605)

Johannes Stradanus, or Giovanni Stradano, or Jan van der Straet or van der Straat, or Stradanus or Stratensis (Bruges 1523 – Florence 2 November 1605) was a Flanders-born mannerist artist active mainly in 16th century Florence, Italy. Born in Bruges, he began his training in the shop of his father, then in Antwerp with Pieter Aertsen.

By 1545, he had joined the Antwerp guild of Saint Luke or painters' guild, the equivalent of the Roman (Accademia San Luca). He reached Florence in 1550, where he entered in the service of the Medici Dukes and Giorgio Vasari. The Medici court was his main patron, and he designed a number of scenes for tapestries and frescoes to decorate the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence, the Medici Villa at Poggio a Caiano, and providing illustrations for the Arazzeria Medicea. He also worked for the Pazzi Family in their estates in Montemurlo.

Many of his drawings became so popular they were translated into prints. Stradanus collaborated with printmakers Hieronymus Cock and the Galle family in Antwerp to produce hundreds of prints on a variety of subjects. He also worked with Francesco Salviati in the decoration of the Vatican Belvedere. He was one of the artists involved in the Studiolo of Francesco I (1567-1577), to which he contributed two paintings including "The Alchemist's Studio".

Karel van Mander wrote about Stradanus in his *Schilder-boeck* (book of famous painters), mentioning that he was 74 in 1603 and still a member of the Florence drawing academy. He also mentioned his pupil Antonio Tempesta, who painted ships and Amazon battle scenes (bataljes), mainly in 16th century Florence, Italy.

Johannes Stradanus is one of the most well-known unknown artists in history. Even though the Bruges-born painter (1523-1605) had a more than successful career in the highly competitive city of Florence in the second half of the 16th century, his name long remained a well-hidden secret for specialists only. Many of his works, though, are very well known.

Around 1570, Stradanus – who began as designer of tapestries and fresco painter in service of the Medici – started a second career as draughtsman and designer of hundreds of prints. These were engraved, published and distributed all over the then-known world by Antwerp publishers in huge numbers. It are these works – widely collected, copied and used – which secured Stradanus's place in art history as an inventive and influential artist.

Johannes Stradanus died in Florence in 1605.

### Literature

New Hollstein (Dutch and Flemish) 342-345 (Johannes Stradanus).

Stevens & Tooley: Map Collector 2, p.22-24, "One of the Rarest Picture Atlases".

van Mander: *Schilder-boeck*, 1604.

Sellink: Stradanus (1523-1605), Court Artist of the Medici, 2008.

Markey: Renaissance Invention - Stradanus's Nova Reperta, 2020.