



ZOOLOGY -

Merian, Maria Sibylla.

Over de voortteeling en wonderbaerlyke veranderingen der Surinaamsche insecten...  
With engraved colored frontispiece, colored title vignette, colored vignette in the preface  
and 72 copper plates by J. Mulder, P. Sluyter u. D. Stoopendael after M. S. Merian.  
[Enclosed:] De europische Insecten. Naauwkeurig onderzocht, nat leven geschildert en  
in print gebragt. With engraved colored frontispiece, colored title vignette, colored  
vignette at end of text, and 188 (instead of 184, plates; CXVII-CXX is double) colored  
engravings, four each on one plate. 2 parts in 1 volume.

Amsterdam, Oosterwyk, 1719 and Bernard, 1730. 53 x 38 cm. Full leather of the time  
with ornamental cover and spine gilt and marbled edges on all sides (spine and corners

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neatly restored, somewhat bumped and scuffed, cover with small missing parts).

Nissen BBI 1341 and 1342 - Wettengl 156 - Magee/Touzel 58. - The volume on Surinam is the main work of Maria Sibylla Merian, now extremely rare, which owes its creation to the epochal journey of the artist with her daughter to South America in the years 1699 to 1701. The plates, which are equally important in terms of natural science as in their artistic execution, show exotic butterflies in all stages of development on flowering plants and fruits, mostly in life size, supplemented by some miniature depictions of reptiles and amphibians. "Her mastery, already demonstrated in the Caterpillar Book, of preserving the peculiarity of the plants and animals in their depiction and yet building them into an effective pictorial composition, has reached an incomparable climax with the Surinam work. It not only belongs to the best old works of natural science, but is one of the most splendid illustrated books ever created" (Rückert p. 14). "The narrative strategy was altogether [...] an aesthetic strategy: artfully the European reader and viewer were led from the familiar to the strange and from the foreign to the own. The first sheet with the already familiar pineapple and the astonishingly large cockroaches already referred to the completely different nature of America, the intense sweetness of the fruits and the tremendous destructive power of the insects" (Natalie Zemon Davis, in: Kurt Wettengl (ed.): Maria Sibylla Merian 1647-1717. Künstlerin und Naturforscherin, Ostfildern 2013, p. 183). - Copies in old, neatly executed, fine coloring without significant puncture. - The part on Suriname as the second, only posthumously published edition, compared to the earlier edition with 12 additional plates, the part on European insects in the first (Dutch) edition. - Occasionally a little brown spotting, rarely minimal finger spotting, overall in good condition.

CHF 120 000 / 160 000

€ 123 710 / 164 950







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