



Passion for Fashion (103)

20th November 2017

Lot 147

Estimate: £12000 - £18000 +Fees

The Sudeley coverlet, Italian, circa 1720-30, the ivory satin ground richly embroidered in satin stitch with coloured silks, silver and gold threads, with a central vignette of Christopher Columbus landing on the island of Hispaniola in 1492 after a 1594 engraving by Theadore de Bry from his 'America' series, the centurion-like soldiers plant a cross in the ground surrounded by scantily clad natives with feather headresses and skirts - with native huts in the distance and just the prow of the galleon showing, within a strapwork cartouche worked in diapered gold threads interspersed with peonies and pomegranates in shades of pink silk, worked to the borders with large rose arbours enclosing embroidered scenes of a lion or wolf attacking a hound, a garlanded bull (Europa), a boar hunt and a stag hunt interspersed with vine clad ruined classical buildings, distant palaces, the corners with large single allegorical figures depicting exotic lands/continent, comprising: a warrior with breastplate and shield holding a falcon, taking shade under a parasol (Asia), a moustachioed figure under a palm tree with chained monkey (Africa), a female in draped robes with shepherd's crook and peacock headress and displaying peacock to one side (India/Asia) and a turbaned figure with a camel (Asia), lined in crimson silk and with ivory silk fringed edges, 273 by 254cm, 107 1/2in by 100in excluding fringes

The De Bry collection of around 600 copper engravings was to prove highly influential in this 'Age of Discovery' which was to inform how many Europeans viewed the world, especially in relation to America for which there had been no previous iconographic traditions. These prints were widely copied and in 1732 the Amsterdam-based Huguenot writer Bernard Picart, for his book entitled 'Ceremonies et Costumes Religieuses de Tous les Peuples du Monde', created a very similar illustration of the Columbus' landfall, which included a mother nursing her child as indeed this coverlet does.

Property of Sudeley Castle. This coverlet was recently rediscovered when undertaking an inventory of the entire castle contents.