



NEWS RELEASE
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New exhibition at the Stewart Museum

20 000 LEAGUES OVER LAND AND SEA

Exploring six centuries of cartography



Montréal, June 11, 2013 — From June 12, 2013 to April 13, 2014, the Stewart Museum presents the exhibition *20 000 Leagues Over Land and Sea - Exploring Six Centuries of Cartography*. Discover some hundred maps from the Stewart Museum's collection, the largest, most consistent and comprehensive collection of ancient cartography and cosmography conserved by a private museum in Québec.

On display are world maps, continental maps, maps of countries, sea charts, polar maps, celestial maps and city maps. A selection of navigational, astronomical and surveying instruments as well as globes of the earth and the heavens—all from the Stewart Museum's collection— complements the exhibition. More than six centuries of mapmaking will be presented, with special emphasis on the Age of Discovery, from the 15th to the 18th centuries. This is an outstanding opportunity to discover the little-known yet fascinating world of ancient mapmaking.

The importance of cartography

The cartographer's craft, as it emerged and developed in the 16th and 17th centuries, quickly became essential to mariners, explorers and administrators, and went hand in hand with navigating the seas, commanding crews and governing territories.

Maps have always been much more than just simple graphic representations of geographic areas. That is why ancient cartography gives us access to an exciting world at the crossroads of science, politics and aesthetics. According to Guy Vadeboncoeur, Executive Director and Chief Curator of the Stewart Museum, a map "is not a neutral object, devoid of values and intentions.

Beyond scientific objectivity conferred to the map, there is a discourse to decipher in direct link with the social image of the cartographer and the general economy of knowledge of an era and society”.

Integration of new technologies

What about geographic maps today? They’re everywhere and in a multitude of formats using the new technologies: GPS in the car, Google Maps at home, geopositioning on smart phones. After visiting the exhibition *20 000 Leagues Over Land and Sea*, visitors will have a better understanding of the importance of cartography in daily life. They will also experience an “enhanced reading” of maps. On a large touchscreen, visitors will be able to explore 20 digitized, high-definition ancient maps to better appreciate their detail, richness, beauty and complexity, and discover the myriad ways of depicting heaven and earth.

Moreover, thanks to the collaboration of Natural Resources Canada, visitors are invited to consult for free on the spot maps from the latest generation of Toporama products from the Centre for Topographic Information. As a prologue, the Archives of the Port of Montreal has a dozen reproductions of plans of the Port of Montreal from 1800 to today.

About the Stewart Museum

The Stewart Museum, a private, non-profit history museum, was founded in 1955 by philanthropist David M. Stewart. The institution holds a unique collection of nearly 27,000 artifacts, archival documents and rare books that show the European presence in New France and North America up to the present. The Museum’s main mission: to conserve and exhibit these objects, which relate to the voyages, scientific advances, feats of arms, beliefs and daily life of our ancestors. This Montréal organization is located in the arsenal of the British fortified depot on *Île Sainte-Hélène*, a 19th century military construction registered in the *Répertoire du patrimoine culturel du Québec*.

The Stewart Museum is open from Wednesday to Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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