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Images

Joan Blaeu (1596–1673)

Archipelagus Orientalis, sive Asiaticus
(Eastern and Asian archipelago) 1663

Maps Collection, National Library of
Australia, Canberra, MAP RM 4701

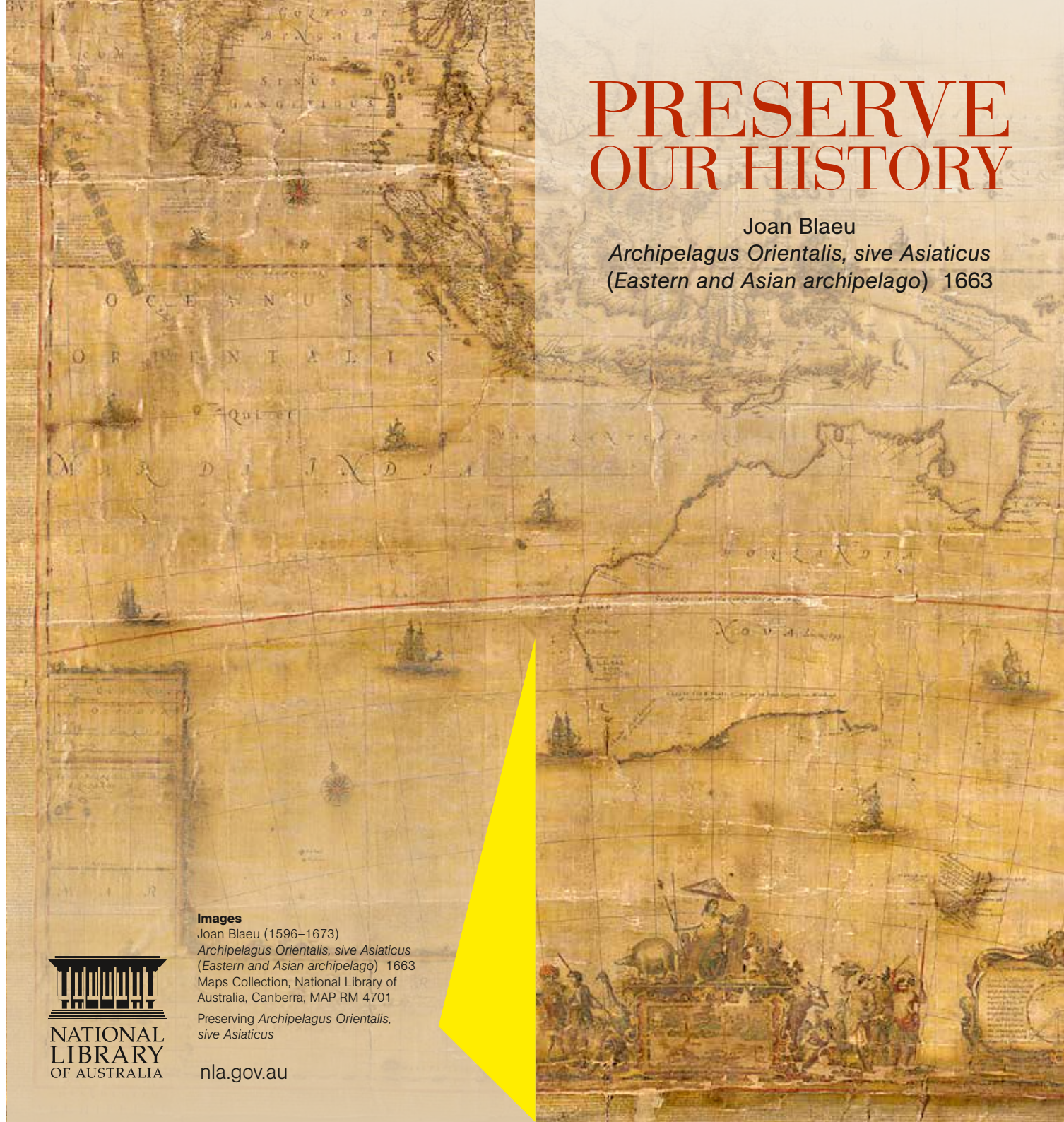
Preserving *Archipelagus Orientalis,*
sive Asiaticus

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PRESERVE OUR HISTORY

Joan Blaeu

Archipelagus Orientalis, sive Asiaticus
(Eastern and Asian archipelago) 1663



Help Us Preserve *Archipelagus Orientalis, sive Asiaticus*

The National Library's exhibition *Mapping Our World: Terra Incognita to Australia* features one of its recent major map acquisitions by master cartographer Joan Blaeu (1596–1673), *Archipelagus Orientalis, sive Asiaticus* (*Eastern and Asian archipelago*), 1663.

This remarkable wall chart—one of only four surviving copies in the world—is in an exceedingly fragile state, but conservators from the Library's Preservation Branch have embarked on a meticulous and time-consuming preservation treatment to stabilise it for display.

Fortunately, the areas of greatest interest, illuminating the story of the Dutch discovery of Australia—the mention of the first sighting of Tasmania and the text naming the continent—are intact and clearly visible.

What Is the Significance of the Map?

Over 1.5 metres in width, the map is the first large-scale map of New Holland, and one of four complete examples known to exist.

Professor Gunter Schilder, the foremost expert on Dutch cartography, describes it as possibly the most important map of the Dutch East India Company, and the best general map of Dutch sea power in South East Asia executed in the 1600s. It is the earliest large-scale map of Abel Tasman's discoveries, and is regarded as the first wall map of Australia. As the map on which all subsequent maps of New Holland were based, it can rightly be considered the 'birth certificate' of New Holland.

How Did This 350-year-old Map Survive?

Survival of this wall map is remarkable, and owes much to lack of awareness of its existence over perhaps a century. The map was found in 2010 on a property in Sweden owned by the late Richard Du Rietz, who ran the long-established antiquarian bookshop Thulins Antikvariat. A few examples of the map were known worldwide—but none had come to light since the seventeenth century. This copy was sold at auction to a private vendor who recognised it as a Blaeu and offered it to the National Library.

How You Can Help

We need your help to complete preservation of the map to ensure its future survival. Your support will provide further treatment: the varnish (which has become yellowed and brittle) will be removed; the map's backing will be repaired; a long-term storage and display system will be developed; and the original display rods will be reattached.

Donate online at nla.gov.au/blaeu-map, or pick up a donation form at the entrance to the Exhibition Gallery or at the Information Desk in the Foyer during *Mapping Our World* (from 7 November 2013 to 10 March 2014).

Find out more about the Blaeu map and about the exhibition at nla.gov.au/blaeu-map. You can view *Archipelagus Orientalis, sive Asiaticus* in the Treasures Gallery during *Mapping Our World*.



Donation Form

To support the preservation of Blaeu's *Archipelagus Orientalis, sive Asiaticus*, donate online at nla.gov.au/blaeu-map, or return the donation form below.



Thank you for supporting the National Library of Australia.

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(Continued overleaf)