

World's largest Atlas finds home in Australia's oldest library

19/6/2015

Australia's only copy of the world's largest atlas – measuring a mammoth 1.8 x 2.7 metres open – is on public display in the State Library's Mitchell Library Reading Room for the next four weeks.

The *Earth Platinum* is a spectacular new addition to the State Library of NSW's rich collections, which also boasts the world's first atlas produced in 1570 by Ortelius.

Only 31 copies of the 150 kilo, limited edition *Earth Platinum* atlas were released by publisher Millennium House (Sydney) in 2012. Not surprisingly, it is listed in the Guinness World Records!

More than 100 international cartographers, geographers and photographers from across the globe were involved in the production of the maps included in the atlas. The 128 pages contain 61 pages of maps, 27 images of famous locations (including St. Peter's Basilica, the Antarctic and Machu Picchu) and a double-page spread of the world's national flags. Many of the images were made from stitching together 1,000 individual photos, and the largest image has 12,000 photos joined together.

The atlas was printed in Italy and bound in Hong Kong. Now Australians can see it in person for the first time at the State Library of NSW.

According to the State Library's maps expert, Maggie Patton: "The State Library holds an impressive collection of world atlases, and *Earth Platinum* is a remarkable example of a unique milestone in the history of cartographic publishing."

Until now, the famous 1660 Klencke Atlas – found in the British Library's collection – held the world record for the largest atlas.

Gordon Cheers of Millennium House conceived of the idea of the world's largest atlas over 25 years ago, and it took four years to complete.

Gordon has said: "It's not always easy to get a sense of scale of our planet, this is the closest a book can go to achieve this. This is the closest any of us who are not astronauts can get to obtain a feeling of how the whole world would look from space."

MEDIA INQUIRIES:

Vanessa Bond, Media & Communications Manager, State Library of NSW
(02) 9273 1566, 0411 259 898, vanessa.bond@sl.nsw.gov.au