

DAVID TUNICK, INC.

PRINTS & DRAWINGS

ALBRECHT DÜRER (1471-1528)

The Rhinoceros

Date:	1515
Medium:	Woodcut on laid paper
Annotations:	"Rinoceronta No. 136" at the bottom in brown pen-and-ink in an old hand verso ("no. 136" refers to the number assigned to the print by Bartsch and Hausmann, the latter catalogue raisonné published in 1861); "139" at the top edge in brown pen-and-ink in an old hand recto
Dimensions:	216 x 299 mm. 8 1/2 in. x 11 3/4 in.
References:	Meder 273, Schoch, Mende, and Scherbaum 241, probably early in or just before the 4 th edition of 8, with the thin horizontal crack through the left hind leg barely visible (probably printed c. 1540-50 or not long after)
Watermark:	Similar to Bishop's Coat of Arms, Meder 39 (which Meder dates 1540-50)
Provenance:	David Tunick, Inc.; c. 1968 to Private collection, U.S.A.
Impression:	Very fine, with consequent full printing, little or no wear throughout, including the thinly cut lines, which are distinct and clear
Condition:	Damage at the corners and other scattered small flaws mostly around the edges, vertical center crease, some surface dirt, trimmed to the borderline, without text

Dürer added an explanation in letterpress above the image of his famous woodcut in 1515:

In the year 1513 [sic] A.D., on May 1, there was brought to Emanuel of Lisbon, the great powerful king of Portugal, such a living animal from India. They call it a rhinoceros. It is represented here in its full form. It has the color of a speckled turtle. And it is almost entirely covered by a thick shell. And in size it is like the elephant but lower on its legs, and almost invulnerable. It has a sharp horn on its nose, which it starts to sharpen whenever it is near stones. The stupid animal is the mortal enemy of the elephant. The elephant fears it terribly, because where they encounter, it runs with its head down between its front legs and fatally rips open the stomach of the elephant which is unable to protect itself. Because the animal is so well armed, the elephant cannot do anything about it. They also say that the rhinoceros is fast, lively and clever.

The popularity of *The Rhinoceros* was such that it went through eight separate editions over a period of more than a century after Dürer made it.

Rare in impressions as early as this example.