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DEUX RARES PORTRAITS IMPERIAUX D'OFFICIERS, ENCRE ET COULEUR SUR PAPIER

CHINE, ATTRIBUES A JIN TINGBIAO (ACTIF ENTRE 1757 ET 1767) ET PORTANT DES INSCRIPTIONS DE L'EMPEREUR QIANLONG (1736-1795)

Tous deux représentés debout, tenant une épée dont le fourreau est fait de galuchat, l'un ayant également un arc et un carquois attachés à sa ceinture, parés d'une coiffe piquée d'une plume de paon, l'un vêtu d'une robe beige, l'autre d'une tunique marron et d'une veste bleue, les visages individualisés avec un grand souci du détail ; petites usures

Dimensions: 30,3 x 31,8 cm. (11¼ x 12½ in.)

(2)

€90,000-120,000

US\$ 120,000-160,000

GBP 81,000-110,000

PROVENANCE:

Acquired in Berlin, Germany, in the late 1950s.

The inscription can be translated:

The Late Vice Commandant, Commandant of Calvary, One-Cloud Calvary San Ge
He fled from the Battle of Hunqi; was demoted for jeopardising the defences. Rejoined the army in atonement for his negligence, he always advanced in battles. Lost his life in Heishui, he has gained merit and dispelled all previous wrongdoing. Now his portrait is in the Hall of Purple Splendour, to commemorate his boundless loyalty.

Vice Commandant, Loyal Hero Wen Bu

In his life he knows no fear; in battles he does not retreat, nor does he get injured. His head is made of bronze, his back of iron. His bow is strong enough to carry buckets of water, his arrows as forceful as ploughs. The Marquis Wen named Bu, is this him, or is this not him?

(Marquis of Wen, Lü Bu, was a famous Eastern Han warrior. Here the Qianlong Emperor used Wen Bu's name as a pun to evoke the bravery of Lü Bu as a comparison.)

These two bannerman paintings are fragments from a scroll, originally comprising fifty portraits and commissioned by the Qianlong Emperor from the court artist Jin Tingbiao in the 25th year of his reign (AD 1760). The scroll commemorates the success of these military subjects in the campaign against the Uyghurs of the Western frontiers. Two scrolls apparently were made, featuring a total of one hundred banner men, but only the first scroll, to which the current two portraits belonged, is recorded in the imperial catalogue *Shiqu Baoji chubian*. It is very possible that larger full-scale portraits based on these smaller studies were also commissioned. The Qianlong Emperor commissioned in total two hundred and eighty of such portraits of his loyal military subjects after the successes of various military campaigns during his reign. These portraits were stored in the Hall of Purple Splendour (*Ziguangge*), the current examples being among the earliest. Three portraits from the same scroll are in the Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst in Berlin, illustrated in *Bilder für die Halle des Purpurglanzes*, Berlin 2003, cat. nos. 1-3; a set of ten portraits was sold in Sotheby's New York, 31 March 2005, lot 280; and another single portrait was sold in Sotheby's New York, 21 September, 2006, lot 9.

TWO RARE IMPERIAL "BANNERMAN" PORTRAITS

CHINA, ATTRIBUTED TO JIN TINGBIAO (ACTIVE 1757-67) WITH INSCRIPTIONS BY THE QIANLONG EMPEROR (1736-95)



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