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Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art

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LOT 9

PROPERTY FROM A CANADIAN COLLECTOR
**AN EXTREMELY RARE AND IMPORTANT BANNERMAN
 PAINTING OF AYUSI ATTRIBUTED TO JIN TINGBIAO
 (ACTIVE 1757-1767), INSCRIBED BY THE QIANLONG
 EMPEROR**

QIANLONG PERIOD, CIRCA 1760

100,000—150,000 USD

Lot Sold. Hammer Price with Buyer's Premium: 192,000 USD

MEASUREMENTS

measurements note

11 3/4 by 11 3/4 in., 29.8 by 29.8 cm

DESCRIPTION

ink and color on paper

the figure painstakingly portrayed in fine detail, the tanned and weathered face framed by a fur-trimmed winter hat with a bead and peacock feather denoting his rank, standing with his right foot lifted slightly off the ground as if about to take a step and throw the lance mounted diagonally across his back, his right arm raised with hand reaching for the lance, the left arm akimbo with hand firmly gripping the shaft, dressed in finely meshed chainmail worn over a long skirt covered by tan riding chaps, the feet covered in black silk boots with green soles, carrying a long sword covered in a shagreen scabbard with a green silk cord hilt and gilt bronze fittings, further armed with a buffalo horn archer's bow, encased in a tooled leather bow casing, and a quiver filled with arrows, some with different fletching, the right side handwritten with a eulogy in *xingshu* (running script) by the Qianlong Emperor and one Imperial seam seal reading *Qianlong yulan zhi bao*, framed

PROVENANCE

Acquired in Berlin, 1957.

LITERATURE AND REFERENCES

Dr. Ka Bo Tsang, 'Portraits of Meritorious Officials: Eight Examples from the First Set Commissioned by the Qianlong Emperor', *Arts Asiatique*, no. 47, 1992, pp.54, 69-88.

CATALOGUE NOTE

Although Ayusi's exact dates are not known, he is recorded with the titles Junior Assistant Chamberlain of the Imperial Guard (Chinese: *sanzhi dachen*, Manchu: *sula amban*) and *Kara Baturu* (literally: "black hero"). He was a Zungar (Western Mongol) who surrendered in 1750 to the Qing following his leader Saral, and was then granted a military position in the Qing army. In the spring of 1755 (14th day of the

fifth month) he commanded 24 riders on a night attack against the camp of the head of the Western Mongol rebels, Dawaci. Although Dawaci escaped, almost his entire family and a majority of his followers were captured. Since not a single soldier was lost by the Qing army in that tactically brilliant attack, and since the enemy forces were so severely weakened by such a rapidly undertaken expedition, the Qianlong Emperor undertook a range of measures to celebrate this victory properly.

The inscription on the present painting reads (translated by Ka Bo Tsang, *ibid.*, p. 76): "As the rebels commanded strategic points at Gädän-Ola, he led the twenty-four men on a by-path to raid the camp from behind. The rebels dispersed in great disorder, therefore it was a great success. An Eleuth from birth, he had surrendered to the Emperor and had demonstrated his loyalty. In the spring of the *gengchen*-year of the era Qianlong [1760] composed by the emperor."

In addition to this portrait, the Qianlong Emperor also commissioned a handscroll, 'Ayusi Assailing The Rebels with a Lance,' by Giuseppe Castiglione (1688-1766) in 1755 (fig. 2), now in the National Palace Museum, Taipei, and illustrated in Chuimei Ho and Bennet Bronson, *Splendors of China's Forbidden City*, New York, 2004, p. 111, cat. no. 122. A full-scale portrait of Ayusi (fig. 3) was also commissioned and hung in the Hall of Purple Splendor (*Ziguang ge*), now in the Tianjin Museum, illustrated in *100 Years of Treasure Collecting: Highlights of the Tianjin Museum*, 2005.

In the sixth month of the year 1760, the Qianlong Emperor ordered the much admired court painter Jin Tingbiao (active 1757-67) to paint a horizontal scroll on paper with fifty portraits of the officers involved in the East Turkestan campaign, for his private use. A second scroll with fifty portraits was evidently commissioned by the Emperor in the following year. However, the imperial catalogue *Shiqu baoji xubian* ('Precious Collection of the Stone Canal Hall,' Second Series) of 1793 mentions only the first scroll. Of the few surviving fragments of the first 1760 scroll, three portraits are kept at the Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst in Berlin (Arigun, Looge and Daktana), illustrated in *Bilder für die Halle des Purpurglanzes*, Berlin, 2003, cat. nos. 1-3, and a rare set of ten portraits (fig. 1) was sold in these rooms 31st March 2005, lot 280. The present lot appears to be the only other surviving 1760 fragment published. For a further discussion on bannermen paintings see Annette Bügener's essay, "The Qianlong Emperor and His Bannermen", *ibid.*

We are indebted to Dr. Annette Bügener, Junior Curator in the East Asian Department of the Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Frankfurt, Germany for her assistance in researching this painting.