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Yuan Ming Yuan The Garden of Absolute Clarity and Imperial Peking, The Last Days

Sale: HK0260 | **Location:** Hong Kong
Auction Dates: Session 1: Tue, 09 Oct 07 10:30 AM

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LOT 1315 (of 33)

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[View Zoom/Large Image](#)**LOT 1315**

AN EXTREMELY RARE AND IMPORTANT IMPERIAL COURT PAINTING OF THE BANNERMAN TANIBU ATTRIBUTED TO AI QIMENG (IGNAZ SICHELBAUT) (1708-1780) AND JIN TINGBIAO (FL. 1757-1767)

QING DYNASTY, QIANLONG PERIOD, DATED TO THE GENGCHEN YEAR (CORRESPONDING TO 1760)

10,000,000—15,000,000 HKD

Lot Sold. Hammer Price with Buyer's Premium: 11,527,500 HKD

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ALTERNATE VIEWS:

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MEASUREMENTS**measurements note**

186 by 95.3cm., 73 1/4 by 37 1/2 in.

DESCRIPTION

THIS IS A PREMIUM LOT. CLIENTS WHO WISH TO BID ON PREMIUM LOTS ARE REQUESTED TO COMPLETE THE PREMIUM LOT PRE-REGISTRATION 3 WORKING DAYS PRIOR TO THE SALE.

hanging scroll, ink and colour on silk, framed
 portraying the Second Ranked officer of the Imperial Guard, the youthful figure full of vigor and energy with an angular ruddy face and a light mustache, his head covered with a winter fur-lined hat with silk floss on top and set with a blue bead denoting his rank and a single-eye peacock feather, dressed in a fine mesh chain mail worn over a blue jacket, his blue trousers covered with elaborate pale lavender floral brocade riding chaps, over a pair of black silk riding boots with white and green soles, his waist tied with a finely painted blue knotted belt suspending the buffalo horn bow with a taut white bow-string and ceremonial sword covered with a shagreen sheath around his waist, his right hand with a white jade thumb ring grasping a bundle of arrows held in the shagreen-trimmed quiver further hanging from his waist, his left arm bent with his thumb and index finger tugging at the string on his collar, eulogized with several lines of text written at the top, on the right side in Chinese in *kaishu* (standard script) and in Manchu on the left, signed *chen Liu Tongxun*, *chen Liu Lun* and *chen Yu Minzhong*, dated *Qianlong geng chen*, 1760, spring, and with one seal of the Qianlong Emperor, *Qian Long Yu Lan Zhi Bao*

PROVENANCE

Removed from the Ziguangge (Hall of the Purple Splendour), Zhongnanhai, Beijing, 1900.
 Sotheby's New York, 1st June 1993, lot 53.

CATALOGUE NOTE

Transcription of the Manchu inscription:

Jai jergi hiya. tegus baturu Tanibu:

*untuhun galai hūlha be jafaci.
utala hūlha jailame mutehakū.
ududu mudan niyalma be aitubuci.
ukcahakū niyalma akū:*

*terebe wargi aiman Badaksan de unggihe.
terebe amargi aiman Urus de unggihe.
teng seme emhun amasi Julesi yabure jakade.
tegas baturu sere colo buhe:*

*Abkai wehiyehe sanyan muduri aniya niyengniyeri.
amban Lio tung hiyūn. amban Lio luwen. amban loi min jung
hese be dahame gingguleme maktacun araha:*

Translation of the Chinese inscription:

*The second class officer of the imperial guard and perfect hero (tegas baturu) Tanibu.
When he spat into his hands and tied-up the bandits,
Then, none of the bandits was able to free them by using force.
[But] when he saved men at the risk of his own life,
Then, there was not a single one who did not get free.
From Badakhshan in the west
To the Russians in the north
He moved alone back and forth
Ah, you perfect one!*

In spring of the gengchen year of the Qianlong era [1760] the official Liu Tongxun, official Liu Lun, and official Yu Minzhong respectfully wrote this eulogy on imperial command.

Text recorded in (*Qinding*) *Huangyu Xiyu tuzhi*, shou 4, 19b.

One seal of the imperial collection of the Qianlong Emperor, *Qianlong yulan zhi bao* ("treasure appreciated by the Emperor Qianlong").

Portrait of a Perfect Hero - a Bannerman Painting from the Hall of Purple Splendour (Ziguangge)
Dr. Annette Bügener
Specialist of Qing dynasty Portrait Painting
Director of Education
Museum of East Asian Art, Cologne

Second class officer of the imperial guard, Tanibu would have been lost to history if the Qianlong Emperor (r. 1736-1795) had not commissioned his portrait to be painted and hung in the Ziguangge, a hall of fame for immortal heroes located in the West Garden of the imperial palace precincts in Beijing. Although Tanibu is not listed in the standard Qing biographies, his merit on the battlefield was obviously so extraordinary that his portrait became painting number 41 in the second set of fifty portraits commissioned after the glorious victory of the military campaign in East Turkestan (today Xinjiang autonomous region) against the Western Mongols in the years 1755 to 1759. In his function as an imperial bodyguard it is highly probable that he was a member of one of the eight Manchu banners. From the eulogy written by three eminent statesmen and close advisors to the Emperor, we can conclude that Tanibu was not only involved in the negotiations with the Russians in the eighth month of the year 1757, but even played a decisive role in the extradition of the fugitive rebel leader of the Western Mongols, Amursana, who had escaped following Manchu troops across the border.

The painting shows Tanibu in his prime, wearing a long dark blue surcoat with a fine chain mail covering his trunk and arms and an additional skirt-like thigh protection. On his waist he is carrying a sabre with a hilt covered with shagreen, next to a typical Manchu double-reflex bow in a case, as well as a quiver filled with arrows. From his black fur-trimmed winter hat dangles a single-eyed peacock feather, an imperial gift bestowed only to officers who had distinguished themselves in a military campaign. The archer's ring on his right thumb and his gesture of grasping for an arrow from behind allude to his martial skills as an experienced archer. His feet, hidden in black satin boots, give the impression of Tanibu taking a step towards the viewer. The vivid and energetic full-figure representation of the officer against a blank background, the half-profile depiction of his face, as well as the added eulogy on a separate piece of yellow silk (*shitang*, literally "poem hall") are all characteristics of traditional Chinese portrait painting, while both the thick ink brushstrokes outlining his body and the strong watercolours show the typical 18th-century Chinese painting style of the imperial academy workshop. A closer look at the face reveals the influence of Western painting techniques transmitted by European Jesuits: the intense modelling and particularly the white specks in the eyes.