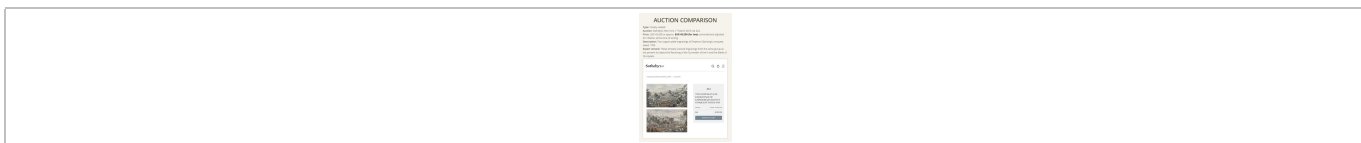


16th Oct, 2025 11:00

TWO-DAY AUCTION: Fine Asian Art, Buddhism and Hinduism



Lot 65





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65

Sold for €6,500

including Buyer's Premium ⓘ

Lot details

Hand-colored and copper-engraved on paper. Part of a set of sixteen engravings commissioned by Emperor Qianlong to depict the large-scale military battle scene in a rugged mountainous landscape. Cavalry units in lines of troops and wearing elaborate uniforms including helmets, tunics and sitting on horses are spread across the landscape, creating a highly dynamic scene.

Provenance: Christie's New York, 22 September 1995, lot 508, offered with an upper estimate of USD \$6,000 or approx. **EUR 11,500** (converted and adjusted for inflation at the time of writing). Collection of B. Strongin, United States, acquired from the above, and thence by descent in the family. A copy of the invoice from Christie's addressed to Ms. B. Strongin accompanies the present lot.

Condition: Good condition with old wear, light soiling, minor foxing, little creasing, few tiny losses.

Weight: 9.2 kg

Dimensions: Image size 51.4 x 88.9 cm, Size incl. frame 78.7 x 116.8 cm

Framed behind glass. (2)

This print depicts the 1758 Battle of Yesil-Kol-Nor, one of the key military engagements

during the Qing dynasty's campaigns to pacify the Xinjiang region under the reign of the Qianlong Emperor. Fought near the lake of Yesil-Kol-Nor (known today as Sayram Lake), the battle marked a decisive moment in the Emperor's efforts to suppress the Dzungar Khanate and consolidate Qing control over China's western frontier.

The present lot belongs to a remarkable series of sixteen military engravings commissioned by the Qianlong Emperor to commemorate his military campaigns across China's interior and frontier regions. Among the most ambitious visual projects of the Qing court, these works were intended not merely as records of military triumph, but as grand visual statements celebrating Imperial authority, strategic command, and territorial expansion. The original designs were created in Beijing by European missionary artists at the Qing court, including the renowned Italian Jesuit Giuseppe Castiglione (1688-1766), along with Jean-Denis Attiret, Ignatius Sichelbarth, and Giovanni Damasceno Salusti (also known as Jean Damascene Sallusti) and then sent to Paris, where they were engraved by leading European craftsmen and printed under the supervision of Charles-Nicolas Cochin of the Académie Royale at the Court of Louis XVI and the individual engravers include Le Bas, Aliamet, Prevot, Saint-Aubin, Masquelier, Choffard, and Launay. The present engraving was originally created by Giovanni Damasceno Salusti.

The prints exemplify the fusion of Eastern and Western representational styles fostered within the Qing Imperial painting academy. The European technique of chiaroscuro—the modeling of forms through the use of light and shading—has been visibly tempered, as has the use of one-point perspective. Instead, the scenes present panoramic views and strongly up-tilt ground planes. At the same time, however, they reflect European preferences for anatomical accuracy, a single light source, and the mathematically correct reduction of scale to create the illusion of recession.

Literature comparison:

Compare a closely related etching depicting the same scene, dated to c. 1765-74, in the collection of the Cleveland Museum of Art, accession number 1998.103.12. Compare a closely related colored etching depicting the same scene and an imperial poem, dated to 1765-1769, in the collection of the National Palace Museum, Taipei, accession number 故00006336-12/1. Compare a closely related engraving depicting the same scene, in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, object number 45.100.12. Compare a closely related engraving depicting the same scene, dated to 1772, in the collection of the Library of Congress, control number 2021668797.

Auction result comparison:

Type: Closely related

Auction: Sotheby's New York, 17 March 2015, lot 224

Price: USD 42,500 or approx. **EUR 49,500 (for two)** converted and adjusted for inflation at the time of writing

Description: Two copper-plate engravings of Emperor Qianlong's conquest dated 1769

Expert remark: These similarly colored engravings from the same group as the present lot

depict the Receiving of the Surrender of the Ili and the Battle of Oroï-Jalatu.

Auction result comparison:

Type: Closely related

Auction: Sotheby's New York, 13 September 2017, lot 171

Price: USD 40,000 or approx. **EUR 44,500 (for two)** converted and adjusted for inflation at the time of writing

Description: Two colored copper-plate engravings of the conquests of the Qianlong Emperor dated 1769

Expert remark: These similarly colored engravings from the same group as the present lot depict the Receiving of the Surrender of the Ili and the Storming of the Camp at Mount Gadan.

Lot Details

How to Bid

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