



大商 紐約貞觀國際拍賣公司
Gianguan Auctions EST. 2006

EXCEPTIONAL CHINESE ARTS AUCTION
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Golden Tibetan frieze and Wei stone Guanyin lead Buddhist art in Gianguan Auctions' September 9th Sale

From Tibet to the mighty Yellow and Yangtze River basins, the arts of China are informed by references to Buddhism. Gilt-bronze and stone statues, stone seals, scroll paintings and carved jades reflect regional and highly personal interpretations of the Buddha, Guanyin, the Bodhisatva, Maitreya, Louhans, acolytes and deities, creating an aesthetic that is both sacred and decorative.

Buddhist art in its splendid forms is the theme of Gianguan Auctions' upcoming sale on September 9th.

The sale also features an exceptionally strong field of secular art, highlighted by a collection of Chinese porcelains and antique jade and ceramic pillows.

The porcelain marquee item is a Wucai (5-color) guan with cover and beast handles, bearing the Yuan Dynasty's Bo Ling Di Studio mark. Decorated in tones of red, blue, green, turquoise, and yellow on a white ground, the jar has four double banded panels of appliquéd blooms and leaves that swirl around a central insect that looks like open work in relief. Ruyi clouds filled with waves and lotus blooms emanate outward from the rounded shoulder. The rim is decorated with a classic scroll band. The domed cover is surmounted with a recumbent beast. Lot 146 is expected to go off at more than \$850,000.



Wucai guan with cover. Of the Yuan Dynasty, bearing mark of Bo Ling Di Studios. Estimated at upwards of \$850,000.



Wang Hui's "Mountain Temple" will fetch upwards of \$100,000.

Pillow-talk starts at Lot 254, a Warring States jade rarity with a ruyi shaped headrest floating above conjoined, evil-thwarting hogs at rest. Engraved with zoomorphic masks, the pillow weighs about five pounds. Another jadeite pillow, Lot 156, is an adorable Ming-carved boy laying on his stomach, hands clutching a nugget for prosperity tucked under head while his feet kick-out. The Song gave us Lot 273, a heart-shaped Cizhou area porcelain pillow of ivory glaze banded with florals of black and brown slip. The pillows range in value from \$3,000-\$8,000.

Gianguan seal collectors will be pleased to see an array of unique stone seals—originally the official indicator of emperors and scholars' identity. Lot 47, for instance, is a columnar furong stone seal surmounted with a seated Guanyin resting her arm on a cleverly carved table. About five-inches tall, bidding starts at \$600. Lot 74 is an unusual octagonal seal of shoushan stone with poetry and landscapes inscribed on its panels. Its reticulated knob features nine dragons chasing pearl. Six-inches tall, three and half pounds, the rarity starts at \$1,500. More than twenty stone seals and boulders decorate the sale.

Top tier Buddhist highlights begin with the allegorical painting "The Wandering Mallard" by Zhu Da (Bada Shanren), the Qing Dynasty painter of royal descent who took refuge in a monastery and became a monk. Exquisite in its full-bleed background of dark brown with the singular duck, tree and rockery rendered in black, it is signed Bada Shanren and bears one artist seal. Lot 107 is expected to command upwards of \$600,000.

Traditional Buddhist sculptures begin with early stone images of Guanyin. The catalog cover lot is an elegant gray-stone Guanyin seated in dhyanasana, clad in a plain monastic shawl that exposes a bare chest. Of the Western Wei (386-535 CE), it weighs in at nearly one-hundred pounds and is two feet tall. It is Lot 265. From the Eastern Wei (534-550 CE), comes a slender standing Guanyin, also gray stone, that commands a petal socle. The deity's richly pleated garments fall above the feet in a high-low profile. Three feet tall, weighing about sixty-pounds, it is Lot 268. Each is valued at \$50,000 - \$60,000.

A thousand years later, tributes to the deities became more elaborate, as exemplified by a Tibetan gilt-bronze thangka of Avalokitesvara, the human manifestation of the eternal Buddha Amitabh. This masterpiece of intricate repoussé depicts the deity in dharmachakra. It is seated on a stepped throne within a stupa inlaid with coral, turquoise and lapis, all mounted in a border of chased lotus tendrils. The mantra Om A Hum is engraved on the work, which is similar to items in the 2014 Asia Society exhibition "Golden Visions of Densatil, A Tibetan Buddhist Monastery." The rare, rectangular frieze is Lot 270, valued at \$40,000-\$60,000.

Gilt bronze deities include a pigmented figure of Tara seated in seated in lalitasana. Blue eyes punctuate the serene face while polychrome accents the forehead framing crown. It is Lot 271, expected to bring upwards of \$15,000. Meanwhile, a fearsome Qing Dynasty Vajrabhairava Yamantaka with two moveable arms grasping his consort and thirty-two fixed arms wielding weapons, is a tour-de-force of casting. Each part was individually cast and assembled, forming a dramatic representation of this protector of Tibetan Buddhism. It is Lot 272, 10-inches tall, estimated at \$40,000-\$60,000.

Other excellent values include three exceptional Ming figures of different media. Lot 262 is a gilt bronze seated Luohan holding an elixir cup. Lot 266 is a carved gilt lacquer wood figure of Bodhisattva that retains some blue and red pigment. And Lot 267 is a rare lacquered gilt bronze seated Avalokitesvara atop a high plinth. Over all estimates are \$3,000 to \$10,000.

Among the meditative paintings is Dai Jin's "Four Panels of Buddha." A Ming work, it is executed in Zhe School (Southern Song) style with frontispiece by Wang Zuxi and colophon by Yu Yue. Lot 100, it is valued at more than \$30,000.

It is followed by "Mountain Boating" by Shi Tao, the Qing painter who used more than two-dozen courtesy names and followed the path of religious instruction. The subtly shaded work of impressive brush work could be an allusion to the aloneness of man. If not, it is indeed a work worth contemplating, as attested by eight collectors' seals. Inscribed and signed with two artist seals, Lot 135 is valued at upwards of \$350,000.

Wang Hui, whose Qing era works were seen at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's 2008 exhibition "Landscapes Clear and Radiant: The Art of Wang Hui (1632-1717)," delivers a bold, academic depiction of a "Mountain Temple" nestled in the rolling peaks of brown, green, subtle red. Lot 192 will fetch upwards of \$100,000.

On the strength of the spiritual philosophy, scholars were encouraged to engage in arts as diverse as painting and poetry, a strategy that led to the visual triumph of Lot 106, Liu Yong's 1800 work "Script Calligraphy of a Poem." The ink on gold flecked paper is inscribed and signed Shi An and stamped with two artist seals. A modern interpretation of the practice is Qi Gong's 1989 "Poem Calligraphy in Running Cursive Script"—a technique that delights the eye with weighted characters.

The best of Famille-rose—ever popular—is a globular vase from the Honxian, Republic Period that delights with brightly painted blooming chrysanthemum, pomegranates in the foreground and two bats encircling its borders. With the four character mark of the period in iron red, the 15-inch tall vase is Lot 275, valued at more than \$10,000. A pair of fish cups with underglaze blue and gilt depicts golden carp jumping on a cresting wave with eight trigrams above, all in blue, green, copper-red and gold, auspicious symbols of good omens. Lot 126, the pair will go for \$2,000 or more. Finally, the catalog cover image is of a Kangxi octagonal lacquered box and cover whose gilt and silver decorations depict a garden scene with figures. It is lot 278, estimated to fetch upwards of \$5,000. The elaborate decoration inspires a field of small household objects such as that include a mother-of-pearl set of lacquer stack boxes (Lot 179, \$50,000 or more) Zisha Yixing teapots (from \$800 and up) and carved Zitan brushwashers (also from \$800 upwards.)