Khusrau passed his allegiance from one monarch to the next, but it was the reign of Ala al-Din Khazal (1296 - 1316) that saw Amir Khusrau's most prolific period. Thought to have written nearly half a million verses, Amir Khusrau's complete works have never been fully collated.

The present example of his Kulliyat comprises a number of his extant works including the five diwans that record much of his poetry in five separate stanzas. From that which he wrote in his childhood, through middle age and finally during his maturity, the Kh罩as that includes his verses of Matib al-A'In, Kh罩au wa Shams, 'A'nir, Sikanderi, Hasrat Bihisht and Layla wa Manun, and three of his historical poems that record some of the political events and military victories surrounding the various monarchs and princelings to whose service he was bound.

It is through these latter works that the true value of Amir Khusrau's art comes to light, constituting a record of the religious, moral and aesthetic values of the elite of Indo-Persian culture during the thirteenth century. Although his poetry does not provide factual accounts of events and personalities, it is from the flippancy and fable of the verse that much can be inferred of the social, literary and cultural ideals of the period.

€18,000 - 12,000
£11,700 - 7,000

Illuminated Leaf from the Frontispiece of a Shahnama, Timurid, Persia, Circa 1425-60

This exquisitely rendered frontispiece is an excellent example of high quality Timurid book art and illumination. The decorative arrangement as well as the aesthetic vocabulary, such as the hatched decoration of the outer margin, the interlocking cartouches and the delicacy of the scrolling foliate motifs, recall other examples of fifteenth century illumination; for instance the frontispiece from a manuscript of a Shahnama dated to 1441 illustrated in Arts of the Persian Courts (Soudavar 1992, cat.270, p.73).

€8,000 - 12,000
£11,700 - 10,000
17 ILLUMINATED ALBUM PAGE OF NASTA'LIQ CALLIGRAPHY, SAFAVID, PERSIA, LATE 18TH CENTURY

Leaf of buff brown paper, 7 lines of fine nasta'liq written in black ink on cream paper laid down on stout paper, interlinear spaces decorated with gold flowers and blue split palmettes on a ground of gold cross hatching, finely illuminated borders in colours and gold

Panel 26 by 15cm. Leaf 32 by 20.5cm.

PROVENANCE
An inscription in Persian on the reverse records that this album page was presented on the occasion of a banquet given by Abul Hassan Fahri al-Mulk, the Minister of Trade and the son of the governor of Kurdistan. The inscription is dated A.H. 1322/A.D. 1904 and bears the seal of Prince Afza' al-Dawlah.

£8,000-12,000
€11,700-17,500

18 OTTOMAN TOOLED LEATHER BINDING, TURKEY, SECOND HALF 16TH CENTURY

Gilt green morocco binding, exterior tooled and gilded with central lobed cypress shaped cartouche bearing a scrolling foliate motif with extending palmettes, small Initialed corner pieces, flap with lobed pointed medallion bearing a scrolling vine, double rows of red morocco with central geometric knotwork motif. A tooled cable between fillets

25 by 17cm.

PROVENANCE
Lusas & Co., 21 December 1959

This fine fifteenth century binding is stylistically similar to a number of imperial bindings produced during the reign of Bayezid II (r.1481-1512), whose sufi faith encouraged his pursuit of learning and an interest in scholarship, indeed he is often depicted clasping a book as a symbol of his scholarly interests. The sultan’s faith led to his active patronage of the arts, and he is often portrayed as the stimulus for the classical calligraphic school led by his protege Shykh Hamdullah. His attention to the arts of the book saw a flourishing of all related arts from illumination, and calligraphy to book binding. The present binding is closely comparable to a binding produced for the sultan Bayezid II in 1498. Both bindings exhibit a central decoration that consists of a lobed pointed medallion with extending trilobed palmettes, small corner pieces, three dot groupings at the central point of each edge and an a tooled cable between fillets (see Robj and Tanind: 1903, cat.35, p.192).

£4,000-6,000
€5,000-8,000
19 ILLUSTRATED MISCELLANY OF SCIENTIFIC WORKS, PERSIAN MANUSCRIPT ON PAPER, OTTOMAN, TURKEY, FIRST HALF 16TH CENTURY

72 leaves, naskhi script in black ink, section headings and dotting words picked out in red, green, yellow and blue, intercolumnar and marginal rules in red, fine coloured diagrams, double page map of the world, later red morocco binding

16 by 10.3cm.

The first half of this work is largely concerned with providing rules and tables for marking calendrical and astronomical calculations. Also found within the text are the dates of important people and significant historical events in the Muslim and pre-Islamic calendar. The manuscript includes conversion tables for the Islamic, Persian, Greek, Eastern Christian and Chinese-Lighur calendars, as well as charts showing the placement of the stars and planets in accordance with the time of the year. Divination, based either on numerology, or on ahkhlar or 'election', that is the art of choosing an auspicious point in time based on astrological conjunctions or the seasons, is also treated extensively in the work. In addition, the manuscript contains a map of the world based on the Greek notion of the seven climates, as well as a diagram for determining the direction of Mecca for the purpose of prayer.

A number of the tables refer to the year A.H. 709/A.D. 1309 as the date of composition, which would fall in the reign of the Mongol ruler Oljetu (1304-16). The Mongol rulers of Iran were notable for their interest in astronomy and astrology, perhaps the most prominent evidence of which is the famous observatory at Maragha in Western Iran and the Zij-I Khani of Nasir al-Din Tusi (d 1234). The latter work was a book of astronomical tables that set out the most authoritative and sophisticated exposition of the planetary system until the time of Copernicus. In this work Tusi also provided tables for the conversion of all the Islamic, Greek, Eastern Christian and Chinese-Lighur calendars for the first time. This would have been of great practical use for the Mongols and their administrators, given the cultural, religious and ethnic diversity of the Mongol Empire. The inclusion of tables for these calendars and the fact that the original composition of many of the tables can be dated to 1309, shortly after the death of Tusi, make it likely that the Miscellany drew heavily upon the Zij-I Khani.

In the light of the Ottoman provenance of the Miscellany, also interesting is the inclusion of a table for calculating the dates of the Greek Orthodox festivals. A substantial percentage of the citizens of the Ottoman Empire were Christian, and the inclusion of these tables may have been of particular relevance for the patron or owner of the work. That the Miscellany is an Ottoman work can be established by the presence of a table in Ottoman Turkish for calculating the first day of each month for the years 961-1000 A.H. (1553-1591). This is corroborated by the presence of marginal notes, calculations and commentary in Ottoman Turkish throughout the manuscript.

The second half of the work can be identified as an untitled Persian treatise on the preparation of food and drink by Ammi al-Din Ostaj, dedicated to the Mongol ruler of Iran, Arghun Khan. Ammi al-Din is known to have written another work on the same subject for Arghun Khan, as well as a further one for his successor, Ghazan Khan. This is probably the oldest extant copy of the work. For other copies, see Storey Persian Literature ii, 2, p.217 no.373.

£10,000-15,000
€14,650-21,900
20 GENEALOGY, ILLUSTRATED FRAGMENT OF AN OTTOMAN MANUSCRIPT ON PAPER, TURKEY OR SYRIA, CIRCA 18TH CENTURY

8 pages, 7 leaves with miniatures in gouache heightened with silver and gold on sepia coloured paper; 14 miniatures of which 12 of Ottoman Sultans enthroned except for Ahmet Khan on horseback, each portrait named and described above in Ottoman nasli in black ink, one miniature of `Abd `Ali Tabü with his two sons and followers, and another miniature of a zebra, the last leaf an addition as a protective cover with a catalogue note dated 1882 with an extract from D’Herbelot on the `Abd al Makkispi.

32 by 21cm.

£6,000-8,000

48,800-71,700

21 THE BATTLE BETWEEN THE SASANIAN KING KUSHPAI PARVIS AND SAHRAM CHUBINEH, ILLUMINATED LEAF FROM THE SHAHNAME OF FIRDAWSI, TURKISH, 16TH CENTURY

gouache heightened with gold on paper; text in four columns of nasta’liq script above and below miniature and 25 on the verso; miniature mounted with leaf from the same text.

Miniature 20 by 19cm.

23.5 by 20cm.

This miniature is closely comparable to two leaves from an unidentified manuscript in the late Dr. Edwin Binney’s collection. The miniatures exhibit a similarly crowded field of horses and warriors in a mountain scene. Abstracted rocks and trees in the left of the foreground break through into the margin, as do the army’s pennants at the top of the scene. Although the Binney miniatures were catalogued as Persian in 1966, the golden sky and grouping of the army suggest a Turkish origin and the two miniatures were reassessed as Turkish and dated to 1560 in the Binney catalogue. It has been suggested that Turkish artists working on the manuscript from which these miniatures originated were working in the Tabari style, and that these artists employed on the Houghton Shahnama (Binney 1978, cat. 2a&b, 44-45). It is likely that the current miniature is a product of the same tradition.

£3,000-5,000

48,400-73,000
AN IMPORTANT ILLUSTRATED LEAF FROM THE IMPERIAL SHAHNAMA OF SHAH ISMA`IL II

22 KAY KAU`US AND TWO COMPANIONS CHAINED IN A CAVE. ILLUSTRATED LEAF FROM THE SHAH ISMA`IL II SHAHNAMA. AScribed to SIYAUSH, QAZVIN, PERSIA, 1576-77

gouache heightened with gold on paper, text written above and below miniature in elegant black nasta`liq within four columns, intercolumnar rules in gold, the miniatures depicting three divs and three kings in a mountain setting, the rocks inhabited by birds and beasts, some vegetation; the reverse with 22 lines of text and a heading in gold, margins ruled in colours and gold, name of artist 'Siyaush' written above the rocks on the right

miniature 33.5 by 28.7cm.
leaf 45.5 by 31.5cm.

PROVENANCE
Formerly in the collection of Georges Demotte

EXHIBITED
Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, 1912, reproduced in the catalogue with two other miniatures from the same Shahnama; plates iii, vii, civ
Galerie Demotte: Exhibition of Persian Art, Paris, an invoice addressed to a Monsieur Millon, dated 7th March 1912, stock number 20 341

This illustrated leaf of imperial provenance, ascribed to one of the foremost masters of the sixteenth century, epitomises the grandeur and accomplishment of the Qazvin school at its pinnacle.

An article by B.W. Robinson in the 1976 edition of Iran I vol. XIII, pp.1-8 describes a number of illustrated leaves from the Shahnama commissioned by Shah Isma`il II in 1576 and draws attention to certain noteworthy features of the manuscript which are shared with the present example. Although Robinson does not mention this particular leaf, the dimensions of the leaf indicate a strong relationship between this and other leaves attributed to the aforementioned royal patron.

The manuscript is unusually large with a text area measuring 31.5 by 18.5cm and containing 22 lines of text. Further evidence for its provenance lies in the two-fold margin rulings, with the standard margin enclosing the text block, and the further outer margin bearing additional annotations. Most tellingly, however, is the attribution to Siyaush in the top right section of the miniature, other leaves from Shah Isma`il II's Shahnama bear attributions to leading artists of the period in this self-same cursive hand. Probably inscribed by the Shah's librarian or co-ordinator of the Shahnama, these ascriptions immediately forge a link to other leaves from the manuscript.

Isma`il II's short lived and bloody reign ended with his murder by the Chalshah forces that had helped secure his throne when he came to power in 1576. Despite his military successes against Ottoman forces, Isma`il was impressed by the power of his father Shah Fath amsp in 1566 who feared the possibility of a rebellion led by his son. The twenty years Isma`iI spent under arrest and his addiction to opium had turned his mind,
and upon his accession his paranoia led to a violent campaign against any possible threat to his position as Shah. Eventually turning his attention to those army officers whose sole offence was that they had held positions of power under Tahmasp, certain Qizilbash collaborators exploited his opium addiction and disguised his murder as an overdose of drugs.

Yet despite his violent eighteenth month rule, Shah Isma`il II was a highly cultured individual who had hoped to rebuild the famous atelier of his father’s early years, bringing together many of the foremost masters of his father’s rule including Sadiq Beg, Muhammad and the artist of this painting, Siyavash. Siyavash is mentioned in two contemporary documents that provide details of his life and career including Iskander Bek Murad’s Calligraphers and Painters of 1616: “Siyavash, the Georgian, has been a page of his late majesty Shah Tahmasp,” who having observed in him signs of ability gave him opportunities for the study of painting and he became a pupil of Mirza Hasan ‘Ali, the painter, when he had acquired some ability in that art, the first work of his brush made an impression on His Majesty, so that he himself looked after his being instructed.” It is clear from this passage that Siyavavsh’s talents were highly admired by Shah Tahmasp, and eventually his tutelage was undertaken by the famous Muzaffar ‘Ali, although his first ascribed and firmly dated work was produced under Shah Isma`il II in 1578-77. Siyavavsh eventually retired to Shiraz, where he died some time between 1606 and 1616.

Siyavash was instrumental in the illustration of Shah Isma`il II’s Shahnama and, according to Anthony Welch, of the fifty-two known works thirteen are his. The present example exhibits certain features apparent in Siyavavsh’s other works; for instance, in the portrayal of the three figures we find evidence for Siyavavsh’s fame as a master of characterisation. Despite their closed eyes each of the three prisoners seems to be an individual; certainly their facial features set them apart from one another and do not conform to a standard type. Moreover, the central figure appears to be repeated in a number of Siyavavsh’s other works and recalls the red robed and cross leaped figures of Piran confronting with Kamus and the Khaghan of China in a further miniature from this same Shahnameh now in the Collection of the Late Prince Prince and Princess Saiduddin Aqa Khan in Geneva (Welch 1978, plate2, p.27).

The palette of pinks, greens and purples also recalls the mature Qazvin style exhibited in Siyavavsh’s works, whilst the composition adheres to Welch’s observation that “His [Siyavavsh’s] compositions are carefully thought out without being rigid and often show a tendency towards circular arrangement.” Hence the central three figures form a tight circle within the cave, whilst the Diva form a second circle beyond the mouth of the cave, and yet their arrangement is not strictly ordered with the Diva facing in different directions positioned at different levels. Furthermore, Siyavavsh’s is noted for his avoidance of ‘ordinated ornamental landscape, and instead invests a few elements with intense power.” Again, Welch’s observations can be applied to the present example which does not appear to be either ordered or ornamental, instead the growing leopards and snarling bear in the background bring a sense of menace to the painting.

Other followers of the dispersed Shah Isma`il II Shahnameh attributed to Siyavavsh, as recorded by B.W. Robinson in Iran (p.66), are as follows:

1. Rustam catches his horse Raikh, formerly Rockefeller Collection.
2. The elders of Barbaristan offer submission to Kay Ka`us, formerly Rockefeller Collection.
3. Capture of Kay Ka`us by the king of Hamavaran, Christie’s Sale Catalogue, 2 October 1960, lot 60; London, Moggs Bros., Catalogue No.880 (November 1961), pl.xii.
4. Suhrat questioning his mother Tahmina, Rothschild Collection, p.118.
5. Shams and Suhrat wrestling on horseback, Rothschild Collection.
6. Intervene between Siyavavsh and Qarevaz, Rothschild Collection.
7. Siyavavsh hunting with Afhazseb, Rothschild Collection.
8. Pitam bega Afsharbayjani permission to fight Rustam, formerly Cherif Sabry Pasha Collection, Cairo, Demotte 1893, no.84.
9. Kay Khurshid, his mother Firangis, and Giv fording the Jihun (Oxus), Rothschild Collection.
10. Kay Khurshid welcomes Kay Khurshie after his capture of the castle of Bahanan, Rothschild Collection.
11. Farud watching the approach of the Persian army from the ramparts of his castle, Kir Collection, Hrn, Richmond; Sotheby’s 13 July 1971, lot 354.
15. Isfandiyer and the Simurgh, Rothschild Collection.
16. Iskander instructing Nandam to assume the throne and crown temporarily, Seattle Art Museum, Washington, Iskander 15; Demotte 1930, no.60.
17. Kay Khurshie supervising the execution of prisoners, Private Collection sold Sotheby’s, London, 18 October 1995, lot 76.

£140,000-160,000
€204,000-233,000

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