ILLUSTRATED AND ILLUMINATED LEAF FROM A SHAHNAMA, THE COURT CONVENED IN A GARDEN, SHIRAZ, PERSIA, CIRCA 1570

gouache heightened with gold on paper, the left-hand side of a carpet-page, miniature depicting the court convened in a courtyard, a garden beyond. 4 columns of elegant nasta'liq in black ink within cloud bands reserved against a gold ground with scrolling foliate motif, borders of cusped arches infilled with floral motifs in colours and gold, the verso with 25 lines of nasta'liq text in black ink in 4 columns, intercolumnar rules in colours and gold, margins ruled in colours and gold, header in white nasta'liq on a gold ground on panels in colours and gold with foliate motif
CENTRAL PANEL: 22.3 BY 14.2CM
LEAF: 42.7 BY 26.5CM
£8,000-10,000 £10,000-15,000

ILLUSTRATED AND ILLUMINATED ALBUM PAGE: A BATTLE SCENE, SAFAVID, PERSIA, CIRCA 1650-1670

gouache heightened with gold on paper, laid down on stout paper, 9 lines of nasta'liq script in black ink within cloud bands on a gold ground. Illustration of a pitched battle, orange borders, blue margins with gold scrolling foliate motif
CENTRAL PANEL: 23.8 BY 16CM
LEAF: 35.9 BY 25.4CM
£8,000-12,000 £10,000-15,000
KNEELING YOUTH PLAYING A FLUTE, SIGNED BY MU'IN.
MUSAVVIR, PERSIA, ISFAHAN, DATED 23RD RABI' AL-'AWWAL A.H. 1087/6TH JUNE A.D. 1676

gouache with gold on paper; the uncoloured background painted with rocks, flowers and clouds in gold; signed and dated in gold at lower left, laid down on an album page with green inner borders and plain cream outer borders

CENTRAL PANEL: 18.3 BY 9.4CM.
LEAF, 33.6 BY 24.3CM.

£60,000-80,000 €70500-91000

PROVENANCE
Formerly in the collection of Walter Cabot, thence by descent.

This portrait of a well-dressed youth playing a flute is an important example of the single-figure portraits painted by Mu'in Musavviri (1677-1708), who was one of the greatest and most prolific Persian artists of the seventeenth century. He was a student of the great court painter Rezai Abbasi and a portrait of his master by Mu'in survives in the Princeton University Library (Garrett Coll. M626). His long career (c.1695-1707) gave him the opportunity to produce a large corpus of work, and although much of it was concerned with traditional manuscript illustration, including several Shahnameh manuscripts, he also took the art of single-page compositions to new heights (see Farhad 1990).

Mu'in painted two other miniatures closely related to the present piece, within the first three months of the year A.H. 1087: A youth on horseback was painted on 5th Muhammad 1087 (22nd March 1676) and a youthful shepherd playing the pipe was painted just two days before the present piece, on 21st Rabii' al-Awwal 1087 (6th June 1676). Both these works were sold in these rooms: 22nd November 1976, lot 253 and 23rd April 1979, lot 72.

Three other related works are a portrait of the royal physician Hakim Shafi painted in 1674 (sold in these rooms, 19th April 1975, lot 53), and now in the Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan Collection, see Carlyle 1998, no.50); a portrait of the Sultan al-Ulama Khalifa Sultan Yamad al- Dawl, painted around 1672 (sold at Christie's, London, 23rd April 1983, lot 120, now in the Art and History Trust Collection, see Snouder 1992, p.289) and a portrait of a youth in an orange robe, sold in these rooms 2nd May 1977, lot 55, and again, 15th October 1977, lot 63.

For further reading and illustrations of Mu'in's work see:
Farhad 1990
Carlyle 1996
HUNTING SCENE, MUGHAL, INDIA, CIRCA 1600

gouache heightened with gold on paper, a prince hunting on horseback; his entourage skimming his catch and feeding the falcon and dogs, a
village scene beyond; margins in cream sprinkled with gold; borders ruled
in colours; the verso with calligraphy in nasta’liq script in black ink,
highlighted with red, on cream paper
CENTRAL PANEL: 31.7 BY 13.8CM.
LEAF: 35.9 BY 21CM.
£ 7000-10,000 £9300-15,500

LARGE ILLUSTRATED AND ILLUMINATED ALBUM PAGE:
LUHRASP’S ASCENSION TO THE THRONE, MUGHAL, INDIA.
CIRCA 1780

gouache heightened with gold on paper laid down on stout paper,
depicting a ruler enthroned surrounded by dancers and musicians; various
border bands in colours and gold; margins in green with illuminated trellis
hearing reserves; later attribution to the artist Daulatabad; verso with 4 lines
of nasta’liq script in black ink in cloud bands reserved on illuminated
scrolling foliage, borders in colours and gold, margin of ochre yellow
CENTRAL PANEL: 27.2 BY 16CM.
LEAF: 18.7 BY 9.8CM.
£10,000-15,000 £15,500-25,500

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, historical subjects
enjoyed something of a renaissance, with many artists drawing inspiration
from sixteenth and seventeenth century illustrated manuscripts. The scene
depicted here, for instance, is probably taken from a historical work such as
the Baburnama.

Also typical of this period are the large album pages with decorative
borders, as seen here. Other examples of late Mughal historical painting
within large decorative borders includes the portraits of Shah Jahan, and a
painting of an elephant hunt, circa 1770, from the ‘Johnson Album’, now in
the India Office Library (Tony Falk and Mildred Archer, Indian Miniatures
The refined marginal illumination of this album page is a tribute to the Mughal emperors' concern with the natural world. Beginning with Babur (1526-1530), the dynasty's early rulers expressed an interest in the natural world, and their memoirs are full of notions to the beauty of a bird or plant that caught their attention. The Mughal royal patrons encouraged their artists to observe all aspects of the natural world in great detail, and to study European herbs in circulation at court. Animals, plants, and birds were recorded by the Mughal masters such as Mansur and Manjir, particularly under the patronage of the Emperors Jahangir (1605-1628) and Shah Jahan (1629-1658). By the Shāh Jahan period (1628-1658), a precise observation of the natural world was often displayed in the borders of royal albums, where despite the stylized content and framework, the artists still achieved great precision and a glowing naturalism in the depiction of individual animals, birds, and plants. By the reign of Aurangzeb, under which the patronage of this album page falls, Mughal miniature painting had become increasingly stylized and less naturalistic; however, the beautiful margins of this leaf indicate that the art was not entirely lost in some quarters.

The inspiration for the central image would also appear to build upon the legacy of Shah Jahan, where the themes of love and romance were first fully developed. Due to an increasingly orthodox state, the popularity of painting was in decline in the late seventeenth century, but artists still practiced, looking to a previous era for inspiration. As with the marginal illumination, the central image is again an indication of the achievements of artists from the reign of Aurangzeb, despite the limitations imposed on them.
ILLUSTRATED AND ILLUMINATED ALBUM LEAF: LADIES ON A TERRACE. SUB-IMPERIAL MUGHAL, INDIA, 18TH CENTURY

gouache heightened with gold on paper, laid down on stout paper, a lady and her musicians seated on a terrace with a lake beyond, borders in colours and gold, with scrolling foliate motif on blue, margins of buff cream paper sprinkled with gold
CENTRAL PANEL: 22.2 BY 14.5CM
LEAF: 49 BY 34.5CM
£4,000-6,000 — $5,300-8,000

PROPERTY OF A EUROPEAN PRIVATE COLLECTOR

59
PORTRAIT OF EMPEROR SHAH JAHAN, MUGHAL, INDIA, 18TH CENTURY

gouache heightened with gold on paper, laid down on an album page, Shah Jahan kneeling on a throne against a fretted, on an elaborate carpet, border of a floral band, margins of gold sprinkled ochre, inscribed with an erroneous identification of the sitter as "His Majesty Akbar I Mustapha Nur al-Din Jahangir Padshah"
CENTRAL PANEL: 22.2 BY 14.5CM
LEAF: 54.2 BY 33.2CM
£5,000-7,000 — $6,400-8,700
This exquisitely rendered miniature is a work of surpassing beauty, and is arguably the work of the celebrated Mughal artist, Payag.

From early unremarkable beginnings in Akbar’s reign, Payag developed into one of the foremost artists of the Shah Jahan period. His work can be split into two distinct groups: glittering, highly detailed portraits of his royal patrons, including the outstanding painting of Shah Jahan on a Globe in the Chester Beatty collection (see Ghata 1995, no.245, p.208), and moody, expressionistic group scenes featuring in the main, ascetics and courtiers (see Leach, 1995, pp.68, p.44). Clearly this painting falls into the latter category, the category for which Payag is most celebrated.

It is likely that Payag was influenced by the works of contemporary European masters, like Durer, whose prints and paintings were studied closely by the artists of the royal Mughal atelier. Payag’s use of dark landscapes, pregnant with smoke and mist, a ring of faces lit orange by the heat of a camp fire, and highlighted by flashes of light on a gossamer reed resonate with the work of Renaissance European artists of the period, where experimentation with the effects of light and reflection, velvety chiaroscuro and high realism in portraiture was in vogue.

These European elements are distinctive of Payag’s work alone, which is further evidence for this being the great master’s work. It seems that he was the only artist to further develop the atmospheric character of Jahangir painting through Shah Jahan’s reign, from which we can surmise that it was more to his own taste than to the emperor’s. In discussing the later miniatures of Payag’s oeuvre, Linda York Leach remarks that “these later miniatures reflect Payag’s strong individualistic adaptation of European painting techniques. A seated group of officers demonstrates his mastery of facial plausibility and expression deriving from European portraiture, as well as his ability to handle large numbers of differing human types. A further miniature in the same album shows his skill in interpreting shadowed landscape, based on his observation of European art. Among Mughal artists, Payag’s genius in manipulating the effects of light was unique and was frequently employed in his later compositions.” (Leach 1992, pp.354).

These features are all evident in this miniature, the dark and expressionistic landscape, the play of light around the campfire and the naturalism of the portraits all point to Payag’s hand. In addition, a comparison with other ascetic groups by Payag reveals a correspondence between incidental features, for instance the jar, stick and peacock feather fan that lies beside the kneeling mystic to the left in this miniature, replicates that in the miniature of Soldiers Listening to Music in the Chester Beatty collection (Leach 1992, pp.68, p.44).

This painting is not only replete with the European elements that distinguish him from the rest of the Shah Jahan ateliers, but it is also resonant with the unquantifiable ambience that is Payag’s own.
61  PORTRAIT OF A PRINCELY YOUTH, ATTRIBUTABLE TO MUHAMMAD SADOQ OR SAYYID MIRZA, GAJAR, PERSIA, EARLY 19TH CENTURY
oil on canvas, framed
173 BY 95CM.
€ 60,000-80,000  £55,000-73,000

The style of this portrait shows similarities with the work of both Muhammad Sadiq and Sayyid Mirza. Muhammad Sadiq was working at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries while Sayyid Mirza flourished around 1800. Sayyid Mirza was known to have specialised in portraits of Fath 'Ali Shah and his family. The subject of the present portrait may therefore be one of the princes of the royal household. The background is interesting, though not typical of the period, and shows features which were direct imports from eighteenth-century European painting, particularly Italian landscapes and rural scenes.

This portrait was previously sold in these rooms 5 July 1985, lot 28 and again in these rooms 19 October 1994, lot 146. For comparative paintings by Muhammad Sadiq and Sayyid Mirza see S.J. Falk, Qajar Paintings, London 1972, nos. 47 and 57.

62  PORTRAIT OF A PRINCELY YOUTH, STYLE OF MUHAMMAD SADOQ, GAJAR, PERSIA, SECOND-HALF OF THE 18TH CENTURY
oil on canvas, framed
172 BY 94CM.
€ 60,000-80,000  £55,000-73,000

The style of this portrait and its landscape background is close to the work of the eighteenth-century painter Muhammad Sadiq. A number of his works were formerly in the Amery collection, now in the Nagasaki Museum, Tokyo (S.J. Falk, Qajar Paintings, London 1972, nos. 47). The Nagasaki picture of a prince on horseback attacked by a dragon (op. cit. no. 47) has a similar landscape background and features an almost identical floppy-eared dog.

This portrait was previously sold in these rooms 5 July 1985, lot 28, and again 19 October 1994, lot 146.