



**Chinese finely carved cinnabar lacquer scroll tray, Kangxi (1662-1722)
POA**

Chinese finely carved cinnabar lacquer scroll tray, Kangxi (1662-1722), of rectangular form, carved with a landscape scene, with two buildings, their gardens containing willow, prunus, peony, pine and rockwork, all underneath scrolling clouds, the sides with a design of densely packed chrysanthemum and foliage and a narrow band of leiwen (cloud and thunder, or key-fret) motif, the base coated in black lacquer and with label reading 'Christie's 7 10/6/96'.

Condition: Corners chipped, small chips on one prunus flower design, general typical wear.

Notes:

Lacquer is the resin tapped from a type of tree native to southern China and has been used to paint and decorate the surfaces of sculptures or three-dimensional objects in China for millennia. After application, lacquer hardens upon exposure to oxygen, becoming a water- and heat-resistant natural plastic which is also reported to have anti-bacterial properties. It can be coloured with minerals: largely carbon, to make black lacquer, orpiment, to make yellow lacquer, and, as seen in this case, a powdered form of mercury sulphide known as 'cinnabar' to make a vibrant red lacquer. While early lacquered objects are simple in design, by the twelfth century Chinese artists had begun to create intricately carved lacquer objects made by coating a base vessel, generally made of wood, with up to hundreds of layers of lacquer, each of which was applied then exposed to the air and left to dry before continuing. After a thick surface of lacquer had been built up this way, objects including boxes, dishes and trays were finely carved with incredibly intricate designs, frequently featuring geometric patterns, natural motifs such as birds and flowers, and, as seen here, sweeping landscape scenes, sometimes with figures enjoying nature.

Provenance:

The piece originates from the collection of Reginald Howard Reed Palmer (1898–1970), a noted British collector, and was passed down to the present owners. It was valued for probate upon his death in 1970.

Material and Technique	Wood with carved cinnabar lacquer
Origin	Chinese
Period	18th Century
Dimensions	Height: 37.5cm. (14 3/4in.); width: 15.7cm. (6 3/16in.)

Antique ref: W927