Large Chinese Luopan Compass, Late Qing Period, C.1890



1 600 EUR

Period : 19th century
Condition : Très bon état
Material : Lacquer
Diameter : 22.6 cm
Height : 1.8 cm

Description

An impressive Chinese luopan geomantic compass dating to the late Qing Dynasty, circa 1890. Made in Xingning County, Guangdong Province, this unusually large example measures 22.6 cm in diameter and retains its original magnetic needle beneath glass.
The lacquered surface is arranged in numerous concentric rings carrying traditional Feng Shui calculations, including the Eight Trigrams (Bagua), the Twenty-Four Mountains, the Five Elements (Wuxing), and the Heavenly Stem and Earthly Branch cycles. Together these form a complex system of cosmological, astrological and directional calculations used in traditional Chinese geomancy.
The luopan was the principal instrument of the Feng Shui master, used to determine auspicious

Dealer

Gillers Antiques
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orientations for buildings, ancestral tombs and important architectural projects. Its densely inscribed surface combines multiple layers of cosmological, directional and calendrical information arranged in twenty-one concentric rings around the Tian Chi, or Heaven Pool.
The reverse bears a red inscription reading Xingning County, Xinghua Street, Made by Xing Tai Ji, identifying the maker of the compass. Xingning was one of the principal centres of luopan production in southern China, and surviving signed examples are increasingly difficult to find. Comparable luopan compasses are preserved in the collections of the British Museum (https://www.britishmuseum.org), Penn Museum (https://www.penn.museum), Science Museum London (https://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk), Stromness Museum (https://www.stromnessmuseum.org.uk), Royal Museums Greenwich (https://www.rmg.co.uk) and the Metropolitan Museum of Art (https://www.metmuseum.org), underscoring the cultural and historical significance of these instruments within the Chinese geomantic tradition.
The combination of its large size, surviving maker's inscription, original magnetic needle and strong visual presence makes this a particularly desirable example for collectors of Chinese antiques, Feng Shui instruments and Asian ethnographic material.

Measurements
Diameter: 22.6 cm (8.9´´)
Height: 1.8 cm (0.7´´)
Weight: 265 g

Condition
In some areas the lacquer has flaked, mainly around the outer edges, as shown in the photographs. The principal inscribed field remains largely intact with only minor wear. Dust is present beneath the compass glass. Otherwise good antique condition.

Shipping & Packaging
Fully tracked and insured delivery.
Shipping cost includes professional packaging, careful handling and postage.
Carefully packed using recycled materials where possible.

Please study the accompanying photographs carefully as they form an integral part of this description. If you have any questions, we will be happy to answer them. The item will be shipped with full tracking and insurance. It is important to note that shipping costs include labour, packaging and postage.
Questions are welcome.