

STEPHEN ONGPIN FINE ART



Jean-Baptiste TAVERNIER

A Calligraphic Design for a Frontispiece

Pen and brown ink.

Inscribed, signed and dated 'EXEMPLAREN / VAN / Verscheyden geschriften / Seer nut in de bequaem voor / Alle beminders en Liefhebbers der Pennen / DOOR / Joannes Baptista Tavernier / Anno 1652' in the centre.

205 x 302 mm. (8 1/8 x 11 7/8 in.) [sheet]

This drawing may have served as a design for the frontispiece of J. B. Tavernier's 'Collection of Calligraphic Pieces', published in Bruges between 1651 and 1672. Intended as a guide to penmanship, a manuscript copy of this work is in the Newberry Library in Chicago. The inscription may be approximately translated as 'Examples of penmanship, very useful for all those who admire writing, by Jean Baptiste Tavernier, in the year 1652'. It remains unclear whether the artist responsible for this drawing may be identified with the famous French gem merchant and traveller Jean-Baptiste Tavernier (1605-1689), who made six long voyages to Persia and India between 1630 and 1688. Tavernier was the son and nephew of cartographers, and it is thought likely that he had some practice of cartography and of engraving. In the year 1652, however, Tavernier is known to have been in the midst of the fourth of his famous voyages, to India.

Provenance:

Anonymous sale, Brussels, Les Nouvelles Galeries de Paris, 23-24 October 1995, lot 656
Jacques Hollander, Ohain, Belgium
Thence by descent until 2013.