



Fine Japanese Art (JAP1221)

Fri, 3rd Dec 2021

Lot 30

Starting price: €3000

Estimate: €6000

KISETSU: A SUPERB SILVER AND BRONZE GROUP OF A SHISHI TRAINING ITS CUB

By Yamashita Kisetu, signed Kisetu koku
Japan, Meiji period (1868-1912)

The bronze cast as a rocky outcrop with very finely worked, separately cast reishi fungi. The inset Buddhist lion (shishi) and cub are masterfully cast from silver, finely chiseled, the adult ferociously snarling, the eyes of both in gold with shakudo pupils. The subject illustrated is known as Shishi no ko otoshi. According to legend, the adult shishi test the vitality and strength of their offspring by throwing them off a cliff. Should the youngsters survive, they are certain to have a long life. With an inlaid silver signature plaque KISETSU [engraved by Kisetu].

Yamashita Kisetu was a pupil of the famous metalwork artist Oshima Joun (1858-1940). The present piece is likely a collaboration between the two (see auction comparison).

LENGTH 30 cm, HEIGHT 24.5 cm

WEIGHT 3 kg

Condition: Very good condition, some minor surface wear including some light scratches to bronze.

Provenance: US private collection.

Legend has it that the shishi tested the vigor of their young by throwing the young ones from the top of a cliff (shishi no saka otoshi). Longevity was assured if the animal survived.

Auction comparison:

A near identical group signed Kisetu and Joshun (Oshima Joun) was sold at Christie's, Japanese and Korean Art, 19 September 200, New York, lot 84 (**sold for 4,700 USD**).