



Fine Japanese Art (JAP0522)

Fri, 27th May 2022

Lot 49

Starting price: €15000

Estimate: €30000

HAYASHI KODENJI: A LARGE AND IMPORTANT CLOISSONNÉ ENAMEL TRIPOD KORO (INCENSE BURNER)

Firmly attributed to Hayashi Kodenji (1831-1915), unsigned Japan, late 19th century, Meiji period (1868-1912)

The large high shouldered incense burner stands on three tall feet with a pierced cover and silver rims, copper-gilt lining, decorated in multicolored cloisonné enamels and various thicknesses of silver and copper wire. A total of eight (!) vertical panels finely depict plovers above an eagle on rocks amidst crashing waves, finches perched on a branch of plum in bloom, a flock of plovers in flight above a meandering stream and reeds, swallows among willow, red-capped Japanese cranes on a shore, finches in a cherry blossom tree, ducks among river reeds and foliage, and sparrows in the bough of trailing wisteria. The shoulders, feet and cover show scrolling karakusa and paulownia on a blue ground, bordered by lappets of geometric and floral design.

Unsigned, but firmly attributed Hayashi Kodenji (1831-1915), see auction result comparison below for another closely related attribution.

HEIGHT 27 cm

WEIGHT 2280 g

Condition: Absolutely perfect condition with no damage whatsoever. Only minor old wear, mostly to silver rims and gilt, and microscopic manufacturing flaws. Extremely rare in this pristine state of preservation.

Provenance: Property from the John and Muriel Okladek collection.

This remarkable presentational incense burner, likely intended for a world fair or as an imperial presentational gift, has an ingenious construction for display. The décor is made up of a total of eight panels, with four main panels, so that the incense burner could be turned to one's liking to fit any specific mood. Each of the main panels features water, in the form of crashing waves or a meandering stream, and various birds (eagle, crane, plover, duck) against a stunning clair-de-lune ground and is flanked by two panels featuring an opulent décor of birds and flowers against a turquoise-blue ground.

Hayashi Kodenji (1831-1915) was a pivotal figure in the history of cloisonné enameling and instrumental in the formation and leadership of the Shippo-cho enamellers guild, and it is probable that he worked for the Nagoya-based Shippo Kaisha. As well as being an innovative enameller he was also an astute businessman. Stories are told that in his early days he walked from Nagoya to Yokohama to sell his wares at a time when there was a long-standing prohibition on selling copper (which included the body of the cloisonné objects). He worked with his son, Kodenji II, for over 40 years

and it is often hard to differentiate the work of the two makers. He exhibited and won prizes at many international exhibitions: Nuremberg 1885 (silver), Paris 1889 (silver) and St Louis 1904 (gold). In 1912, Glendining of London auctioned over 300 'Japanese cloisonné enamels from the Glasgow Exhibition offered for sale by Mr. K Hayashi of Nagoya'.

Auction comparison:

Compare with a closely related incense burner of similar size (29 cm), also unsigned and firmly attributed to Hayashi Kodenji, sold at Christie's, The Avo Krikorian Collection: Innovation and Inspiration of Meiji Period Design, 19 February 2007, Geneva, lot 129 (**sold for CHF 44,400 or EUR 59,720** in today's currency after inflation).