



Fine Japanese Art (JAP0621)

Fri, 4th Jun 2021

Viewing:

You may view objects in this auction in our gallery from 25 May to 4 June, 2021. We are open Monday to Friday from 10 AM to 6 PM CET, as well as by appointment. On the day of the sale, the preview will be open from 10 AM to 1 PM. FFP2 masks are required.

Lot 93

Starting price: €3000

Estimate: €6000

OGAWA HARITSU (RITSUO): A FINE CERAMIC AND LACQUER INLAID KIRI WOOD RYOSHIBAKO (DOCUMENT BOX) AND COVER WITH BUGAKU ACCOUTREMENTS

Attributed to Ogawa Haritsu (Ritsuo, 1663-1747), probably by Michizuki Hanzan (1743-1790), sealed Kan Japan, 18th century, Edo period (1615-1868)

Of rectangular form, carved from kiri (paulownia) wood of an attractive grain and color, the rounded edges with gold lacquer, the sides and cover inlaid with glazed ceramic, polychrome lacquer, and mother-of-pearl, depicting the various elements needed to perform the bugaku dance, including a fierce mask with phoenix headdress, a drum with beaters, a biwa and plectrum, a torikabuto, a flute and cymbals, a sho and a koto, the interior with a small ceramic inlay and the inlaid ceramic seal KAN – a seal used by Ogawa Haritsu and his followers. This type of pink seal was used by Michizuki Hanzan (1743-1790), a direct pupil of Ogawa Haritsu.

HEIGHT 17.3 cm, WIDTH 28.6 cm, DEPTH 23 cm

Condition: Good condition with minor wear, scattered losses (some of them likely intended), natural age cracks, few minuscule chips to edges, some nicks and scratches, one small ceramic inlay to the interior of the cover is lost. All as is to be expected from a Ritsuo box.

Provenance: Christie's, 27 October 1981, London, sale 2232, lot 371, purchased by William R. Appleby (1915-2007) and Elinor Appleby (1920-2020), longtime donors to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Mrs. Appleby had a particular interest in Asian art, and she and her husband supported the Department of Asian Art as well as the Fund for The Met, providing for important acquisitions and institutional initiatives.

Ogawa Haritsu (formerly often referred to outside Japan by his alternative name of Ritsuo) was among the first Japanese lacquer artists to establish an independent reputation outside of the hereditary craft dynasties of Kyoto, Edo, and Kanazawa. Following an early career as a haiku poet, he is thought to have first turned his attention to lacquer design in middle age and soon attracted a wide following thanks to his novel choice of subject matter and pioneering and imaginative use of unusual materials; at some point after 1710 he was hired by Tsugaru Nobuhisa (1669-1747), lord of a domain in

northern Japan, for whom he worked until 1731.

Auction comparison:

Compare a related but smaller inlaid wood box and cover signed Ritsuo and with the same pink seal Kan, but depicting a different subject, at Van Ham, Asiatische Kunst, 9 June 2016, Cologne, lot 2263 (**sold for 10,320 EUR**). Also compare to a similar ryoshibako featuring a biwa very similar to the one on the present box, sold at Zucke, Fine Japanese Art, 29 November 2019, Vienna, lot 83 (**sold for 11,430 EUR**). Also compare to a related wood document box recently sold at Bonhams, Fine Japanese and Korean Art, 17 March 2021, New York, lot 594 (**sold for 27,812 USD**).