



Asian Art Discoveries Day 1 - Japanese Art (AK0121)

Thu, 21st Jan 2021

Lot 14

Starting price: €1000

Estimate: €2000

A RARE AND RETICULATED SILVER CLOISSONÉ “VASE WITHIN A VASE” ATTRIBUTED TO HIRATSUKA MOHEI

Attributed to Hiratsuka Mohei (born 1836), unsigned
Japan, late 19th century, Meiji period (1868-1912)

The silver vase with an elongated ovoid body, a short neck with a slightly everted lip, and a flat circular foot. The neck and shoulder decorated with a leafy collar containing enameled floral patterns in relief. The body with a finely textured ground hammered by hand and decorated with nine irregularly placed circular enameled reliefs showing bright and colorful flowers, plants, and butterflies. Four of these reserves are further reticulated and reveal the true showstopper of this piece: a second, plain silver vase is hidden inside! This ingenious design can be considered the Japanese answer to a highly important Chinese reticulated vase, once praised by the Qianlong Emperor as a masterwork (see auction comparison below).

With an associated wood tomobako (storage box).

HEIGHT 13.5 cm

WEIGHT 136.8 g

Condition: Overall superb condition, the vase minimally tilted, traces of use mostly to base, few microscopic nicks, minor losses. The larger openly worked area of one of the reserves seems intentional, giving a clear look at the second vase within.

Provenance: Czech private collection, acquired at the local art market in Kyoto.

Auction comparison:

For a silver and filigree incense burner by Hiratsuka Mohei, see Bonhams, Fine Japanese and Korean Art, 12 September 2018, New York, lot 1214 (**sold for 23,750 USD**).

For the Chinese inspiration for this “vase in a vase” design, see Sotheby’s Hong Kong, The Harry Garner Reticulated Vase, 11 July 2020, lot 1.