



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 124

Starting price: €4000

Estimate: €8000

A RARE GILT AND LACQUERED WOOD STATUE OF MONJU BOSATSU ON A KAMAKURA PERIOD BUDDHIST LION

Japan, the Bosatsu figure dating from the Edo period (17th to early 18th century), the lion dating from the late Kamakura to earlier Muromachi period (13th-15th century)

Seated in vajrasana on a lotus throne, which itself rests on the back of a ferocious lion standing foursquare and with its mouth wide open. Bosatsu's left holds a blossoming lotus. He wears a pleated skirt, a shawl on his shoulders, and an elegant scarf across his chest. His serene face with its half-closed eyes, the aquiline nose, the slender mouth, the dominant forehead adorned with an urna, and the hair combed into a high chignon overall show a distinct benevolent expression.

Condition: Significant traces of use, old wear, touchups, age cracks and losses. Possibly minor old replacements. Generally in fine condition, overall commensurate with age.

Provenance: Figure and base each with old collector inventory inscriptions "45010 Bälz" and "45010 Japan Bälz". According to these inscriptions from the ancient collection of Erwin Bälz (1849-1913). Collection of Dr. Erich Junkelmann (1890-1964), Lustheim Castle, Bavaria, by repute acquired from the above. Private collection, Southern Germany, by repute acquired from the above. Erwin Otto Eduard von Bälz (13 January 1849 – 31 August 1913) was a German internist, anthropologist, and the **personal physician to the Japanese Imperial Family**.

HEIGHT 48.5 cm

The head adorned by a matching gilt-bronze openwork crown, neatly incised and inlaid in glass, all backed by a circular wood halo. Note the distinct 'Ruyi' shape of the lion's nose, typical for the period, as well as the original inside-painted glass eyes.

Literature comparison:

Compare the manner of the carving of the Buddhist lion with a closely related example from the Kamakura period in the Nara National Museum, accession no. 1311-0.

Auction comparison:

Compare with a similar Bodhisattva on a Buddhist lion, dated to the Kamakura period (13th-14th century), sold at Christie's,

Japanese Art & Design, 16 May 2012, lot 299 (**sold for 55,250 GBP**). Note particularly the similarities to the Buddhist lion, which clearly dates to the same period as the present example.