



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 106

Starting price: €5000

Estimate: €10000

A SUPERB ZESHIN-STYLE INLAID LACQUER SUZURIBAKO WITH DRAGON AMONGST CLOUDS AND COMBED WAVES

Japan, late 19th century, Meiji period (1868-1912)

Published: Little, Stephen / Lewis, Edmund J. (2011) *View of the Pinnacle: Japanese Lacquer Writing Boxes: The Lewis Collection of Suzuribako*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, cat. no. 69.

Of rectangular form with canted edges, superbly decorated in red and gold takamaki-e and kirikane as well as glass and mother-of-pearl inlays with a fierce dragon with finely detailed scales amid flames emerging from thick clouds, all on a dark-red **seigaiha (combed-wave pattern)** ground continued to the sides of the cover and the box, the underside of the cover with the attributes of a lucky god, including a treasure sack, a fan decorated with a phoenix, and a long gnarled staff with a double-gourd and scroll, all against a densely sprinkled nashiji ground, the interior of the box with nashiji and fitted with two compartments, a rectangular inkstone, and the original silver water dropper in the form of a tama (magical pearl), the underside with nashiji as well.

SIZE 5.2 x 23.7 x 25.4 cm

Condition: Very good condition with minor expected wear to lacquer and some old restored cracks to the edges of the box.

Provenance: Collection of Drs. Edmund and Julie Lewis.

This exceptionally well-crafted suzuribako clearly shows at least the influence of Shibata Zeshin, particularly in its use of the impressive seigaiha (combed-wave pattern) lacquer technique, a characteristic of the master lacquer artist Zeshin.

Auction comparison:

Compare a red-lacquer tray and cover from an original tiered jubako by Shibata Zeshin, of related size and also showing seigaiha on dark-red lacquer, at Bonhams, Fine Japanese Art, 14 May 2015, London, lot 338 (**sold for 31,250 GBP**). Compare also with a black-lacquer intro by Shibata Zeshin, also showing seigaiha on dark-red lacquer, at Bonhams, Fine Japanese Art, 5 November 2020, London, lot 57 (**sold for 18,812 GBP**).