



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 127

Starting price: €15000

Estimate: €30000

A MAGNIFICENT AND VERY LARGE FIGURE OF AMIDA, BUDDHA OF INFINITE LIGHT

Japan, 17th - 18th century, earlier Edo period (1615-1868)

Carved wood. Amida, the Buddha of Immeasurable Light and Life, standing on a lotus base, the right hand raised in the Semui or Vitarka gesture, the left lowered in the Yogan or Varada mudra, the drapery of his garment elegantly rendered in 'endlessly' flowing folds, all sumptuously gilt and decorated in fine lacquer.

HEIGHT overall 135 cm

Condition: Traces of use and old wear as expected, minor touchups, age cracks and losses, possibly some old replacements. Generally in good condition, commensurate with age, and better than most statues of this extremely rare size and period.

Provenance: From an old French private collection. Galerie de Chartres, France, April 2016. A noted European collector, acquired from the above.

The Byakugo, a white swirl of fine hair on the forehead of the Buddha, is represented here by a neatly inlaid pearl of crystal. It is also sometimes called the third eye and allows Amida to see past the mundane and into the divine world. The ushnisha above is embedded in finely sculpted, curly hair and neatly inlaid in glass.

The massive, three-sectioned pedestal is composed from multiple layers of finely carved lotus petals and partially reticulated reliefs of Dharmachakra wheels and horizontal Vajras. The borders are fortified by bands of gilt bronze, all bearing fine incision and punching work. The backside shows a group of blazing flames.

The gilt halo is carved in shallow relief to depict a seven-lobed lotus flower springing from a circular band of rays, all supported by a single vertical column.

Amida is the principal Buddha in Pure Land Buddhism, also called the Buddha of Infinite Light. In Vajrayana tradition, he is known for his magnetizing discernment, pure perception and deep awareness of the emptiness of all phenomena. According to scriptures, he possesses infinite merit resulting from good deeds over countless past lives as a bodhisattva.

Literature comparison:

Compare with an earlier statue of a standing Amida Nyorai in the Tokyo National Museum, traditionally identified as Shaka Nyorai, inventory number C21, formerly owned by Sennyu-ji, Kyoto.

Auction comparison:

Compare with a closely related statue of Amida of near-identical size, but lacking most of the superb gilding of the present lot, sold at Christie's London, Japanese Art and Design, 16 November 2000, lot 191 (**sold for 35,200 GBP** - c. 42,000 EUR).