



Marble Buddhist Guardian, Tang Dynasty (618 - 907 Ad), China

85 000 EUR



Period : Before 16th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Marble

Height : 34.5 cm

Description

This rare marble guardian sculpture from Tang Dynasty originates from the Indian Buddhist deity Vajrapani. He is a guardian that stands next to the buddhas and bodhisattvas as a protector in ritual sites such as temples and grottos. The marble sculpture was made using a realism approach, consistent with the terracotta tomb figures produced during the same period. The guardian has a wrathful and a fierce facial expression, intent on threatening evils. The exposed breast reveals dense chest muscles, and the exaggeratedly large feet stand firmly on the rock. The missing arms lead us to imagine him holding weapons or displaying fists, demonstrating his godly power. The posture is Hellenistic with the figure's weight held slightly on the left side of the body. Therefore, this figure

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can be named 'Chinese Venus' because of his missing arms. This kind of esoteric sculpture evolved in China with the arrival of tantric beliefs in the 8th century but suffered from severe losses due to the anti-Buddhist repression in 840-846 CE. Other examples of this guardian, called Nio, can still be found in the popular post Tang-era statuary of Japan.