



Buddhist Kokeshi, Kannon - By Kato Kuen, Monk Circa 1960 - Kok186



80 EUR

Signature : Kato-kuen prêtre temple dédié à Kannon-ji - mont Koya acif 1960-80

Period : 20th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Solid wood

Diameter : 8

Height : 34,3

Description

Kato-kuen was a priest at a temple dedicated to Kannon-ji on Mount Koya. This mountain, southeast of Osaka, gave its name to a complex of 117 Buddhist temples. Kato Kuen was a member of the imperial family. He tirelessly turned dolls in the image of Kannon (a sort of Our Lady of Compassion.) -This Kokeshi is discreetly adorned with black and gold. The doll contains a personal prayer inside the base. The bun is a reference to Buddha. This doll embodies the Buddhist philosophy that to achieve enlightenment, one must lead a simple and frugal life. Historical Overview Kokeshi appeared in the 1820s-40s (late Edo period), in northern Honshu (Japan's largest island), Tohoku province. In this region gush numerous hot springs frequented by spa visitors for centuries. Peasants made them during

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the winters to sell to travelers. Kokeshis were toys for little girls, or offered as a token of love or friendship; or symbolized the desire to have a healthy child. As for their origin and symbolism, three conceptions are proposed by ethnologists: We refer here to the work of the University of Pittsburgh, Jennifer McDowell: "Kokeshi: Continued and Created Traditions (Motivations for a Japanese Folk Art Doll)," 2011 - A ghostly approach. Omiya Amae, the first author to study the subject of kokeshi in 1928. The succession of nearly eight major famines between 1800-1837 had led to the disappearance of a very large number of children. The name kokeshi translated as "to make the child disappear." The kokeshi had a function as a talisman to remember the missing little ones. The simple form would evoke the small shroud, or a ghost.- A pragmatic and Shintoist approach: The doll comes from a communion with nature (forest / wood / landscape). Shinto places links between landscapes and feminine forms. Kokeshis are, modesty, discretion, femininity, feminine ideal.- Buddhist approach: in temples were found in the 19th century schematic kokeshis. Evoking hat shapes, they would be the symbolization of the "stupa" hemispherical shape, built to contain bodily relics of the Buddha. Collected from the 1920s-30s because they embodied a vanished ancient world (from the Meiji Era -1868-1912 opening of the Empire to the West). Kokeshi were worth preserving because they symbolized the national and regional heritage of Japan and its people. They were a symbol of distancing from Western toys. The ancestral category is called "dento" Traditional kokeshi (keel-like appearance). They multiplied from the 1880s (invention of the individual wood lathe). A new category appeared in 1945: creative kokeshi, "sosaku"; with free and imaginative shapes and decoration. Many creators, returning from war or captivity, wanted to turn a page while continuing their art and responding to a new American demand. A creative boom continued until the

1970s - Since the 2010s, there has been a certain revival, but a large number of workshops have closed, the technique has been lost. Productions oscillate between repetition of old models, or creations in manga and kawaii styles.