



## Pair Of Chinese Figures De Piedmontese Manufacture



22 000 EUR

Period : 18th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Painted wood

Length : 34

Height : 104

Depth : 24

### Description

Pair of Chinese figures, Piedmontese manufacture, late 18th century. Painted wood, cm. 104 x 34 x 24. The two figures, made in the second half of the 18th century, are an exceptional example of Asian art conceived for the Western market. Similar sculptures of human figures, depicting high-ranking figures, are documented in China as early as the Song dynasty in the 10th century; initially made of terracotta or glazed ceramic, in the modern age this type of decorative object was produced in biscuit or wood. Starting from the first decade of the 18th century, colonial claims, especially by the English, made it possible to intensify trade between Europe and China; exported goods also included this type of object, much appreciated by Western nobles: the fascination for chinoiserie.

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was born, which in Italy had its fortunate epilogue in the Kingdom of Sardinia. Like other contemporary rulers, the House of Savoy also commissioned entire rooms within their residences to house chinoiserie, such as the Chinese Cabinet created for the Royal Palace based on a design by the architect and set designer Filippo Juvarra. The hunting lodge of Stupinigi, whose renovation, which took place in 1729 and decided by Vittorio Amedeo II based on a design by Juvarra, contained two Chinese Cabinets, also decorated with objects and furnishings from Asia. In this context, artisan workshops also emerged that recreated chinoiserie, as demonstrated by the Piedmontese origin of the two figures shown here. Of exquisite workmanship and fine technical quality, the two sculptures have considerable dimensions, suggesting a prestigious destination. The pair of figures, probably spouses, wear court clothes used in China since 1644, the year of the Manchu invasion, which marked the beginning of the Qing dynasty: the man wears an ochre-colored jacket decorated with dragons, probably inspired by both the gunfu and the jifu, ceremonial clothes worn by members of the imperial family and minor officials; the outfit is completed by a collar, the piling, and the duanmao, the official hat of imperial bureaucrats during the winter months. In his hands he holds a roll of paper and a tea box. The woman wears a similar version of her husband's clothes. The yellow of the clothes of both characters is very curious: in fact, during the Qing dynasty, this color represented the Emperor and only his personal guards and high officials were allowed to wear it, in the form of a magua, a jacket that reached the waist. Comparison with documented ceremonial clothing suggests that the sculptures were made not by observing some real models but rather by looking at Western illustrations, depicting the Chinese fashion of the time, which were circulating throughout Europe; a known example are the prints of the drawings of J.M. Vien, published by the publisher Jefferys in

London between 1757 and 1772 and to which  
European artists most likely had access.