



An Imari Coffee Urn. Japan, Arita, Circa 1700



2 500 EUR

Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Porcelain

Height : 41,5

Description

Japan Edo, circa 1700 Modelled after a Dutch metal prototype, of pear shape with spirally lobed sides, showing a bulbous swelling with classical fluting below the neck, surmounted by a frieze of leiwen, with a flat loop handle and three tall feet in the form of bijin. The domed cover is topped with a knob in the form of a jewel set upon a rock. The decoration of cranes among pines, rocks, and a waterfall runs around the sides in moulded relief. The painting is executed in the characteristic Imari palette: underglaze blue enriched with enamels and gilding. Related works : An identical coffee urn is illustrated by John Ayers and David Howard in *China for the West: Chinese Porcelain and Other Decorative Arts for Export Illustrated from the Mottahedeh Collection*, 1977, Tome I, p. 128/129, no.

Dealer

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108. There are similar examples in the Princessehof, Leeuwarden, published by Lunsingh Scheurleer, *De Japanse Porseleinkast' Mededelingenblad, Vrienden van de Nederlandse Ceramiek*, 1972, no. 8, p. 75 ; and at the Musée de la Compagnie des Indes, Lorient. Another example is illustrated by David Howard in *The Choice of the Private Trader - The Private market in Chinese Export Porcelain* illustrated from the Hodroff Collection, 1994, p. 141, no. 148. A similar urn, in the collection of the British Museum, is illustrated by Jenyns Soame, *Japanese Porcelain*, London, 1965, pl. 28A. Additional information: Generally considered to be for coffee, such urns may also have been used sometimes for tea. A painted table-top of c. 1700 shows Nicolaas Heinsius and his family apparently taking tea from a metal urn of basically this form (*The Dutch at the Tea-table* illustrated by Lunsingh Scheurleer, *De Japanse Porseleinkast' Mededelingenblad, Vrienden van de Nederlandse Ceramiek*, 1972). This form is one of the more ambitious adaptations from metalware and the idea seems only to have been tried in Japan - perhaps because it proved expensive and clumsy