



Kannon Maternal To The Child -- Possible Maria-kannon



6 800 EUR

Period : 17th century

Condition : En l'etat

Material : Painted wood

Description

Japan, Edo period, 17th-18th century. Carved from a single block of wood, with early polychromy using gofun, red gesso, and gold leaf. H. 26 cm -- Diam. approx. 15 cm -- Weight: 640 g. Provenance: former European collection. This small Japanese figure, intended for private devotion, depicts a maternal Kannon holding a child, set within a rocky niche forming a miniature shrine. The gentleness of the face, the verticality of the veil, and the silent presence of the child place the work within the tradition of Koyasu/Jibo Kannon, protectors of motherhood. The simplicity of the composition and the iconographic ambiguity also allow for a subtle Marian interpretation, sometimes associated with the Maria Kannon figures of the Edo period, without any dogmatic pronouncements. The

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sculpture retains a remarkable early stratigraphy--thick white ground, red gesso, and traces of gilding--now fragmentary but stable. The wood, deeply hollowed and very light, testifies to a handcrafted production intended for domestic devotion. A bird carved in relief animates the composition, while an old dwelling reveals the original presence of a now-lost added element, confirming a composite construction typical of popular cult images. The old deposits and slightly blackened areas suggest prolonged exposure to incense smoke or a votive flame, reinforcing the spiritual and lived dimension of the whole. Condition: old wear, losses and material damage; fragmentary polychromy; Partially missing lateral elements. This work lies at the intersection of popular Buddhism and a possible discreet Marian reception, revealing the religious complexity of Edo-period Japan. Points of authenticity: o Heavily hollowed-out single-piece wood, structural lightness consistent with Edo domestic imagery. o Legible ancient stratigraphy: thick gofun, red gesso, and remnants of gold leaf. o Composite construction: bird carved from a single piece and an old housing for an added element. o Thermal patina and ancient deposits suggesting prolonged devotional use (incense/votive flame). o Modeling of faces with half-closed eyes and restrained expressiveness, typical of early folk art.