



Rare Japanese Hirado Seven Sages Bamboo Vase, Mikawachi, Edo Period C.1800



10 000 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Porcelain

Description

An exceptionally rare Japanese Hirado porcelain figural vase or brush pot, made at the Mikawachi kilns in the former Hirado domain during the Edo period, probably in the late 18th or early 19th century, circa 1800. The vessel is conceived as a tall bamboo trunk rising from an irregular porcelain plinth. Seven individually modelled scholars are arranged continuously around its base, creating a complete three-dimensional composition intended to be viewed from every side. Each figure has an individual face, hairstyle, pose and arrangement of robes. The scholars turn, lean and interact with one another rather than forming a static group. The bamboo-form vessel is finely painted in underglaze cobalt blue with birds, bamboo and a scene showing a scholar accompanied by two boys, one of whom gestures

Dealer

Gillers Antiques

Specialists in 19th-century European silverware, porcelain and décor

Mobile : +44 7738009924

Buntingford SG9 0PY

towards a bird in flight. Selective blue and iron-brown glaze accents emphasise the robes and sculptural details. Around the upper rim is an elaborate collar of individually modelled overlapping bamboo leaves, delicately shaded in blue. The Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove were third-century Chinese scholars, poets and intellectuals who withdrew from official life to drink wine, play music and engage in philosophical conversation. They became an enduring symbol of intellectual independence and withdrawal from corrupt public life. The subject was greatly admired in Edo-period Japan and became established in painting, porcelain and other decorative arts. The Metropolitan Museum of Art preserves several Hirado vessels painted with the Seven Sages, including a mizusashi dated to the second half of the 18th century. The Toguri Museum in Tokyo preserves a closely related Edo-period Mikawachi brush pot in which seven separately modelled sages surround a cylindrical bamboo grove. Related sculptural groups are also preserved in the Sasebo City collection. These museum parallels show the rarity and technical ambition of this distinctive Mikawachi sculptural tradition. The underside is unmarked. Dimensions: height 24.3 cm; width 16.3 cm; depth 15.7 cm; weight 1842 g. Please study the accompanying photographs carefully as they form an integral part of this description. If you have any questions, we will be happy to answer them. The item will be shipped with full tracking and insurance. Shipping costs include handling, packaging and postage.