



## Rare 18th Century Japanese Lacquer Portrait Medallion, Sasaya, 1775-1800



2 800 EUR

Period : 18th century

Condition : Bon état

Width : 9 cm

Height : 12 cm

### Description

RARE JAPANESE LACQUER MEDALLION  
SASAYA, 1775-1800

Oval copper medallion with gold maki-e decoration (takamakie) on a black lacquered background (roironuri) depicting the portrait of Anne Le Fevre in bust after an engraving, surmounted by her name in capital letters, provided with a grip ring.

Inscription on the back in gold: "Wife of Mr Ironside Born in Saumur; Died August 17, 1720. Aged 68 Years."

Japan, Sasaya or Kyoto, Edo period (1600-1868), 1775-1800.

Good condition, very slight lacquer lacks.

H. 12 x L. 9 cm.

### History

### Dealer

#### ROYAL PROVENANCE

Historical Memorabilia - Sevres porcelain - Objects of Vertu

Tel : 06 50 00 65 51

5 rue Auber

Paris 75008

These portrait medallions were made by Japanese artisans from Sasaya (sometimes referred to as Kyoto), under the direction of the Dutch East India Company expressly for export to the European market between 1787 and 1796. They were commissioned by Isaac Titsingh (1745-1812) and Baron Johann Frederick van Reede tot de Parkeler (1757-1802), who were Dutch business managers (Opperhoofd) in Deshima, Nagasaki Bay.

All executed more or less in the same style and technique, they are part of several series of portraits representing famous historical figures. The Japanese lacquerer finely and carefully copies the prints of "Illustrated Europe" compiled by Dreux du Radier in six volumes between 1755 and 1765 and published in Paris. It contained 593 depictions of famous figures from the early Middle Ages to the mid-18th century engraved by different artists who often used earlier prints, drawings or paintings as models.

The Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam has a collection of 19 medallions; some with portraits of historical figures others depicting Roman emperors, which is considered to be of documentary importance due to their numbers and they were all acquired in 1829 as part of King William's royal cabinet of curiosities I in The Hague.

The Japanese export lacquer portrait medallions that entered England in the 1770s may well have influenced Josiah Wedgwood to commercially exploit their popularity and produce his own ceramic medallions of famous figures in blue jasper and black basalt, all the more so that he made a special series for the Netherlands depicting famous Dutch personalities.

#### Related works

- Eleven medallions sold at auction at Ivoire in Lyon, June 15, 2008, for EUR 21,600.
- A large rectangular plaque showing the Dutch fleet in front of the port of Batavia, lot 97 of Christie's sale no 7627, 20 November 2008, for £ 20,000.

- Two portraits sold at Christie's Amsterdam, lot 196 of the sale n ° 2827, September 22-23, 2009, for EUR 3,250.

#### Biography

Anne Le Fevre, wife of Dacier, was a French Hellenist and scholar.

Her portrait engraved by Robert Gaillard is kept at the National Portrait Gallery in Edinburgh, Scotland. The same legend is written there as on the back of this medallion.

#### Literature

- C. Shimizu, The lacquers of Japan, Paris, 1988, pp. 225-227.

- O. Impey and C. Jörg, Japanese Export Lacquer (1580-1850), Amsterdam, 2005, pp. 48-57 and 216-217.