Finch & Co



CHINESE CAST BRONZE HAND OF THE BUDDHA SHAKYAMUNI

A FINE CHINESE CAST BRONZE HAND OF THE BUDDHA SHAKYAMUNI

WITH LONG DELICATE FINGERS THE NAILS AND JOINTS SHOWN WITH CAREFULLY ETCHED LINES

PARTLY GILDED SMOOTH PATINA

CHINA

MING DYNASTY (1368 – 1644) – 16TH CENTURY

SIZE: 26CM HIGH, 10CM WIDE 16CM DEEP – 10¼ INS HIGH, 4 INS WIDE, 6¼ INS DEEP

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LITERATURE

THIS HAND MOST PROBABLY FROM A LARGE TEMPLE FIGURE OF THE BUDDHA, WAS RAISED IN A GESTURE OF REASSURANCE AGAINST THE CHEST OF THE STATUE AND SHOWS THE BUDDHA AS A PROTECTOR AND PRESERVER OF MANKIND FROM SUFFERING.

THE GESTURES OF THE BUDDHA BECAME STEREOTYPED OVER TIME, AND IT WAS COMMON PRACTICE TO SHOW STANDING FIGURES WITH THE RIGHT HAND RAISED, THE PALM TURNED OUTWARDS, IN AN OFFER OF REASSURANCE TO THE FAITHFUL. THE HANDS SHOWN IN THE LAP OF A SEATED BUDDHA IMAGE INDICATED MEDITATION, THE RIGHT HAND TOUCHING THE GROUND WITH THE PALM TURNED INWARDS REFERRED TO THE CHALLENGE OF MARA, GOD OF DESIRE AND DEATH, AND WHEN THE BUDDHA VICTORIOUS OVER THE GOD CALLED THE EARTH TO WITNESS. THE RIGHT HAND HELD DOWN TOWARDS THE GROUND PALM TURNED OUTWARDS INDICATED GENEROSITY AND LASTLY WHEN THE HANDS WERE BROUGHT TOGETHER IN FRONT OF THE CHEST, THE LEFT BELOW THE RIGHT, THE GESTURE WAS THAT OF PREACHING.

PROVENANCE

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