Finch & Co



JAPANESE SAWASA PARCEL GILT TOBACCO BOX

A FINE JAPANESE SAWASA PARCEL GILT TOBACCO BOX DECORATED WITH FIGURES IN A LANDSCAPE THE GILT INTERIOR WITH A CIPHER OF EUROPEAN INITIALS H.W.W. DATED 1823 ENCIRCLED BY LEAFY BRANCHES
18TH CENTURY WITH LATER INSCRIPTION
SIZE: 2.5CM HIGH, 9.5CM WIDE, 7.5CM DEEP - 1 INS HIGH, 3¾ INS WIDE, 3 INS DEEP

LITERATURE

IT WAS ONCE TRADITIONALLY THOUGHT IN THE ANTIQUES TRADE THAT THESE BOXES WERE MADE IN TONKIN, WHICH IS NOW IN NORTH VIETNAM, AND EXPORTED TO CHINA, JAPAN AND THE WEST. HOWEVER, THE EXHIBITION AT THE RIJKS MUSEUM IN AMSTERDAM IN 1998 ESTABLISHED THAT SAWASA WARES WERE MADE AS A RESULT OF THE INTERCONTINENTAL ASIAN CONNECTIONS IN COMMERCE AND TRADE CREATED BY THE DUTCH EAST INDIA COMPANY OR V.O.C. WHILST SEARCHING FOR EXPORT MARKETS TO APPEAL TO EUROPEAN TASTES THEY CREATED WITH THE SKILL OF ASIAN ARTISTS AND CRAFTSMEN BOXES AND OTHER ARTEFACTS WITH REFINED GILT RELIEFS AND ENGRAVINGS ON A LUSTROUS LACQUERED SURFACE. SAWASA WAS THE JAPANESE NAME GIVEN TO THESE OBJECTS MADE BY ORIENTAL ARTISTS ADOPTING EUROPEAN MODELS COMBINED WITH JAPANESE AND CHINESE MATERIALS AND DECORATIVE TECHNIQUES.