Finch & Co



FOUR CASE GOLD GROUND KINJI LACQUER INRŌ

A FINE FOUR CASE GOLD GROUND KINJI LACQUER INRŌ DECORATED IN GOLD SILVER AND RED HIRAMAKI-E DEPICTING ROSEI RECLINING ON A DAY BED IN THE SHADE OF A TREE HIS FACE SHOWING THROUGH A SEMI-TRANSPARENT UCHIWA FAN OVERLAID WITH A MINUTE SLICE OF IRIDESCENT SHELL

THE REVERSE DETAILING HIS DREAM IN LIGHT TOGIDASHI ON A GOLD GROUND

SIGNED IN RAISED GOLD SCRIPT 'KOMA KYŪHAKU SAKU'

A CERAMIC OJIME AND NETSUKE OF GILT METAL INSET WITH CARVED CARNELIAN AGATE PANEL DEPICTING PEONY FLOWERS ARE ATTACHED TO THE CORDS

LATE 18TH CENTURY

SIZE: 8.5CM HIGH, 6CM WIDE, 2CM DEEP - 3¼ INS HIGH, 2¼ INS WIDE, ¾ INS DEEP

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LITERATURE

IN THE ORIGINAL 8TH CENTURY CHINESE FOLK-TALE LU SHENG (ROSEI) LEAVES HIS VILLAGE IN SEARCH OF AN ILLUSTRIOUS CAREER IN THE CIVIL SERVICE. THIS TALE INSPIRED THE 15TH CENTURY JAPANESE NOH PLAY 'KANTAN' AND WAS MODIFIED TO REFLECT THE BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY OF NOH THEATRE'S ELITE WARRIOR AUDIENCE. IN THE DRAMA ROSEI FALLS ASLEEP AT AN INN WHILE WAITING FOR HIS MEAL AND DREAMS THAT HE IS VISITED BY A GRAND ENTOURAGE THAT INVITES HIM TO BECOME EMPEROR. WHEN THE INNKEEPER AWAKENS HIM ROSEI IMMEDIATELY REALISES THAT HIS 50 YEAR REIGN AS EMPEROR WAS ONLY A VAIN DREAM. ROSEI'S AWAKENING IS COMPARABLE TO A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING OR ENLIGHTENMENT THAT RECOGNISES THE TRANSIENCE OF HUMAN LIFE AND THE VANITY OF AMBITION. ROSEI THUS ABANDONS HIS DREAM OF SELF-ADVANCEMENT AND RETURNS TO HIS VILLAGE.

THE IRIDESCENT SHELL ACROSS THE FACE OF THE SEMI-TRANSPARENT FAN HELD BY ROSEI CREATES A VEIL THAT REMINDS THE VIEWER OF THE ALTERED STATE OF THE DREAMER AND THE INSUBSTANTIAL NATURE OF HIS DREAM. ON THE REVERSE OF THE INRŌ, ROSEI'S DREAM IS DEPICTED AS A GHOSTLY PROCESSION OF SERVANTS CARRYING CEREMONIAL UMBRELLAS AND PALANQUINS THAT CAN ONLY BE GLIMPSED DREAM-LIKE WHEN THE INRŌ IS TURNED IN THE LIGHT.

PROVENANCE

EX PRIVATE LONDON COLLECTION