

INDIAN, HIMALAYAN  
AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN  
WORKS OF ART  
NEW YORK, 11 SEPTEMBER 2019

CHRISTIE'S

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**307**

**A BRONZE FIGURE OF A RAKSHASI**

INDONESIA, CENTRAL JAVA, 10TH-11TH CENTURY

4 $\frac{3}{4}$  in. (11 cm.) high

\$12,000-18,000

**PROVENANCE**

The Pan-Asian Collection (Christian Humann), by 1976.  
Robert Hatfield Ellsworth, New York, by 1982.  
The Pan-Asian Collection; Sotheby's New York, 5 October 1990, lot 102.

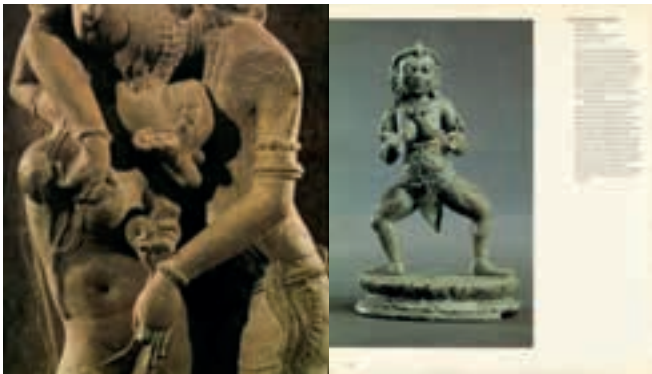
**EXHIBITED**

On Loan to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (L.76.24.13), by 1976.  
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Seattle Art Museum, Denver Art Museum,  
William Rockhill Nelson Gallery, Kansas City, National Gallery, Ottawa, Toledo  
Museum of Art, "The Sensuous Immortals: A Selection of Sculptures from the  
Pan-Asian Collection" 25 October 1977-29 October 1978.

**LITERATURE**

P. Pal, *The Sensuous Immortals, A Selection of Sculptures from the Pan-Asian  
Collection, catalogue of the traveling exhibition, Los Angeles, 1977*, p. 196, no. 119.

The iconography of the present figure, with bared fangs, bulging eyes, and unusual  
attire, make identification of the present figure difficult. In *The Sensuous Immortals*,  
Pal speculates that she perhaps represents a *rakshasi*, a semi-divine ogress  
belonging to the same class of demons as *asuras*. Less likely in his estimation is  
that she represents a *dakini* from the Buddhist pantheon.



P. Pal, *The Sensuous Immortals, A Selection of Sculptures from the Pan-Asian Collection*,  
catalogue of the traveling exhibition, Los Angeles, 1977, cover and p. 196.



**310**

**A BRONZE FIGURAL LOTUS PETAL FROM A  
LOTUS MANDALA**

NORTHEASTERN INDIA OR TIBET, 12TH-13TH CENTURY  
3 in. (7.5 cm.) high

\$4,000-6,000

This sculptural fragment, cast with figures on both the front and back, is a single lotus petal from a larger three-dimensional sculpture of a lotus stalk and blossom enclosing a central figure. The figure on the interior-facing side is a *dakini*, likely from a Hevajra mandala, and the exterior-facing side of the petal depicts the mahasiddha, Virupa in the charnel grounds, mimicking such hierarchies in two-dimensional mandala paintings. Such three-dimensional lotus mandalas first originated in Northeastern India during the Pala period; for a complete example, see P. Pal, *The Sensuous Immortals, A Selection of Sculptures from the Pan-Asian Collection*, Los Angeles, 1977, p. 96, no. 57.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24535.



310 (recto)

**311**

**A GROUP OF INEBRIATED ASCETICS ON A HILLSIDE**

INDIA, MARWAR, 18TH CENTURY

Image 11¼ x 7⅞ in. (28.5 x 19.8 cm.)

folio 4¾ x 10¼ in. (36.4 x 26 cm.)

\$6,000-8,000

The present scene depicts a host of holy Hindu ascetics or *sadhu* drinking alcohol and *bhang*, smoking hookah, and generally unwinding. Some have meditation bands still tied around their legs; a few are engaging playfully with the animals around them. This bold-colored and lively painting comes from a historical kingdom of Marwar in the modern state of Rajasthan.



310 (verso)





312

**AN ILLUSTRATION FROM A RAMAYANA SERIES**

INDIA, MALWA, CIRCA 1630

Image 6½ x 8½ in. (16.4 x 21.8 cm.); folio 9¼ x 7¼ in. (23.1 x 18 cm.)

\$5,000-7,000

Originally composed by Valmiki in the fifth or fourth century BCE, the Ramayana or the story of Rama's journey is one of India's oldest and most popular epics. As well as being an engaging epic, it is also an important devotional text. In the present composition, Rama appears to be soliciting the help of Hanuman in rescuing his kidnapped wife, Sita. This painting, as well as that to the right, can be classified by their flat execution, distinct palette, and large fields of solid color, as executed in the Malwa style.







313

AN ILLUSTRATION FROM A BHAGAVATA PURANA SERIES

INDIA, MALWA, CIRCA 1720

Image 7¼ x 13¾ in. (18.3 x 35 cm.)

\$5,000-7,000

The present folio is from the *Bhagavata Purana* which chronicles the ten avatars of Lord Vishnu, each of whom must save the world from danger, destroy the wicked and protect the virtuous. This painting depicts Krishna, about whom many popular stories emerge from this important epic.



316

316

**A FOLIO FROM A JAIN MANUSCRIPT**

WESTERN INDIA, 15TH-16TH CENTURY

Image 3 $\frac{7}{8}$  x 2 $\frac{1}{4}$  in. (9.7 x 5.8 cm.); folio 4 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 10 $\frac{1}{8}$  in. (11 x 25.8 cm.)

\$1,500-2,500

Jain paintings of this period are easily recognizable due to their favoring of three-quarter profiles and avoidance of foreshortening. At a time when naturalistic styles of painting were spreading, Jain miniatures perpetuated a more classical style.

317

**A PAINTING OF THE JAGANNATH TRIAD**

EASTERN INDIA, ORISSA, 19TH CENTURY OR LATER

24 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 20 $\frac{1}{8}$  in. (61.2 x 51 cm.)

\$6,000-8,000

This image is directly inspired by those found in the inner sanctum of the Jagannath temple in Puri. Jagannath, a form of Vishnu, stands here with his brother Balabhadra and sister Subhadra, encircled by a lively retinue of gods and animals.



# GANDHARAN SCULPTURE

**318**

**A RARE GREY SCHIST BUDDHAPADA**

ANCIENT REGION OF GANDHARA, 2ND-3RD CENTURY

29½ in. (74.9 cm.) high

\$30,000-50,000

**PROVENANCE**

Christie's Amsterdam, 13 April 1999, lot 23.

Depictions of the footsteps of the Buddha were one of the early aniconic symbols used to represent the presence of Buddha. In Gandharan art, they are often found alongside images of the Buddha himself.

The footprint of the Buddha represents the proliferation of the *dharma* and its size conveys the power of Buddhist teachings. The *swastikas*—ancient fertility symbols—on each toe represent immutability, while the omega symbol upon the ball of the foot points to the Greek influence on the Hellenized Kushan civilization. The symbolic form was appropriated from the Mauryan Empire of India, the first Buddhist empire from which these forms of representation were born.

For a very similar *buddhapada* in the Lahore Museum collection, see A. Proser, *The Buddhist Heritage of Pakistan*, New York, 2011, p.146, pl. 54. Also compare the symbology, scale and motif of the present lot with another contemporaneous *buddhapada* in the Yale University Art Gallery collection (acc. no. 2015.141.1), illustrated in K. H. Selig-Brown, *Eternal Presence: Handprints and Footprints in Buddhist Art*, exh. cat., Katonah Museum of Art, New York, 2004, 34–35, pl. 1.



PROPERTY FROM A DISTINGUISHED PRIVATE COLLECTION

**321**

**A GREY SCHIST BUDDHAPADA**

ANCIENT REGION OF GANDHARA, 2ND-3RD CENTURY

19½ (49.5 cm.) high

\$30,000-50,000

**PROVENANCE**

Sotheby's New York, 20 March 1997, lot 36.

The historical Buddha was first revered through symbols rather than through figurative images, as the Buddha himself professed the danger of attachment to icons in his own pursuit of enlightenment. Depictions of a *bodhi* tree, an empty throne, a riderless horse, a *chakra* or wheel, a parasol and footprints of the Buddha were all examples of what is now known as the early "aniconic phase" of Buddhist art, in which the presence of the Buddha was inferred through his absence. This tradition developed during the Mauryan Empire in the third-first centuries BCE, and was referenced in the later Graeco-Buddhist artistic traditions throughout the ancient region of Gandhara.

In a preliterate era, a work of art such as the present lot would have played a powerful role in the transmission of Buddhist philosophy. In the current work, each toe print is adorned with a *swastika*, an ancient Indic symbol of peace and fertility. In the center of each footprint is a many-spoked *dharma chakra* or wheel of law, which represents the Buddha's first sermon, known as "Turning the Wheel of Dharma". The upper right and left corners are adorned with a simple foliate motif. Compare the current work with another grey schist *buddhapada* from the ancient region of Gandhara, see lot 318.

The predominate medium of Gandharan sculpture, grey schist, has an abundant mica content, which is evidenced in the current work.



Buddhapada; South Asia, ancient Gandhara, 2nd or 3rd century c.e.; Gray schist, dimensions unknown. Private collection, Japan, after D. A. Sensabaugh, "Footprints of the Buddha," *Yale University Art Gallery Bulletin*, 2017, pp. 84-89.



THE PROPERTY OF A DISTINGUISHED GENTLEMAN

326

**A SILVER-INLAID BRONZE FIGURE OF  
PADMAPANI LOKESHVARA**

NORTHEAST INDIA, BIHAR, PALA PERIOD, 11TH-12TH CENTURY  
4¼ in. (10.8 cm.) high

\$25,000-35,000

**PROVENANCE**

Dr J.R. Belmont Collection, Basel, by repute.  
The Pan-Asian Collection (Christian Humann), by 1977, by repute.  
Robert Hatfield Ellsworth, New York.  
Christie's New York, 21 September 2007, lot 103.

Powerfully cast despite its small size, the *bodhisattva* of compassion is seated in *lalitasana* on a beaded double-lotus base, his right hand lowered in *varada mudra*, the gesture of dispensing boons, and his left holds the stem of a lotus. His benevolent expression is enhanced with silver-inlaid eyes and surmounted by an elaborate topknot of dreadlocks (*jatas*). A product of the Pala period, this important dynasty that flourished in eastern India from the eighth to the twelfth century produced artworks of a distinct style heavily influenced by the Gupta period aesthetic. The Pala style traveled from India to Nepal, China and Tibet, and served as an important foundation for sculptural and painting traditions in subsequent centuries. The double-lotus base over the stepped plinth is, for instance, a widely-used style created during this period and emulated widely for many centuries thereafter. The backside of the present figure's base is adorned with what is likely a dedicatory inscription in a Devanagari script, with one letter per lotus petal. For a very similar figure, compare with a bronze figure of Maitreya illustrated by U. von Schroeder, *Indo-Tibetan Bronzes*, Hong Kong, 1981, p. 283, fig. 69D.



(another view with inscription)

A silver-inlaid bronze figure of Maitreya; Northeastern India, Pala period, 11th-12th century; 4 ¼ in. (11.7 cm.) high; sold at Christie's New York, 20 March 2019, lot 634, for US \$87,500.





# HIMALAYAN SCULPTURE



PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE GERMAN COLLECTION

**341**

**A BRONZE FIGURE OF BLACK JAMBHALA**

TIBET, 13TH CENTURY

4 7/8 in. (12.4 cm.) high

\$20,000-30,000

**PROVENANCE**

Private German collection, by 1973; thence by descent.

Kalajambhala or Black Jambhala holds a mongoose, disgorging jewels as a reminder that generosity yields abundance. As the destroyer of snakes, the mongoose symbolizes the destruction of greed. Kalajambhala is a wealth deity popularized in Tibet by Bari Lotsawa (b. 1040) and the Kashmiri teacher Shakyashri Bhadra. The greenish metal alloy, simple lotus petals, and simple ornaments and stippled flower design are marks of this Black Jambhala figure's early Tibetan origin. The present sculpture is distinguished by its onyx-inlaid eyes and visible fangs. A similar Kalajambhala dated to the twelfth century is illustrated by U. von Schroeder in *Indo-Tibetan Bronzes*, Hong Kong, 1981, p. 179, fig. 33D.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24531.



"Kalajambhala; Western Tibet, 12th century; Ht. 0.171 m.," after U. von Schroeder, *Indo-Tibetan Bronzes*, Hong Kong, 1981, p. 179, fig. 33D.



342

**A BRONZE FIGURE OF VAJRAYOGINI**

TIBET, 14TH-15TH CENTURY

4¾ in. (12.1 cm.) high

\$6,000-8,000

**PROVENANCE**

Private collection, United Kingdom, 1990s, by repute.

The principal female deity of the Chakrasamvara Tantra, Vajrayogini stands in a powerful lunge atop corpses, a blood-filled skull cup held to her mouth and a curved knife in her hanging hand. She is a fully-enlightened being who epitomizes the practice of *tantra*, the expedient Buddhist path to enlightenment, which entails destruction of human ego and the triumph over the duality of conventional and ultimate truth. These principles are captured in the skulls that adorn her naked body and the blood she transforms to *amrita*. The present lot is cast in a copper-rich alloy, which appears to have previously been gilded.

The single lotus base and overall style are similar to a fourteenth-century *dakini* illustrated in U. von Schroeder in *Indo-Tibetan Bronzes*, Hong Kong, 1981, p. 442-443, fig. 119B.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24561.



343

**A BRONZE FIGURE OF JAMBHALA**

TIBET, 13TH-14TH CENTURY

4 in. (10.2 cm.) high

\$15,000-25,000

**PROVENANCE**

Private collection, United Kingdom, 1990s, by repute.

Jambhala, the Buddhist god of prosperity and abundance, is seated in *lalitasana* atop a rounded base, his pendant foot resting on a rising lotus blossom. He holds a mongoose spewing jewels, a symbol of his power to manifest wealth. His plump body is adorned with simple ornaments and his head is topped with a three-leaf crown. His delicately rendered facial features convey a benevolent expression, while his eyes are wide. The present form of Jambhala is particularly reminiscent of Indian figures of *yaksha*, and is indicative of its early date.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 245258.



**344**

**A GILT-BRONZE FIGURE OF BUDDHA SHAKYAMUNI ON A  
STEPPED THRONE**

TIBET, 14TH CENTURY

5 $\frac{1}{2}$  in. (13.7 cm.) high

\$20,000-30,000

**PROVENANCE**

The collection of Cheng Huan, SC, Hong Kong, 1990s, by repute.

The present figure of Buddha Shakyamuni calling the earth to witness to his enlightenment is finely cast, despite its small size, with a delicate face, well-articulated hands and feet, and a robust torso covered in a diaphanous *sanghati* draped over the shoulder with natural looking folds. The richly-gilded figure is unmistakably inspired by Malla-period images Nepalese of the historical Buddha, and the short neck indicates the work was likely modeled directly or indirectly after the principle image of Buddha at the Mahabodhi Temple in Bodhgaya, which was said to have had a short neck.

The adorsed lions on either side of the stepped base, however, are distinctly Tibetan in style. The three inlaid stones between them represent the three jewels and three sources of refuge in Buddhist philosophy—the Buddha, the *dharma*, and the *sangha*—a symbol common to all Buddhist traditions.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24537.







346

346

**A GILT-BRONZE FIGURE OF JAMBHALA**

TIBET, 15TH CENTURY

2¾ in. (5.9 cm.) high

\$8,000-12,000

**PROVENANCE**

Acquired in Hong Kong, 1987, by repute.

The present work is a particularly charming depiction of the god of wealth, Jambhala. The diminutive figure sits on four overturned vessels, and holds a fifth, smaller vase under his right arm, all of which are spilling strings of jewels. He holds a fruit in his outstretched right hand and a *mala* in his left, and clutches a mongoose under his left arm. The vases, fruit, *mala* and jewel-spitting mongoose are all traditional symbols of wealth with origins in early Indian art. The specific iconographic representation of the present figure, with Jambhala seated on four vases, is relatively rare; most works in sculpture and painting from this period depict Jambhala seated on a traditional lotus base. Another nearly identical example of roughly the same size, however, is known and illustrated by R. Bigler in *Art and Faith at the Crossroads: Tibeto-Chinese Buddhist Images and Ritual Implements from the 12th to the 15th Century*, Zurich, 2013, p. 93, no. 35. Bigler suggests the small size of that work meant it might have been worshipped in a traveling shrine, or *gau*.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24567.

347

**A GILT-BRONZE FIGURE OF AMITAYUS**

TIBET, 15TH-16TH CENTURY

6 in. (15.2 cm.) high

\$8,000-12,000

**PROVENANCE**

The collection of Cheng Huan, SC, Hong Kong, 1990s, by repute.

Amitayus, the bliss-body of the *tathagata* Amitabha, is adorned with the standard six bodhisattva ornaments and is seated in *dhyanasana* atop a double-lotus base. The present figure of Amitayus is executed in a classic Tibetan style associated with the fifteenth or sixteenth century. For another example of this style, see a figure of Shadakshari Lokeshvara, illustrated by U. von Schroeder in *Buddhist Sculptures in Tibet*, vol. II, Hong Kong, 2001, p. 1067, fig. 273E.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24540.



347



PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE BAY AREA COLLECTION

**348**

**A GILT-BRONZE FIGURE OF GUHYASAMAJA  
LOKESHVARA OR HIS CONSORT**

TIBET, 16TH-17TH CENTURY

6½ in. (15.5 cm.) high

\$10,000-15,000

**PROVENANCE**

Collection of the late Mrs. Anne MacDonald, acquired before 1981.

The subject of the present figure, Guhyasamaja Lokeshvara or his consort, is exceedingly rare to find in three-dimensional form. This tantric form of buddha Avalokiteshvara emerges out of the Guhyasamaja Tantra and this particular meditational deity was said to have been promoted by the famed Indian adept, Atisha. A painted image of this figure can be found in the upper right corner of a painting of Guhyasamaja Akshobhavajra at The Rubin Museum of Art (acc. no. C2001.1.3; Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 65003). The present gilt-bronze image of Guhyasamaja Lokeshvara is executed in a mature, Tibetan style—with a soft, round face, delicate ornaments, well-executed drapery, and an elegant, waisted double-lotus base.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24533.

A LARGE AND MAGNIFICENT  
FIGURE OF VAJRASATTVA





PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE EUROPEAN COLLECTION

**349**

**A LARGE AND MAGNIFICENT GILT-BRONZE  
FIGURE OF VAJRASATTVA**

TIBET, 14TH-15TH CENTURY

23½ in. (58.7 cm.) high

\$600,000-800,000

**PROVENANCE**

Private European Collection.

Acquired by the present owner from the above, 23 November 1985.

**EXHIBITED**

Barcelona, Casa Asia, "Arte Sagrado de las Tradiciones Indicas, Hinduismo, Budismo y Jainismo", 24 May - 7 July 2005.

**LITERATURE**

*Arte Sagrado de las Tradiciones Indicas: hinduismo, budismo y jainismo*, Barcelona, 2005, pp. 175-177, cat. no. 36.



*Arte Sagrado de las Tradiciones Indicas: hinduismo, budismo y jainismo*, Barcelona, 2005, cover and cat. no. 36.







Peace and perfect equanimity radiate from this large and spectacularly elegant Tibetan sculpture of Vajrasattva. The 'Vajra Being' depicted here is a primordial buddha as well as a highly-accomplished bodhisattva, with a perfected understanding of ultimate truth. He is the personification of the primary symbol of The Lighting Path. This important Tibetan Buddhist deity is the primary and ceaseless source of Vajrayana teachings. He manifests in the *sambhogakaya* (Tib. *long-ku*) or celestial form or to assist in liberating all sentient beings from the undesirable cycle of rebirth in *samsara*. The mantra of Vajrasattva (known in Tibetan as Dorje Sempa) has the power to cleanse any sentient being of past transgressions. He holds a *ghanta* (Tib. *drilbu*) symbolizing the female aspect of wisdom and a *vajra* (Skt. *dorje*) symbolizing the male qualities of skillful means and compassion. Together, these aspects indicate Vajrasattva's fully enlightened status.

The masterful artisans who crafted this sculpture made careful choices to convey the power, majesty and serenity of this invincible buddha. The flowing scarf, windblown flares behind his ears, and gently-lifted chest create a sense of movement in this strong figure. The surface of his sensitively modeled body is richly adorned with armbands, necklaces, and belts, all inlaid with jewels—the six ornaments representing the perfected qualities of the bodhisattva. While his proportions are otherworldly, his soft hands and feet give him a lifelike impression. The lost-wax process employed to create this sculpture ensures that this important commission is entirely unique.

This magnificent image of Vajrasattva is an exemplar of a mature Tibetan style inspired by Nepalese models. The figure's sharp aquiline nose, muscular upper body, cinched waist, and foliate-style ornamentation reveal the influence of a sculptural style established by the Newars, the indigenous inhabitants of the Kathmandu Valley. The Newar people were the progenitors of the most sophisticated forms of Nepalese material culture and, as such, their patrons were largely the royal and religious elite. Situated between India to the south and Tibet and China just beyond the Himalayan range to the north, the Kathmandu Valley holds a unique geographic position conducive to the proliferation of its artistic commodities. In Tibet, this artistry was highly sought after from the nascent years of Buddhism's import to Tibet; sixteenth-century Tibetan historian and Kagyu lama, Pawo Tsuglag Trengwa, cites Newar artists as the source of metal artworks for Yarlung dynasty emperors of the sixth to eighth centuries. Later in history, the renowned Newar artist Anige erected a large *torana* for the Jokhang temple in Lhasa. Anige, who was appointed to head the imperially-sponsored Beijing atelier of Kublai Khan by his Tibetan Imperial Preceptor, Sakya hierarch Phakpa Lodro Gyeltsen (1235-1280) was, thereafter, credited with the development of the Nepalo-Chinese style of the Yuan period (1279-1368).

While the present figure exudes characteristics of Nepalese sculpture, the scale of the present lot as well as iconographic features such as the shawl covering both shoulders and the lack of a helmet-like crown associated with Newar Vajracharyas (to whom Vajrasattva is the root guru), identify this as a masterpiece made in Tibet. Both Vajrasattva's crown and face help to identify the figure as a product of the fifteenth century. The crown in particular can be found in the *Belri* or Nepalese style painting tradition that flourished in Tibet, such as those within the 15th-century Gyantse *Kumbum* murals in Tsang Province (South Central Tibet). Wood and papier-mâché sculptures within Gyantse (as illustrated on Himalayan Art Resource, item no. 6855) are remarkably similar to the present image of Vajrasattva.

The present figure's face is nearly identical to that of Maitreya in a painting associated with Gyantse at the Rubin Museum of Art (see fig. 1). The distinct countenance seen here in three-dimensional form is defined by slightly-upturned, narrow, pursed lips and half-closed eyes that came to define a Tsang atelier in South-central Tibet, ostensibly active from the fifteenth century onward (see fig. 2). It remains possible, however, that the present sculpture was crafted by a Nepalese artist. Remarkable similarities to the face of a fourteenth-century gilt-bronze figure of Vajradhara at the Rubin Museum of Art, attributed to Nepal, evidence this possibility (see fig. 3), as do the many aforementioned qualities.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24536.



(another view)



Maitreya, the Future Buddha Tibet; 15th century (c. 1420-1450); Pigments on cloth; Rubin Museum of Art; Gift of Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation, F1998.17.2 (Himalayan Art Resource, HAR 664)



Vajradhara; Central Regions, Tibet, probably Tsang, c. 1500; Copper alloy; Rubin Museum of Art; Gift of Carlton Rochell, C2005.37.1 (Himalayan Art Resource, item no. 65411)



Vajradhara; Nepal, 14th century; Gilt copper alloy; Rubin Museum of Art, C2005.16.9 (Himalayan Art Resource, item no. 65431)





PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE DUTCH COLLECTION

**350**

**A GILT-BRONZE FIGURE OF  
SONAM CHOKYI LANGPO (1439-1504)**  
TIBET, 16TH CENTURY  
4 $\frac{1}{2}$  in. (12.4 cm.) high

\$8,000-12,000

**PROVENANCE**

Collection of Mr Willem Lodder (1918-2005), acquired in Amsterdam mid-1970s, by repute; thence by descent.

This engaging portrait depicts a Tibetan teacher bestowing wisdom with traditional *abhaya mudra* with his proper-right hand, perhaps from the *pecha* or religious text he holds in his proper-left. An inscription on the back of his stepped throne identifies him as Gelukpa lama, Sonam Chokyi Langpo. This fifteenth-century figure, who in his lifetime was recognized as founder of an important Gelukpa hermitage in Central Tibet called Wensa Monastery, was posthumously recognized in the Tashilhunpo religious tradition as a Panchen Lama. The Panchen Lama, a political and religious incarnation lineage first identified by the Fifth Dalai Lama in 1667, is understood to be an emanation of Buddha Amitabha. Those recognized in their lifetimes acted as the abbots of Tashilhunpo Monastery of Shigatse in Tsang Province (Central Tibet) and were often deeply involved in Tibet-China relations.

This rich, gilt-bronze is particularly warm in both the material sense, as a product of the copper-heavy alloy and bright gilding, and in the aesthetic, due to the artists' modeling with soft facial features and lifelike hands. Gilded portraits like this were commonly made in the sixteenth century and thereafter. Based on the specific facial features and body type, it is likely that this was a portrait created soon after the hierarch's death by someone familiar with the deceased.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24525.



351

**A SILVER-INLAID AND POLYCHROMED BRONZE  
FIGURE OF A SAKYA LAMA, POSSIBLY A NGOR  
MONASTERY ABBOT**

CENTRAL TIBET, TSANG PROVINCE, 15TH CENTURY  
6¾ in. (17.2 cm.) high

\$15,000-20,000

**PROVENANCE**

Acquired in Hong Kong, 1987, by repute.

The pointed red cap with pendent lappets as well as the three-piece robe identify the present figure as an adept teacher from the Sakya tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. The cap is known as a pandit's hat, and was worn by Indian scholars of the great Buddhist monastic university, Nalanda. The Sakya sect, founded in Tibet in the eleventh century, carries on this tradition. While it is clear that the present figure is a Sakya hierarch or part of an important incarnation lineage within the tradition, it does not bear an inscription or identifying iconography and cannot be identified further.

Wide-set, piercing eyes, inlaid with shining silver, give this Sakya lama an awakened aura. The casting is extremely fine and reminiscent of a style associated with Central Tibet. The modeling of the face and lotus petals, as well as the alloy tone, are strikingly similar to two published examples illustrated by H. Stoddard and D. Dinwiddie in *Portraits of the Masters: Bronze Sculptures of the Tibetan Buddhist Lineages*, Chicago, 2003, p. 234, pl. 58, and in B. Chen, *Cang Chuan Fo Jiao Wen Hua Yi Shu = Sattva & Rajas: the Culture and Art of Tibetan Buddhism*, Taipei, 2010, p. 99.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 245268.



PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE ASIAN COLLECTION

**352**

**A SILVER- AND COPPER-INLAID FIGURE OF  
LOWO KENCHEN SONAM LHUNDRUP (CIRCA 1441-1532)**  
CENTRAL TIBET, TSANG ATELIER, 16TH CENTURY  
6 $\frac{7}{8}$  in. (17.5 cm.) high

\$30,000-50,000

**PROVENANCE**

Sotheby's New York, 20 November 1994, lot 203.  
Portraits of the Masters: 108 Bronze Sculptures of the Tibetan Buddhist  
Lineages; Bonhams New York, 14 March 2017, lot 3276.

**LITERATURE**

R.N. Prats and E. Lo Bue, *Monasterios y Lamas del Tibet : Exposició*, Barcelona,  
2000, p. 205, no. 171.  
H. Stoddard and D. Dinwiddie, *Portraits of the Masters: Bronze Sculptures of  
the Tibetan Buddhist Lineages*, Chicago, 2003, pp. 270-1, no. 76.

This bronze portrait depicts the great fifteenth-sixteenth century Sakya abbot of Lo Manthang in Mustang (Western Nepal), Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrub. The lama's square face, ornamentation, proportions, and style of tightly-rendered lotus-petals with bead-like tips is one that is often attributed to an atelier in South-central Tibet (Tsang Province). The silver-inlaid eyes enliven his serene expression, and the delicately incised details on the hat and robes demonstrate the artist's careful attention to detail. An extensive inscription encircles the bottom of the base and translates as:

*Homage to Jamyang Sonam Lhundrup! I, the fully ordained monk, Sonam Pelzang, along with my entourage, prostrate and take refuge. May he take us under his benevolent care. Auspiciousness!*

See D. Snellgrove, *Four Lamas of Dolpo, vol. I*, Cambridge, 1967 for an in-depth biography of this important figure.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 2332.



H. Stoddard and D. Dinwiddie, *Portraits of the Masters: Bronze Sculptures of the Tibetan Buddhist Lineages*, Chicago, 2003, cover and p. 270.



R.N. Prats and E. Lo Bue, *Monasterios y Lamas del Tibet : Exposició*, Barcelona, 2000, cover and p. 205.



PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE SWISS COLLECTION

**353**

**A LARGE GILT-BRONZE FIGURE OF VAJRADHARA**

TIBET, 14TH-15TH CENTURY

13 $\frac{5}{8}$  in. (34.6 cm.) high

\$120,000-180,000

**PROVENANCE**

Yan Wing Arts Co., Hong Kong, 1991.

The heavenly embodiment of wisdom, Vajradhara, holds a *ghanta* (Tib. *drilbu*) and *vajra* (Tib. *dorje*) in *vajrahumkara mudra*, representing his primordial wisdom and mastery of skillful means. Vajradhara is understood as the secret form of Buddha Shakyamuni and the combined essence of all buddhas. In the highest form of tantric Tibetan Buddhist meditation, the five *Tathagatas* emanate from the body of Vajradhara.

The present form of this important meditational deity is depicted in a classical Tibetan style, with elongated torso, turquoise ornaments, the face adorned with cold gold, and with polychromy to the eyes, lips, and hair. The figure's proportions, facial modeling, and ornamentation, including the-jewel topped pile of hair and beaded arm bands, bear a great similarity to a fifteenth-century gilt-bronze figure of Vajradhara at the Newark Museum (acc. no. 70.5A).

Compare the crown ornaments, the delicate facial features, the lithe physiognomy, attenuated waist and exuberant gilding and stone-inlay with another gilt-bronze figure of Vajradhara, ca. fifteenth century, sold at Christie's New York, 20 September 2000, lot 78.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 13478.





354

**A GILT-BRONZE FIGURE OF  
TSONGKHAPA LOBSANG DRAKPA (1357-1419)**

TIBET, 16TH CENTURY

7 in. (17.9 cm.) high

\$30,000-50,000

**PROVENANCE**

The collection of Cheng Huan, SC, Hong Kong, 1990s, by repute.

Tsongkhapa, the figure depicted here, is the fourteenth-century founder of the Gelukpa sect of Tibetan Buddhism. After practicing a bit of each tradition and observing a dangerously loose application of the monastic code, Tsongkhapa established a new tradition based on a set of regulations that emphasized discipline and a regimented study of the sacred scriptures. The tradition came to be known as the 'Virtuous Tradition' and rose to religious and political preeminence in the seventeenth century, displacing the Sakya school as the primary political force in Tibet. The Gelukpa school is that with which the widely-influential incarnation lineage of the Dalai Lama is associated.

Tsongkhapa's iconography is standardized; he is always depicted with the symbolic attributes of a sword and a religious text. Here he is depicted in a richly-gilt bronze form, with lifelike hands held in *dharmachakra mudra*, lotus stems rising at both shoulders, clad in heavy robes with ornate incised textile patterns throughout. The large, curled lotus petals surrounding the circular base are indicative of its sixteenth-century central Tibetan origin.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24538.



355

**A RARE BRONZE FIGURE OF HVASHANG**

TIBET, 15TH CENTURY

5½ in. (13 cm.) high

\$30,000-50,000

**PROVENANCE**

Rossi & Rossi, London, by 2003.

Private collection, United Kingdom, by repute.

**LITERATURE**

Rossi & Rossi, *Homage to the Holy: Portraits of Tibet's Spiritual Teachers* [exhibition catalogue], London, 6 November - 28 November 2003, no. 3.

Hvashang was an eighth-century Chinese Buddhist monk who, after teaching on a visit to the region of Dunhang, was invited by Tibetan King Trisong Detsen to represent the Northern Chinese school of Ch'an Buddhism in a debate against an Indian adept to represent the position of the gradual approach to enlightenment. The latter school prevailed and Hvashang's Ch'an philosophy of sudden enlightenment was officially denounced.

The present representation depicts the adept holding a persimmon fruit—an offering to the *arhats* he challenged at the Lhasa Council. A monk sits before him and other devotees at his side, perhaps symbolizing his audience or fellow Chinese monks.

The sculpture bears a compositional and stylistic similarity to a sculpture housed in the Jokhang Temple in Lhasa, illustrated below.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24562.



"Hva shang; Tibetan, 15th/16th century; Brass; Height 9 cm; width 11.1 cm.; Jo khang / gTsug lag khang Collection; inventory no. 137," after G. Dorje, *Jokhang - Tibet's Most Sacred Buddhist Temple*, London, 2010, p. 271, fig. 20G.



THE PROPERTY OF A PRIVATE DUTCH COLLECTOR

**357**

**A GILT-BRONZE FIGURE OF BUDDHA VAJRASANA**  
TIBET, 15TH CENTURY  
4¾ in. (11.1 cm.) high

\$5,000-7,000

**PROVENANCE**

Private collection, Netherlands, by 1980s, by repute.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 245243.

PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE FLORIDA COLLECTION

**358**

**A GILT-BRONZE FIGURE OF VAJRAGHARBA LOKESHVARA**  
TIBET, 15TH CENTURY  
8¼ in. (20.8 cm.) high

\$15,000-20,000

**PROVENANCE**

Acquired by the late Sr. Francisco Alarcon de Ponce de Leon (1914-1993) in Caracas, Venezuela, October 1976; thence by descent.

The present sculpture depicts an eleven-headed, eight-armed emanation of the bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara, the patron deity of Tibet who embodies the compassion of all the buddhas. Here, the figure is executed in the iconographic form first described by the Indian Buddhist philosopher Nagarjuna during the second century. The form was later popularized in meditational texts by the Indian pandits Bhikshuni Shri and Jowo Atisha, and thereafter absorbed into the essential iconography of Vajrayana Buddhism.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24563.



358



357



THE PROPERTY OF A PRIVATE MANHATTAN COLLECTOR

**359**

**A GILT-BRONZE FIGURE OF GREEN TARA**

TIBET, 15TH-16TH CENTURY

5 $\frac{7}{8}$  in. (17.5 cm.) high

\$20,000-30,000

**PROVENANCE**

The O'Brien Collection of Asian Art, gifted from the Bhutanese royal family, by repute.

Bonhams New York, 17 September 2014, lot 27.

The beautiful liberator, Green Tara, sits here in her classic pose, *lalitasana*, ready to swiftly come to the aid of her devotees. The present gilt-bronze figure is an elegant depiction with a unique and charming detail: an in-turned right foot. The simple execution of her jeweled ornaments and skirt, along with the multi-layered and well-cast lotus-petals, evidence the fine workmanship of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24527.

PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE ASIAN COLLECTION

**360**

**A GILT-BRONZE FIGURE OF MAITREYA**  
SOUTHWEST CHINA, PROBABLY YUNNAN,  
16TH CENTURY  
5½ in. (14.3 cm.) high

\$6,000-8,000

The future buddha is identified here by the waterpot and lotus bud atop the lotus stalks that flank him. While the physiognomy and iconography indicate influence from Indian and Nepalese artworks, the facial features are discernibly Chinese: the delicate nose, fleshy cheeks and fuller lips are common among Ming-period images of the more prominent Mahayana school in China.

During the first quarter of the fifteenth century, Emperor Yongle bestowed enormous Imperial patronage to monasteries and artistic ateliers, fostering the production of artworks depicting Tibetan Buddhist deities in a highly refined and distinct style fusing all these features. Emperor Xuande followed suit, thus establishing a very distinct and sophisticated tradition of Tibeto-Chinese imagery that has come to define the fifteenth century.

The soft folds in the scarf draped over the *bodhisattva's* shoulders, the careful casting of the back, and the neat chignon are typical of works produced during the Yongle and Xuande reigns. The wide and rounded lotus petals, as well as the restrained ornamentation, points to the Tibetan influence. The ornamentation, proportions, and face of this bronze are remarkably similar to a gilt-bronze image of Bon deity Kunzang Akor, attributed to Yunnan Province in Southwest China, at the Rubin Museum of Art (acc. no. C2006.71.7, Himalayan Art Resource, item no. 65760) which has been dated to both the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries by various scholars. The Rubin example was previously attributed to Xixia—a testament to the diffusion of styles across China and Tibet during this period.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24548.





PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE BAY AREA COLLECTION

**361**

**A COPPER- AND SILVER-INLAID FIGURE  
OF MANJUSHRI**

TIBET, PALA REVIVAL STYLE, 16TH  
CENTURY OR LATER  
5½ in. (14 cm.) high

\$20,000-30,000

**PROVENANCE**

Doris Wiener, New York.  
Collection of the late Mrs. Anne MacDonald,  
acquired from the above on 25 October 1972.

This splendid representation of Manjushri, the *bodhisattva* of wisdom, is a classic example of the Pala Revival style produced in Tibet. Following the Northeastern Indian Pala tradition of masterful non-gilt bronze work, this sculpture retains a rich dark-brown patina overall: the *dhoti* is incised with silver and copper inlay to imitate the textiles depicted in vivid colors within the illuminations found on Pala Buddhist texts.

The multi-tiered base with beaded upper and lower edges and flared lotus petals is similar to that of lot 326, a Pala-period image of Maitreya. The elongated torso, stylization of the *jata* or matted hair, and smoothly finished surface, however, point to the Tibetan origin of this sculpture as does the Chinese-style modeling of the face, the long narrow nose and face shape of which clearly take after fifteenth-century prototypes. Note the striking resemblance of this figure's face with that of the figure of Maitreya on the opposite page.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24532.





362 (recto)



362 (verso)



363

### 362

#### A FINELY CARVED PRAJNAPARAMITA MANUSCRIPT COVER

TIBET, 14TH CENTURY

17 $\frac{7}{8}$  x 5 $\frac{7}{8}$  x  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. (44.1 x 14.9 x 1.9 cm.)

\$10,000-15,000

#### PROVENANCE

Acquired in Hong Kong, early 1990s, by repute.

This finely carved manuscript cover depicts Vairochana, Amitayus, Prajnaparamita, Jambhala, and Buddha Shakyamuni. The verso is painted with images of the four additional *tathagata* and bears an abraded inscription that would have provided the title of the religious text or *pecha* within. The style throne atop which the rightmost and leftmost figures (Vairochana, and Buddha Shakyamuni) sit depict forward-facing animal faces, which are representative elements of a Tibetan style of iconography associated with the fourteenth century.

### 363

#### A CARVED MANUSCRIPT COVER

TIBET, 13TH CENTURY

14 $\frac{7}{8}$  x 5 $\frac{7}{8}$  x  $\frac{5}{8}$  in. (37.8 x 14.4. x 1.6 cm.)

\$5,000-7,000

#### PROVENANCE

Acquired in France, 1991.

Prajnaparamita, Vairochana, and Buddha Shakyamuni grace the cover of this early carved manuscript, likely from the thirteenth century. For another manuscript cover of a similar style dated to the twelfth or thirteenth century, see K. Selig Brown, *Protecting Wisdom: Tibetan Book Covers from the MacLean Collection*, Munich, 2012, p. 49, fig. 4.

364

**A POLYCHROMED WOOD FIGURE  
OF PADMASAMBHAVA**

TIBET OR BHUTAN, 17TH CENTURY  
15¼ in. (38.7 cm.) high

\$35,000-45,000

**PROVENANCE**

Acquired in Hong Kong, 1993, by repute.

The *circa* eighth-century progenitor of Vajrayana Buddhism in Tibet sits atop a lotus blossoming from a long-life vase. He holds a *vajra* and a skull-cup topped with a long-life vase (Tib. *tsebum*), and dons the identifying lotus hat topped with a vulture's feather. While his facial features are somewhat exaggerated, his hands and the folds in his many-layered garments are carved with great skill.

Small traces of bright polychrome throughout the otherwise darkened surface are indicative of the original state of this sculpture, which would have been brightly painted and enlivened by wide, bright white eyes.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24559.



PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE ASIAN COLLECTION

**365**

**A GILT-BRONZE FIGURE OF VAJRAPANI**

TIBET, 16TH-17TH CENTURY

4 in. (10.5 cm.) high

\$7,000-9,000

**PROVENANCE**

Rudi Oriental Arts, New York, 1960s, by repute.  
Property from the Collection of Dr. John Mann; Sotheby's  
New York, 16 March 2016, lot 719.

The wrathful or *yidam* tutelary deity stands in a powerful lunge, or *alidhasana*, on a lotus base, his right hand brandishing a *vajra*, the left in *tarjani mudra*, wearing a tiger skin and snake ornaments. Vajrapani, originally a peaceful bodhisattva in the Mahayana tradition, has a wrathful manifestation within the Tantric or Vajrayana Buddhist tradition.

Vajrapani the keeper of all the *tantras*, the 'Lord of Secrets' or *Guhyapati*. The *yidam* takes this form for the sake of liberating others with the power of this appearance. The present sculpture was likely produced within the Newar Buddhist tradition, in which the shallow, single-lotus base and nearly-pure copper medium are common.

Himalayan Art Resource, item no. 13059.



PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE COLLECTION, WASHINGTON, D.C.

**366**

**A GILT-BRONZE FIGURE OF PADMAPANI  
LOKESHVARA**

NEPAL, 14TH CENTURY

8⅞ in. (20.6 cm. high)

\$8,000-12,000

**PROVENANCE**

Christie's Amsterdam, 2 May 2007, lot 299.

The present lotus-bearing form of Avalokiteshvara, known accordingly as Padmapani, is the most common form found in the Nepalese context, in contrast to the Indian tradition in which he is shown seated. Avalokiteshvara has been widely worshipped in Nepal from at least the mid-sixth century, and as such, this form has been perfected. The figure's lithe form and slightly-tilted head give a lifelike quality and grace to this small bodhisattva.

The present sculpture is a small, simpler version of a widely-appreciated form commissioned repeatedly in a variety of large, impressive, heavily-inlaid and gilded styles. Like those iconic examples, this small version features an organically folded *dhoti* that hangs between the thighs, and a sacred thread that falls atop them. While lacking inlay, the artist's approach to ornamentation allows the viewer's eye to imagine Padmapani adorned with jewels, just as he is presented in the great, early Malla-period masterpieces.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24534.



THE PROPERTY OF A PRIVATE MANHATTAN COLLECTOR

**367**

**A GILT-BRONZE FIGURE OF BUDDHA  
SHAKYAMUNI**

NEPAL, 14TH CENTURY

4¾ in. (12.1 cm.) high

\$6,000-8,000

**PROVENANCE**

Acquired on the European Art Market, by repute.

This petite image of Buddha Shakyamuni was, evidently, greatly appreciated; the arch of his nose is worn from handling and there is a smooth abrasion to the gilded surface. The bright copper alloy revealed beneath the gilding and the triangular chasing along the hem of the robe evidence that this fine gilt-bronze image of the Buddha in the moment of his enlightenment is the product of a Kathmandu-valley artist.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24528.



368

**A GILT-BRONZE FIGURE OF TARA**

NEPAL, 13TH-14TH CENTURY

5½ in. (13 cm.) high

\$25,000-35,000

**PROVENANCE**

Heeramaneck Galleries, New York, by 1965.

Private collection, Midwestern United States.

Christie's New York, 13 September 2016, lot 201.

The old Newar greeting 'Taremam' which alludes to taking refuge in the Buddhist goddess Tara expresses the importance of this savioress to the Vajrayana Buddhists of the Kathmandu Valley from which this sculpture came. Nearly all dedicated practitioners have memorized her praises, as she is constantly propitiated for the removal of obstacles. Moreover, she is the female counterpart of the all-important bodhisattva, Avalokiteshvara. Small, portable images of her like the present have, thus, been ubiquitous for centuries. This finely cast example displays the naturalistic physiognomy and precise stone inlay mastered by the Newar artists of the Kathmandu Valley during the early Malla period. For a very similar image of her counterpart, Avalokiteshvara see U. von Schroeder, *Indo-Tibetan Bronzes*, Hong Kong, 1981, p. 345, 88G. Similar figures of Tara can be found in U. von Schroeder, *Buddhist Sculptures in Tibet: Vol. II: Tibet & China*, Hong Kong, 2001, p. 971.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24545.





369

**369**  
**TWO GILT-COPPER REPOUSSÉ FIGURAL PLAQUES**  
 NEPAL, KATHMANDU VALLEY, 17TH CENTURY

Each 8 $\frac{1}{8}$  in. (22.5 cm.) high

\$10,000-15,000

**PROVENANCE**

Collection of Alexander Weddeu and Virginia Chase Steedman Weddeu, Richmond, Virginia.  
 The Virginia House Museum, Richmond, by 1948.

These hammered-metal plaques depicting Shiva and Parvati and their son, Kumara atop a peacock, once served both a ritual and practical purpose, protecting stone images of the same deities. It is likely that these were created in the late-Malla period to safeguard earlier images lining a ritual bath, a commonplace architectural feature that can be found throughout the three former kingdoms of Kathmandu. The hammered-metal technique, mastered by the Newar people of the valley, is prevalent throughout the Kathmandu Valley.



**370**  
**A PAINTING OF SNAKES AND LADDERS**  
 NEPAL, 19TH CENTURY

25 x 24 $\frac{1}{2}$  in. (63.5 x 62.2 cm.)

\$6,000-8,000

**PROVENANCE**

Alfio Nicolosi Collection, Mantova, Italy.  
 Christie's New York, 3 September 2011, lot 291.

The present painting would have been utilized as a board game played with dice. The board represents the progress of life with certain squares denoting good deeds, and others bad deeds, along with the consequences of both actions; the squares at the lower rungs represent states of hell ultimately leading up towards the heavens. The game, often played during the Paryusana festival, was popular amongst Jain nuns who used it as a didactic pastime to impart the notion of karma. Versions were also adapted for Hindus and Muslims; interestingly, and perhaps unusually, this present example includes Buddhist deities.







A RARE GILT-BRONZE  
FIGURE OF RATNASAMBHAVA

PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE GERMAN COLLECTION

**371**

**A RARE GILT-BRONZE FIGURE OF BUDDHA RATNASAMBHAVA**

NEPAL, 17TH-18TH CENTURY

18 $\frac{1}{8}$  in. (45.9 cm.) high

\$400,000-600,000

**PROVENANCE**

Private collection, Germany, by 1973; thence by descent.

At first glance, this magnificent gilt-bronze figure may seem to depict the historical Buddha Shakyamuni. However, the right hand turned towards the observer in the gesture of granting wish or *varadamudra* identifies this figure as the transcendent Buddha Ratnasambhava, the “jewel-born”. Ratnasambhava is a ubiquitously represented *tathagata* associated with the South. He is the father of the Jewel family of Vajrayana Buddhist deities, associated with the element of earth, and the enlightened activity of equanimity.

Ratnasmbhava is often pictured with the other four *tathagata* buddhas—Akshobya of the East, Amitabha of the West, Amoghasiddhi of the North, and Vairochana of the Central direction. These primordial buddhas all bear an appearance like that of the historical Buddha Shakyamuni, unadorned, in the garb of an ordained monk.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24530.





373

Jetsun Lobzang Tenpai Gyaltzen (1635-1723), commonly known as 'Zanabazar', was an important Mongolian religious figure and personal guru to the Kangxi Emperor (r. 1662-1722). The son of Khalkha Tushyetü Khan, leader of the Khalkha Mongols, Zanabazar was at an early age recognized by both the Panchen Lama and Dalai Lama as the reincarnation of the Tibetan lama, Taranatha (1575-1634), and proclaimed the First Jetsundamba, an honorific title. He traveled to Tibet to continue his religious instruction under the powerful Gelukpa lamas before returning to Mongolia in 1651, bringing fifty sculptors and painters with him in an attempt to establish the Geluk order amongst the Mongols. Rather than settle at one established monastery, his

portable temples traveled from one *örgöö* (traveling place) to another, in what became known as the Da Khuree (Great Circle).

During his time as religious leader of the Khalkha Mongols, Zanabazar oversaw a proliferation of Buddhist art in the region. He is especially known for his visualization and design of gilt bronze sculpture, subsequently carried out by master Nepalese bronze casters, which are widely recognized as some of the finest Buddhist gilt-bronze sculpture created. Lots 373 and 374 are examples of the popularized Mongolian style established by Zanabazar.



374

373

**A GILT-BRONZE FIGURE OF BUDDHA**  
MONGOLIA, ZANABAZAR STYLE, 17TH-18TH CENTURY  
6 $\frac{7}{8}$  in. (17.4 cm.) high

\$18,000-25,000

The present work depicts Buddha Amitabha seated in *dhyanasana*, with his hands in *dhyana mudra* and holding an alms bowl. He wears a monk's robe draped over his left shoulder, the hems of which are delicately incised with floret designs. The broad shoulders, tubular limbs, delicate facial features, and stamen-like incised lines above a multi-tiered lotus base, are elements associated with the Zanabazar style of this fine gilt-bronze sculpture.

Himalayan Art Resources ([himalayanart.org](http://himalayanart.org)), item no. 24398.

PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE ASIAN COLLECTION

374

**A GILT-BRONZE FIGURE OF BUDDHA RATNASAMBHAVA**  
MONGOLIA, ZANABAZAR STYLE, 17TH-18TH CENTURY  
6 $\frac{7}{8}$  in. (16.2 cm.) high

\$50,000-70,000

Ratnasambhava appears here in a naturalistic form, with defined facial features, hands and feet. His well-proportioned physiognomy and relaxed musculature are the product of a sophisticated atelier, well versed in the Zanabazar style. The round base and large, leaf-like lotus petals are less ubiquitous, but clear signs of its Mongolian origin.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24551.

THE PROPERTY OF A PRIVATE COLORADO COLLECTOR

**380**

**A GILT-BRONZE FIGURE OF  
BUDDHA SHAKYAMUNI**  
TIBETO-CHINESE, 18TH CENTURY  
6½ in. (15.5 cm.) high

\$6,000-8,000

**PROVENANCE**

Acquired from Stuart Perrin, New York,  
8 April 1988.

This fine gilt bronze image of Buddha Shakyamuni, turning the wheel of the *dharma*, is a typical representation from the Buddhist Qing Dynasty. Its Chinese origin is revealed through the dark tone of the alloy, the oval-like draping of the robe atop each of the Buddha's knees, the visible and neatly-pleated *antaravasaka* or lower robe, and the incised lotus petals on the backside of the base, where the widely-cast petals end.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24526.





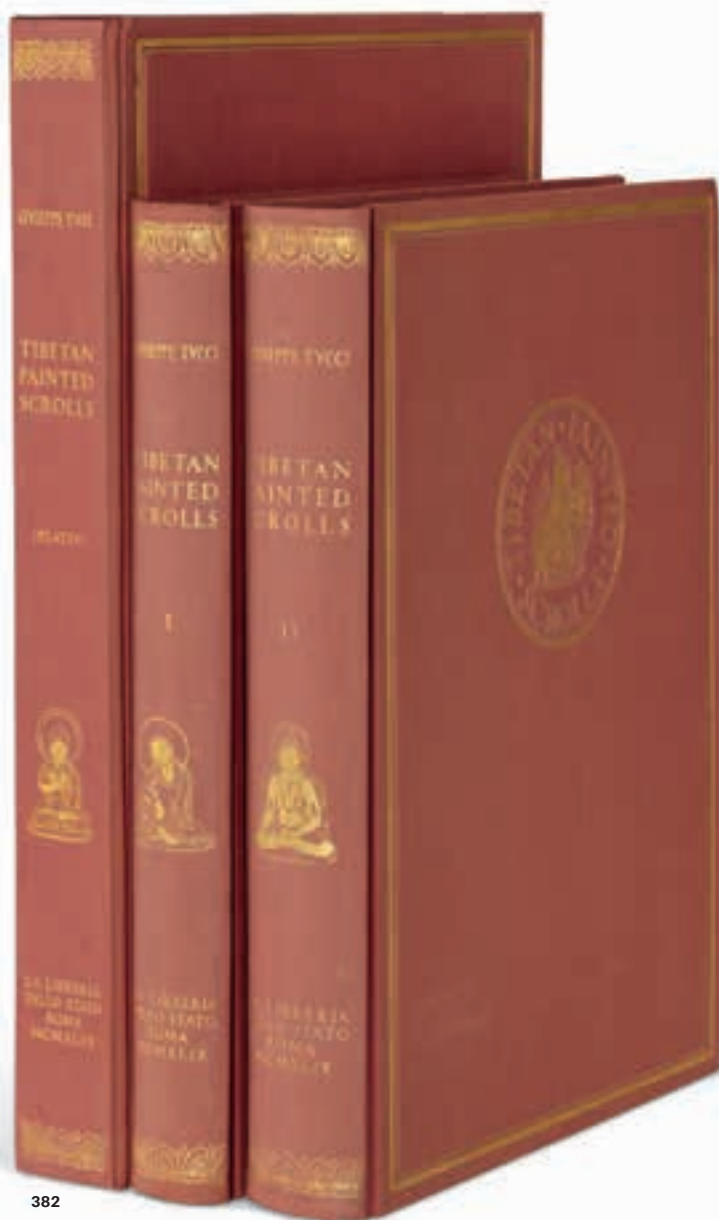
PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE FRENCH COLLECTION

**382**

**TIBETAN PAINTED SCROLLS, 3 VOLUMES**

GIUSEPPE TUCCI, ROME: LA LIBRERIA DELLO STATO, 1949 (3)

\$5,000-7,000



382

PROPERTY OF A PRIVATE MANHATTAN COLLECTOR

**383**

**A THANGKA OF FIVE ARHATS**

TIBET, 18TH CENTURY

Image 25 $\frac{7}{8}$  x 16 $\frac{3}{4}$  (65.7 x 42.5 cm.)

mounted 53 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 29 $\frac{1}{4}$  (134.9 x 74.3 cm.)

\$10,000-15,000

This painting is from a larger three-painting set depicting the sixteen *arhats*, attendant Dharmatala, and the Chinese monk Hwashang. The present painting depicts the Indian adepts (in clockwise order), Abheda, Angaja, Vanavasin, Vajriputra, Kalika, and Ajita, each labeled by Tibetan inscriptions. The composition is executed in a style often referred to as New Menri, introduced through the Panchen Lama's court in the seventeenth century. Therein, people took on more lifelike forms, and compositional asymmetry was introduced with more complex landscapes reminiscent of Chinese landscape paintings.

This finely-executed example of the New Menri style includes a surprising number of vignette-like details throughout, including an image of the historical Buddha performing the miracle of defeating Mara's demons, just prior to his moment of enlightenment.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24529.



**384**

**A PAINTING OF SHAKYAMUNI BUDDHA AND SIX CLASSIC  
BUDDHIST TEACHING STORIES (AVADANA)**

EASTERN TIBET, KHAM PROVINCE, PELPUNG MONASTERY STYLE,  
19TH CENTURY

33% x 24% (86 x 62.1 cm.)

\$20,000-30,000

This narrative composition is the design of Kagyu lama Situ Panchen (1700-1744) of Pelpung Monastery in Kham Province (Southeast Tibet), an important religious and artistic figure who is known for several widely-reproduced painting sets. This particular painting set, comprised of twenty-three compositions, depicts the one-hundred-and-eight classic teaching stories known as *Avadana*.

The first painting in the set depicts Buddha Shakyamuni and the last painting in the set is a portrait of Situ Panchen himself. The other twenty-one paintings depict tales of *karma* coming to fruition and the many virtues of Buddhist practice from a compendium composed by eleventh-century Kashmiri poet Kshemendra based on the earliest canon of Buddhist scripture.

This particular composition is identified, by an inscription in the upper margin of the canvas as “left, eleventh, jataka stories 43 through 48”. The stories depicted are: *The Pure Conduct of King Kanakavarna*; *Hiranyapani’s Hands of Gold*; *Ajatashatru’s Treachery*; *Kritajna Discovers the Power of Truth*; *The Trunks of the Shala Trees*; and *Sarvarthasiddha’s Visit to the Naga Realm* (see P. Chopel, D. Black, and Kshemendra, *Leaves of the Heaven Tree: the Great Compassion of the Buddha*, Berkeley, CA, 1997). The same composition can be found in the Rubin Museum of Art (acc. no. C2002.2.1, Himalayan Art Resource, item no. 65033). For more information on these compositions see D. Jackson, *Patron and Painter, Situ Panchen and the Revival of the Encampment Style*, New York, 2009, pp. 26-28.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24566.





THE PROPERTY OF A PRIVATE COLORADO COLLECTOR

**385**

**A PAINTING OF SHAMBHALA**

TIBET, 19TH CENTURY

Image 36% x 22½ in. (93.0 x 57.9 cm.)

\$12,000-18,000

**PROVENANCE**

Acquired from Stuart Perrin, New York,  
8 April 1988.

The hidden kingdom of Shambhala, believed to be north of the Tibetan plateau is depicted here with circular geography, surrounded by an impenetrable mass of mountains. The mystical land is ruled by an emanation of the bodhisattva of wisdom, the Glorious One with a Melodious Voice (Manjushri).

A temple within the royal precinct of Kalapa protects the *Kalachakra* (Wheel of Time) mandala, the source of Tibetan Buddhist teachings wherein time here is employed as a metaphor symbolizing the process of transformation from a mundane existence towards Buddhahood.

The landscape, replete with domiciles, gardens, and pathways, is protected by a dome of wisdom fire and the Shambhala kings depicted here. A worldly progenitor of this Pureland teaching, a Jonang lama, floats at top center. The bright blues and greens, and the tiny vegetation scattered across the mountains on the bottom register are executed in a style consistent with a nineteenth-century date.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24523.

THE PROPERTY OF A PRIVATE CONNECTICUT COLLECTOR

**386**

**A THANGKA OF BUDDHA SHAKYAMUNI AND  
CLASSIC TEACHING STORIES (AVADANA)**

TIBET, 19TH CENTURY

Image 32 x 19 $\frac{5}{8}$  in. (81.3 x 49.8 cm.)

mounted 56 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 33 $\frac{1}{4}$  in. (142.9 x 84.5 cm.)

\$12,000-18,000

**PROVENANCE**

Purchased in Darjeeling, 1 October 1998.

**EXHIBITED**

On loan to the Rubin Museum of Art, New York  
(L2014.24), 2014-2019.

New York, Rubin Museum of Art, "Shrine Room",  
2014-2018.

New York, Rubin Museum of Art, "Gateway to  
Himalayan Art", 3 August 2018-13 May 2019.

Shakyamuni is surrounded by vignettes illustrating four classic Buddhist stories. This painting is part of a large painting set depicting all one-hundred-and-eight classic teaching stories known as *Avadana* in Sanskrit. This particular composition depicts chapters eighty-nine through ninety-one: *The Son of Hastishayati*, *The Liberation of Dharmaruchi*, *Dhanika's Offerings*, and *The Eloquence of King Shibi* (for further reading, see P. Chopel, D. Black, and Kshemendra, *Leaves of the Heaven Tree: the Great Compassion of the Buddha*, Berkeley, CA, 1997).

The narrative design is based on a series of woodcut prints from Narthang Monastery depicting the *Avadana* compendium of the Indian adept, Kshemendra. The white figure of Chakrasamvara floating in the clouds in the upper-right corner of the composition, however, appears to be this artist's own addition. The color palette and landscape style indicate the nineteenth-century origin of this painting.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24547.



THE PROPERTY OF A PRIVATE COLORADO COLLECTOR

**387**

**A PAINTING DEPICTING BUDDHA SHAKYAMUNI AND CLASSIC  
BUDDHIST TEACHING STORIES (AVADANA)**

TIBET, 18TH-19TH CENTURY

Image 29 x 20½ in. (73.7 x 52.1 cm.)

\$30,000-50,000

The present painting of Buddha Shakyamuni is comprised of stories of the historical Buddha's previous lives, in which he perfected the many qualities that ultimately brought him to enlightenment. The stories are labeled with succinct titles and numbered eighty-one to eighty-nine. One of the most easily recognizable, the story of Prince Mahasattva who sacrificed his body to a hungry tigress and her cubs (number eighty-one), can be seen at top center. The abbreviated titles of the stories that follow, depicted in clockwise order are: *King Moonlight*, *King of Shibi*, *King Aranemi*, *The Bodhisattva Who Endures*, *King Simhakesara*, *The Knowledgeable Master*, *Kumara Sudhana*, and *The Blissful God*. These stories come from the compendium of tales authored by the Third Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje (1284-1339).

This eighteenth or nineteenth-century painting is intended as a teaching tool with which Tibetan lamas can impart many life-cycles of Buddhist wisdom to their students. Painted in a bright, saturated palette of primarily blue, green, red, orange and gold with a Chinese-influenced landscape, the particular place of Tibetan provenance is difficult to discern.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24520.







**388**

**A PAINTING OF PADMASAMBHAVA**

EASTERN TIBET, KHAM PROVINCE, LATE 18TH-EARLY 19TH CENTURY

Image 31½ x 19¾ in. (80.0 x 50.5 cm.); framed 57¼ x 31¾ in. (145.4 x 79.7 cm.)

\$10,000-15,000

**PROVENANCE**

Acquired in France, 1991, by repute.

Padmasambhava, the 'Lotus-born', also known as Guru Rinpoche, or 'Precious Guru', appears atop a giant lotus emerging from a body of water at the center of this full composition. His two consorts, Mandarava and Yeshe Tsogyel, flank him and he is surrounded by vignettes depicting initiations, teachings, cave meditations, and miraculous visions. The many fields of rainbow light as well as the overall color palette are typical features of the regional style associated with Kham Province (Southeast Tibet) referred to in Tibetan as *Khamri*. Take note of the similar colors used in the present composition and in that on the opposite page, from the same region.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24569.



THE PROPERTY OF A PRIVATE COLORADO COLLECTION

**389**

**A PAINTING OF A MOUNTAIN DEITY, MAGYEL POMRA**

EASTERN TIBET, KHAM PROVINCE, 18TH CENTURY

Image 20¾ x 12⅞ in. (52.7 x 32.7 cm.)

\$15,000-20,000

**PROVENANCE**

Acquired from Peaceful Wind Gallery, Santa Fe, 1994-1996, by repute.

The current work is from a distinct tradition known as 'Karma Gardri', created by the eighteenth century Kagyu lama Situ Panchen (1700-1744), associated

with Pelpung Monastery in Kham Province in Southeast Tibet. The figures depicted here are mountain deities, converted to protectors of the *dharma* by Padmasambhava in the eighth century.

At center is Magyel Pomra, named after the mountain range in the Golok area of Eastern Tibet over which he presides. He is accompanied by Yigchen Rabde Nyenpo, Genyen Dorje Gyurme, Jowo Dorje Kundrag, Dorje Dragdul and Nyenchen Thanglha. Compare the composition and painting style with another eighteenth century Eastern Tibetan thangka depicting *Mountain God Amnye Cha Kyung* in the collection of the Rubin Museum of Art, New York (acc. no. C2006.66.8, Himalayan Art Resource item no. 141).

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24523.



390

THE PROPERTY OF A PRIVATE COLORADO COLLECTOR

**390**

**A PAINTING OF CHAKRASAMVARA AND VAJRAVARAHI**

BHUTAN, 19TH CENTURY  
Image 27% x 19 in. (69.5 x 46.3 cm.)

\$12,000-18,000

Above a gathering of deer at the top of the composition is the religious authority of Bhutan, leader of the Drukpa Kagyu state religious tradition, the Zhabdrung. As the figure is not labeled by inscription, this particular incarnation cannot be identified. For another example of this distinctly Bhutanese style, compare the current work with another nineteenth-century Bhutanese painting depicting *Padmasambhava, Guru Drakmar* in the collection of the Rubin Museum of Art, New York (acc. no. C2006.42.9, Himalayan Art Resource item no. 89174).

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 24521.

PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE ILLINOIS COLLECTOR

**391**

**A THANGKA OF VAJRAYOGINI**

CENTRAL TIBET, TSANG PROVINCE,  
SAKYA MONASTERY, 19TH CENTURY  
Image 39 x 26% in. (99.1 x 67.6 cm.)  
mounted 76% x 45% in. (194.0 x 115.6 cm.)

\$20,000-30,000

A skull- and bones-adorned Vajrayogini stands on recumbent corpses splayed on a colorful lotus atop a mystical landscape, encircled by a cool pool of blue light filled with golden rays, and surrounded by a fantastical aureole of fire. She appears here in a form particular to the Sakya school known as Kechara or 'Sky Wanderer', passed down through the lineage of the mahasiddha Naropa. Two other manifestations of the powerful goddess, Maitri Kachod and Indra Kachod, appear in a rainbow sphere of light and in a fiery aureole at her left and right. Chakrasamvara in union and Green Tara appear above them. At the top center is the primordial Buddha Vajradhara and just below is his unique manifestation for this practice, known as Vira Vajradharma. On either side of the primordial buddhas and below are lineage holders of this important Sakya practice. At bottom center are the protectors of these teachings, the Lords of the Charnel Ground, Yellow Jambhala and Black Jambhala. The lowermost register likely depicts the commissioners of this painting; an inscription on the verso, which reads "Dzamling" ('dzam gling) suggests that this painting may have belonged to Dzamling Chegu Wangdu (1855-1919), the 38th Sakya throneholder.

Himalayan Art Resources, item no. 81541.

