

# Galerie Hioco

## Seated Buddha (P659)



### What do we like in this sculpture?

- The beauty and purity of his fine features: this Buddha radiates a remarkable calmness and serenity.
- It is the precise moment of Awakening: Buddha is victorious over Māra, the demon of temptation and death, and achieves Enlightenment!
- The patina is absolutely superb: the gilding rarely so well preserved enhances the beautiful green of the bronze, both dense and dark.

## I. Detailed description

### **Seated Buddha (P679)**

*Bronze with traces of gilding*

*Thailand*

*Circa 15th century, Kingdom of Chiang Saen (14th-16th century)*

*H. 33 cm or 13 in*

### **Chiang Saen, a charismatic art**

In northern Thailand, the city of Chiang Saen, founded in 1327, was the capital of the small vassal Lanna Kingdom with which it shared a varied history. The city was an active centre for bronze-casters who had their own characteristic style. It is thought that Sukhothai casters came north and helped create this particular aesthetic style. Indeed, it has certain traits of the Sukhothai style, such as the slightly hooked nose, the eyebrows arching to the bridge of the nose, and the hair in tiny juxtaposed curls. To this is added the influence of Indian sculpture. The result is a different rendering, closer to the spirit of classical Indian Buddhist statuary, more vigorous, present and majestic. This Buddha is a perfect example. The smoothness of the facial features, the chin, underlined on both sides by an incised line, and the ears with pointed ends bending outwards: all this is characteristic of the Chiang Saen (and Lanna) style.

### **An aesthetic of serenity**

Śākyamuni Buddha is the embodiment of spiritual compassion, and this bronze demonstrates this nature in a very beautiful way. The face is noble, well-balanced and graceful. The eyes with half-closed eyelids underline his serene meditation. Finally, the modelling is handled with great care and there is an obvious harmony in the proportions of the body and in the facial features.

### **A fundamental iconography: Māravijaya Buddha**

In iconographic terms, Śākyamuni Buddha is depicted here at the moment of his Awakening. This occurs while he is seated, here on a lotiform base and an openwork pedestal, in the so-called "noble" attitude, with his right leg folded over his left leg. This is an absolutely fundamental moment in Buddhism: he then touches the earth with his fingertips and sketches the gesture of "Calling the Earth to witness" (*bhūmisparśa mudrā*). At this moment Buddha is indeed victorious over Māra (Māravijaya), the demon of death and temptation, who was trying to distract him from his meditation. He thus achieves Enlightenment and shows his good faith in having vowed to bring deliverance to all beings.

Covered with a green patina and beautiful remains of gilding, the piece has an extremely decorative character.

II. Image of the piece – front view



III. Image of the piece – left three-quarter view



IV. Image of the piece – left profile view



V. Image of the piece – back view



VI. Image of the piece – right profile view



VII. Image of the piece – right three-quarter view





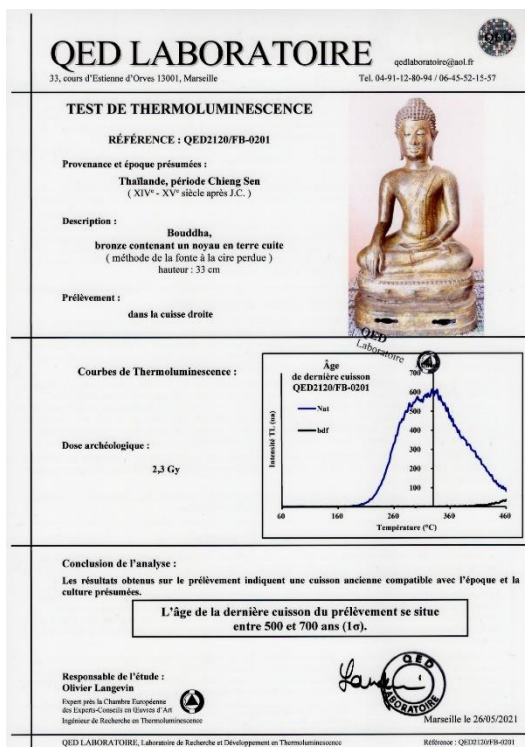
VIII. Images of the piece – views of details



## IX. Provenance: in all transparency!

- . This piece comes from a private collection, France (by repute).
- . We are always very cautious and diligent about the provenance of the artworks we offer. Ensuring the seriousness and reliability of the information given by the former owners is one of our priorities and we then guarantee this origin by engaging our responsibility.
- . In order to reinforce this guarantee, we systematically verify that these artworks have not been registered as missing or stolen. As Interpol has granted us the right to directly consult their database of stolen or reported items, we verify by ourselves and issue a certificate attesting to this.

## X. Condition report: our scientific approach



This bronze Buddha (33 cm high or 13 in), dated to the 15th century, still has its cast clay core, visible at the rear. A thermoluminescence test (ref. QED2120/FB-0201 - see reproduction on the left) has been carried out and confirms this datation. At the top of the head there was originally a flame-shaped end which has now disappeared. A crack between the lotiform base and the pedestal runs all around and a more important loss extends at the rear to the lower part of the Buddha's back as well as to a lotus petal at the base. It is possible that the lower part of the sculpture was broken in the past and reattached. Some incisions are visible: on the torso, the right thumb, the right big toe, on the back of the right shoulder and in the hair. The breaks and incisions appear to be old, as evidenced by their worn surface. The piece must have once been entirely gilded and the gilding is still abundant. It remains partly on the face and body, but has almost completely disappeared on the hair. The face and body have a shiny patina with a nice green tint that contrasts with the roughness of the hair. No other restoration has been detected.

*Please note that since we are not conservators or restorers, it must be understood that any condition report we made is a subjective qualified opinion, even if we do our best efforts. Prospective buyers should inspect the piece to satisfy themselves as to condition.*

XI. Comparable artwork – Galerie Hioco & Christie's



A Chiang Saen Buddha head sold by our Gallery:

**Buddha head**

*Lacquered and gilded bronze*

*Thailand*

*15th century, Kingdom of Chiang Sen (14th-15th century)*

*H. 19 cm or 7 ½ in*

A seated Buddha from the Lanna period,  
H. 52 cm (or 20 ½ in), sold by Christie's New  
York in 2018 :



## XII. Our guarantees: for a serene acquisition!

- More photos will be sent to you on request.
- In case of purchase, we will establish an invoice that you can pay by bank transfer.
- You will receive our certificate of authenticity with the photo of the artwork, its detailed description and the mention of the provenance.
- We will define together the shipping modalities and we will take care of all customs formalities if you live outside of France.
- If you do not like the piece, we give you the possibility to return it to us and we will assist you with the resulting terms and conditions.