PAN
AMSTERDAM

PAUL RUITENBEEK CHINESE ART

LACQUER INCENSE BOX

Ming Dynasty, 16th - early 17th century, 6.2 cm diameter, 2.8 cm high.

The small circular box stands on a foot ring, the straight sides of both box and cover carved with a key-fret border. The flat surface of the cover is carved in relief with a Buddhist figure, probably representing Budai, walking along a shore on bare feet, and wearing loose robes that reveal his belly and chest. The figure holds a long staff in his right hand. His left hand holds a tasseled fan. The ground of the cover is carved with two fine geometric patterns resembling water and land. The plain base and interiors of the box and cover are applied with a layer of black lacquer

This incense box demonstrates the exceptional craftsmanship of carved lacquer. Built up from numerous layers of lacquer, the surface was carefully prepared to allow for intricate relief carving, a process requiring remarkable precision, patience, and technical skill.

PROVENANCE

Formerly in a private Japanese collection

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