

Chinese Buddhist Art Highlights Gianguan's June 9 Auction

NEW YORK CITY — With a growing reputation for offering Chinese religious art, Gianguan Auctions will present a collection of bronze, jade and ceramic statues in its Saturday, June 9, sale, beginning at 6 pm.

A rare Northern Zhou seated Buddha is finely cast and retains a rich patina; the traditionally posed Buddha has a raised right hand while the left one rests on the knee. The countenance is serene and meditative below an urna, framed by a pair of long pendulous earlobes and hair neatly swept over the mound of the ushnisha. At 14½ inches tall, the Buddha is



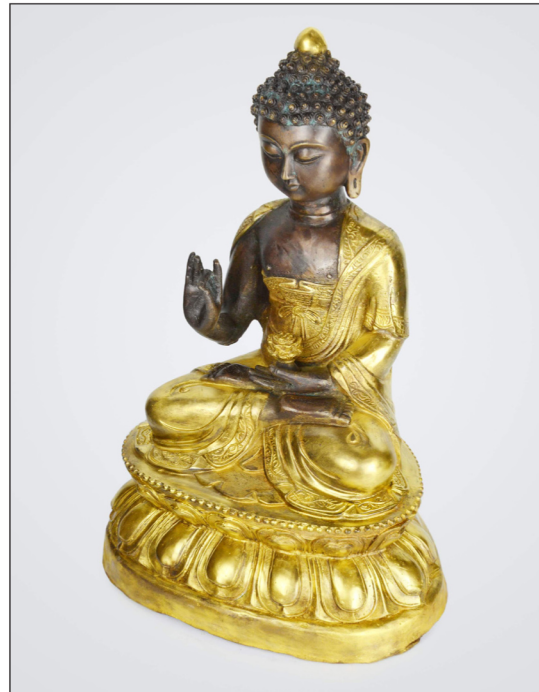
Northern Qi stone figure of Shakyamuni Buddha on a lotus pedestal supported by a base.

expected to fetch more than \$20,000.

From the Ming dynasty comes a rare gilt-bronze figure of the celestial Buddha Amitabha. While the Buddha is depicted seated in dhyanasana, the left hand holds a floral lotus amphora. The dark bronzed body is draped in golden hued, detailed robe. Serenity characterizes the gaze. Elongated ears with pendulous lobes frame the face. Of the period, the casting bears the four-character Xuande mark. It is 15 inches tall and expected to go off at more than \$15,000.

Equally dramatic is a rare enameled gilt bronze Shakyamuni Buddha of the Ming dynasty. Retaining a brilliant patina, the seated figure is dressed in a turquoise robe enhanced with pink and red flowers and scrolls within a matrix of fine wire. The face bears a serene expression beneath a raised urna. The coiffure is of small, tight curls. The usnisa is surmounted by a cintamani. It is engraved with the Ming dynasty Yongle six-character mark and estimated at upwards of \$15,000.

Buddhas of carved jade, one of the hardest stones to work, find a niche in the sale as well. A Northern Wei carving of Shakyamuni Maitreya seated on a plinth offers rare insight into the techniques of the age. The face, appropriately serene with downcast eyes in contemplation, is framed by elongated earlobes and surmounted with a usnisa topknot. The figure is supported on a rectangular



Buddha Amitabha seated in dhyanasana, and holding a lotus amphora, in loose stylized robes, on a pedestal.

plinth carved with lions and Buddhas. It is about 13 inches tall and estimated at more than \$8,000.

Similarly, a jade carving of the standing Shakyamuni Maitreya is an example of period craftsmanship. At nearly 20 inches tall, the figure's face is carved with deeply arching eyebrows, narrow eyes and small pursed lips. The hair has characteristic concentrically coiled strands arranged around the ushnisa, and the robes fall in loose folds

around the body. Weighing more than 1,000 grams, the lot is expected to command upwards of \$6,000.

A great value with strong history is a polychromed Northern Qi stone figure of Shakyamuni Buddha seated in dhyanasana on a lotus pedestal supported by a base. The interest lies in the face, which is finely carved and tranquil under tight curls over the ushnisha surrounded by double lotus petals. A mandorla frames the head. Having sur-



Of the Ming dynasty, the seated figure wears a turquoise robe enhanced with pink and red flowers and scrolls within a matrix of fine wire.

vived more than 1,500 years of weathering, the statue retains traces of pigment on the loose-fitting robe. Both hands, however, have been lost to the ages. The 16-inch-tall property is expected to realize upwards of \$3,000.

Previews open on Friday, June 1, and run through Friday, June 8, 10 am to 7 pm.

The gallery's headquarters is at 39 West 56th Street. For information, 212-867-7288 or www.gianguanauctions.com.