



Japanese Imari plate, Genroku period circa 1700

POA

Japanese Imari plate, Genroku period circa 1700, decorated with a floral arrangement; a raised platform with curling feet bearing a small pine and various flowers including peony and lotus, the cavetto with floral roundels and cartouches, the rim with three 'cloud' vignettes containing peony, chrysanthemum and prunus, divided by three blue sections with peony heads and small shaped cartouches containing stylised grasses, the reverse with three sprays of orchid, peony and plum.

Condition: Good

Notes:

It is probable that the arrangement depicted on this plate refers to a 'shimadai' (??, literally 'island table'), a special decorative platform which was an important part of ancient betrothal and wedding ceremonies in Japan. Essentially a raised platform of curved 'shihama' shape supported on curling legs, adorned with plants and figures, it represents the legendary island of immortals known as 'hourai' ?? ('penglai' in Chinese) and so is frequently adorned with symbols of longevity, including pine (as seen on this example), crane, plum, turtles or bamboo. A shimadai provided an auspicious focal point for ceremonies or banquets, and was intended to celebrate the good fortune of those in attendance, and to ensure a long and happy life together for the couple.

Origin	Japanese
Period	Pre 1900
Condition	Other
Diameter	21.8cm. (8 5/8in.)
Material and Technique	Porcelain with underglaze blue and overglaze

Antique ref: Q161