



**Japanese kakiemon fluted bowl, 18th century
POA**

Japanese kakiemon fluted bowl, 18th century, with a central phoenix roundel, the lobed sides decorated with sprouting grasses and three stylised flowering boughs; the reverse with sprays of bamboo and prunus.

Dimensions:

Diameter: 14.5cm. (5 3/4in.)

Condition:

Pieces out of rim and neatly re-stuck

Notes:

The Japanese phoenix (houou), is often referred to in Japan as a 'Chinese phoenix' as it originated in China before being transmitted to Japan, most likely during the Asuka Period (538–710 C.E.). It shares some of its symbolism with its Chinese counterpart. In ancient China, the 'fenghuang' had consisted of two separate entities to represent yin and yang; the male bird (feng) and female (huang), but during the Ming the two gradually merged to become the symbol of female royalty. In Japan the phoenix represents renewal of life and the balancing of opposites, and has long been associated with the Imperial Family (indeed, it features on the Imperial throne and is can also be found on the 10,000 yen note). Usually depicted as a magnificent beast with brilliant plumage and sometimes with the neck of a snake and a tortoise-like back, it has been a popular decorative motif in Japanese art since at least the Nara period, and features heavily in Japanese art, including ceramic, lacquer and textile design, throughout its long and varied history. Several extant examples of early architecture feature the houou, perhaps most notably the ceiling of the Western Gate of the Main Hall at the Houryuuji temple complex in Nara, the oldest parts of which date back to the 7th century. Initially, designs incorporating the phoenix seem to have retained a strong connection to the symbol's Chinese origins, with the bird often shown perching in a paulownia (a tree native to China) or amongst the arabesque pattern known as karakusa (literally, 'Chinese grasses'). However, overtime artists began to replace these 'Chinese' motifs with seasonal 'Japanese' ones such as wildgrasses, peony, chrysanthemum and prunus, as seen on this Kakiemon example, reflecting the entrenchment of the phoenix in Japanese iconography.

Material and Technique	Porcelain with overglaze enamel decoration
Origin	Japanese
Period	18th Century
Condition	Other
Diameter	14.5cm. (5 3/4in.)

Antique ref: V191