



**Two exceptional Chinese famille verte figures of boys holding jars, Kangxi (1662-1722)
POA**

Two exceptional Chinese famille verte figures of boys holding jars, Kangxi (1662-1722), the moulded figures standing upon solid bases, their hair worn in topknots and their faces with slight smiling expressions; one wearing yellow robes with an iron red hatch pattern and a cape decorated with wisps of cloud; the other with a green and yellow robe decorated with a scrolling lotus design and floral trim, the reverse with a ruyi head containing further lotus scroll.

Condition:

One with slight fritting to rim of vase, the other with minute frit to vase and some fritting to topknot

Notes:

For discussion of the dating of famille verte boy figures, see William R. Sargent, 'Treasures of Chinese Export Art from the Peabody Essex Museum', Salem: 2012, cat no.265. A pair of boys holding lotus vases is also depicted in A. Du Boulay 'Christies' Pictorial History of Chinese Ceramics', Oxford: 1984, p.288 no.3.

Pairs of laughing boys holding pots were popular both as domestic wares and as export goods destined for European markets. In Europe they would have been exotic curios to demonstrate wealth and status, while in China, boy figures were frequently given as wedding gifts to convey a wish for conjugal happiness and the birth of many sons – a preoccupation of the patriarchal culture of the time which depended on male heirs to perform ancestral and administrative duties.

Pairs of laughing twins refer to the Daoist spirits of Harmony and Joy (Hehe Erxian), the patron deities of Chinese merchants, and are often depicted alongside Cai Shen, the god of wealth. As such, figures of boys would often be placed on family altars either to bring about the healthy birth of many sons or to ensure good business dealings. It is highly likely that this pair would have been used in this way: while similar figures are commonly depicted holding pots of lotus, the pots here have been moulded to act as holders, possibly for joss sticks to be burned during worship.

Material and Technique	Porcelain with enamel decoration in the famille verte palette
Origin	Chinese
Period	18th Century
Dimensions	Height: 17.5cm. (6 7/8in.)



Antique ref: W664