



**Pair of Chinese export porcelain Wall Sconces with the Torchbearer design attributed to Cornelis Pronk**

Qianlong period circa 1740

Dutch Market

Height: approx 19 inches; 49cm

Priced in GB pounds sterling

£125,000

This item is located in the UK. Shipping from there is at the buyer's expense.

An important pair of Chinese export porcelain wall sconces of elaborate baroque form decorated in famille rose enamels, the frame incorporating phonixes, the central image of a man in Chinese dress bearing two burning torches, one held aloft; with 19th century metal candelabras adorned with 19th century European white porcelain flowers.

These extremely rare sconces belong to a small group of similar porcelain sconces all attributed to the Pronk workshop. This design, variously known as the 'torch-bearer' or the 'flame-dancer' is recorded in two versions with different frames. The other is thinner and smaller and does not include the phonixes in the frame.

The two other designs on sconces are a European Phoenix over flames, taken from a print for Aesop's Fables by Aegidius Sadeler after Marcus Gheeraerts, known in two difference sizes and frames, and a girl on a swing, which is the rarest. One other example of the same shape as the 'girl on a swing' is recorded but with Chinese figures of a sage beside a pine tree.

The figure here looks to have been created to fit this space, but the inspiration is likely to be various figures in *Ceremonies and Religious Customs of Various Nations of the World*, by JF Bernard and Bernard Picart. This great work was produced in Amsterdam in 1723-30, with engravings by Picart. Several of these show eastern ceremonial processions with figures bearing flaming torches.

References: Arapova et al. 2003, No 49, a flame-dancer scone of the narrow form in the Hermitage; a pair the same as this pair is in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (No 2006.891.1&2); Jörg 1980, p38, fig 13 a scone like these; Howard & Ayers 1978, Vol 1, p295, a scone like these; Cohen & Cohen 2008, No 23, the scone with Chinese figures; C&C 2007, No 11, the smaller Phoenix scone.