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Dragon Dance Japanese Antiques

Rare Antique Japanese Doll, Falconer, Edo

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Falconry or Taka-giri has been a tradition in Japan since the 4th century. It was introduced to Japan in the age of Emperor Nintoku (355 A.D.) Falconry thrived during the Edo period and continued right up to the arrival of Commodore Perry. The third shogun Tokugawa Iemitsu and the 8th Tokugawa Yoshimune were big fans of falconry: they owned huge falconry areas in Edo and its suburbs. However, falconry lost popularity with the introduction of guns in 1492. From the beginning, falconry was the favorite sport of Japanese noblemen. Professional falconers were stationed at the Imperial Court and throughout the monarchy. They were called "Takajo" and were mainly of the Hada people. Their highly developed skill and technique had been carried on from one generation to another. This doll is a very rare example of a falconer complete with bird and cane and dating to the Edo period (1615-1868). His hat is similar to a Jingasa and he wears a hunting costume. The purple color of his upper garment identifies him as a member of the ruling class as 'common' people were forbidden from wearing it. Similar to a Takeda doll, the face and hands are covered with gofun with painted features. Dimensions: 11" x 7" x 5". Overall condition is good considering age. A very rare doll and the only type depicting this sport that we have encountered. A must for the serious Japanese doll collector.

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