

SA1177299

Hirado Porcelain Recumbent Horse, Mikawachi Kilns, Late Edo to Early Meiji (c. 1850–1880)

Price

GBP 800

| USD \$1,083 | EUR 936

Item Reference: SA1177299**Date of manufacture: 1870**

Dimensions

Height = 13 cm (5.1")

Width = 15.5 cm (6.1")

Depth = 9 cm (3.5")

Description

A finely modelled Hirado porcelain figure of a recumbent horse, produced at the Mikawachi kilns, Hizen Province, during the late Edo to early Meiji period (c. 1850–1880). The horse is shown lying with its head gently raised in a composed, alert posture. The porcelain body is hollow-cast and exceptionally smooth, with a cool, bluish-white translucent glaze pooling softly in the recesses — a recognised hallmark of high-quality Hirado ware. The mane, tail and musculature are defined with delicate incised detail, while the eyes and nostrils are picked out in a light iron-brown pigment beneath the glaze, a technique characteristic of Hirado animal sculpture. The unglazed base reveals the warm ivory tone of the biscuit porcelain with faint firing marks typical of Mikawachi kiln supports. This sculptural style reflects the refined aesthetic associated with the Hirado domain, where porcelain production catered to elite patronage. The horse (uma) held particular significance in Japanese culture as a divine messenger in Shinto belief and as a symbol of loyalty and noble spirit within samurai tradition. Comparable examples are preserved in the Kyushu Ceramic Museum (Shibata Collec...

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