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INCENSE BURNER, CAST, ENGRAVED BRONZE. "MADE BY ABU'L-QASIM BIN ABDALLAH"

EASTERN IRAN OR AFGHANISTAN; 12TH CENTURY

H: 19.8; L: 21.2 CM

This incense burner, with its complex structure and decoration, is a little masterpiece. It was made entirely of finely worked bronze just at a time when the new technique of inlaying with precious metals was gaining ground. Animals, especially birds and frequently in combat, embellish the lid.

They are found both in three-dimensional form and in the drop-shaped openwork sections from which the aromatic smoke emerged. The cylindrical container for incense is decorated with an Arabic inscription – "Boundless honor, wealth, and happiness to the owner" – in combination with an openwork decoration of entwined tendrils. The incense burner moreover rests on a base in the form of sphinxes, an ancient motif that for some time also remained popular in the Islamic world.

Published in:
| Joachim Meyer: *Sensual Delights: Incense Burners and Rosewater
Sprinklers from the World of Islam*, The David Collection,
Copenhagen 2015, cat.no. 6;