



Chakrasamvara in Union with Consort Vajravarahi

Date

14th century

Medium

Gilt copper alloy with pigments and turquoise inlay

Description

Chakrasamvara is the primary meditation deity (yidam) of the various Kagyu Schools of Tibetan Buddhism and is also prominently featured in a number of other traditions.

He and his consort Vajravarahi trample on the deities Bhairava and Kalaratri (see detail), the wrathful manifestations of the divine couple Shiva and Parvati, subjugating them. Hindu deities are often incorporated into Buddhist iconography, sometimes in positive roles and other times as representative of obstacles to be overcome, an expression of both common cultural roots and the tension between the two competing traditions. This magnificent bronze sculpture has many delicate details. The figures are slender with long limbs whose movement is echoed by rippling scarves and flaring jewel strands. Only a master artist could have achieved such a natural union of fine detail, iconographic accuracy, and aesthetic appeal. This elegant bronze demonstrates the continuing importance of Nepalese craftsmanship in Tibet.

Dimensions

12 5/8 × 12 1/4 × 6 in.