



Bon Lama, Rinchen Gyeltsen (1415-1446)

Date

18th century

Medium

Gilt bronze

Description

Rinchen Gyeltsen was the second leader, or Throne Holder, of Menri Monastery, the seat of the Bon religion in Central Tibet. He took on this position after the monastery's founder (and Rinchen Gyeltsen's teacher) died in 1415. Here Rinchen Gyeltsen is depicted as a fully ordained monk, wearing the distinctive lotus-shaped hat of the Bon tradition. The face of this portrait is sensitively handled, giving him a gentle expression. The lengthy dedication

written in verse on the back of the statue states it continues Rinchen Gyeltsen's activity, suggesting this portrait may have been made to commemorate the lama's death (ca. 1446–1447). The base of the sculpture is sealed with a yundrung, one of the main symbols of Bon.

Dimensions

7 3/4 × 5 1/4 × 4 in.