LOT 3671
PROPERTY FROM THE COLLECTION OF ROBERT E. KRESKO
A GOLD-SPLASHED BRONZE TRIPOD INCENSE BURNER
QING DYNASTY, 18TH CENTURY
the finely cast compressed globular body supported on three short splayed legs, surmounted by a constricted neck and a wide-rimmed everted rim, the base centred with an apocryphal four-character Xuande seal mark within a recessed cartouche, the bronze patinated to a rich copper-brown colour and decorated overall with irregular splashes of gold of varying sizes
16.1 cm, 6 1/4 in.

ESTIMATE 200,000-300,000 HKD
Lot Sold: 812,500 HKD

LITERATURE

CATALOGUE NOTE
The surface of this exuberant incense burner is covered in irregular spots and flakes of gold, seemingly emerging from the alloy at different angles, in the random fashion that minerals such as gold are discovered in their natural state. This gives a most pleasing overall appearance, the gold splash not distracting from the overall shape of the vessel but subtly reinforcing its rare class.

The origin of gilt-bronze splash remains a source of speculation. Gerard Tsang and Hugh Moss in Arts from the Scholar’s Studio, Hong Kong, 1986, p. 184, mention that the popularity of this surface decoration was fostered by
Xuande bronzes of the Ming dynasty where the appearance of the gilt splashes was caused by the uneven surface patination of the vessel. Some scholars have linked gilt-splashed decoration on bronzes to qingbai and Longquan wares of the Song, Yuan and Ming dynasties. Compare a bronze tripod incense burner similarly decorated with irregular flakes of gold, from the J. de Lopes bequest and now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, illustrated in Rose Kerr, Later Chinese Bronzes, London, 1990, pl. 15 (right). See also a gold-splashed tripod incense burner from the collection of Ulrich Hausmann, sold in these rooms, 8th October 2014, lot 3407.