

# Basic Detail Report

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## Hat

### Date

early 20th Century

### Medium

Silk, cotton and metal

### Description

This early 20th century Chinese silk hat has an ornament depicting a figure known as Budai, a human embodiment

of happiness and compassion whose claim to spiritual fame stems mostly from minor miracles such as predicting the weather. Despite his humble aesthetic, he is among the most venerated Buddhist figures. As early as the 6th Century, Chinese Buddhism was consistently spread to Japan through trade and proselytization. An indeterminant amount of time after his death, stories of Budai were brought to Japan where he was readily accepted under the Japanese name Hotei. Just as it was in China, his likeness in Japanese sumi-e paintings and satsuma was a common sight. Some schools of Buddhism accepted Budai as an incarnation of Buddha rather than just as a Bodhisattva. Over the centuries the figure became more and more often accepted as a symbol of both happiness and abundance. The latter is due to him teaching that it is those that give that are most likely to receive in times of need.

### Dimensions

2 1/2 × 5 1/2 in. (6.4 × 14 cm)