

INDIAN BRONZES

The Indian peninsula has been producing bronze icons for several centuries now. The famous bronze dancing girl from Mohenjo Daro measures around four and a half inches and is housed in the National Museum, New Delhi. This is one of the oldest and most spectacular bronze finds from India. For centuries thereafter regions across India have been producing bronze icons using the lost wax process. The process involves making a wax figurine. The figure is then covered with clay and the molten metal is poured into it. The outer layer is later broken and the inner metal icon gets revealed. The process is such that each piece made is unique and cannot be repeated. Compared to other mediums like terracotta and stone, bronzes were produced in far lesser number. Due to this as a medium they are scarce and coveted. From the 5th to the 9th Centuries metalworkers in Kashmir and Swat valley produced some great artefacts. Metal icons were also made in Amaravati in Andhra Pradesh. The Pala dynasty in Bihar also created some fine Buddhist specimens. The Pallava dynasty in Tamil Nadu also created great examples from the 7th to the 9th Centuries. Kerala developed its very own unique style with metalwork flourishing all the way up to the 19th Century. Apart from the above, pockets such as Mirpur Khas and Bhuj also produced fine specimens in the 5th to 6th centuries. However these are very rare to come by. Although regions across India produced bronzes the most talked about metalworks were done in Tamil Nadu. The Chola Dynasty that ruled the region from the 10th to the 13th Century created the most spectacular bronzes which are till today difficult to emulate.