

# OPENING EXHIBITION



Christian Deydier

Oriental Bronze Ltd

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Laurence Lee

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Oriental Bronzes Ltd  
96 Mount Street  
London W1Y 5HF  
Telephone: 01-493 0309

## Foreword

After moving to England, almost four years ago, and our two successful exhibitions, 'Chinese Gold, Silver and Gilt Bronze up to the Tang Dynasty' and 'Ancient Chinese Bronze Vessels, Gilt Bronzes and Early Ceramics' held at the Holiday Inn, Mayfair (London) in December 1985 and June 1986 respectively, we decided to open a gallery in London.

Our present exhibition, which we hope will contribute to the ever-growing interest in Chinese art, is a selection of twenty-five objects collected over a period of three years and specifically chosen for this opening.

We are privileged to offer here pieces from major international collections such as E.T. Chow, D. Cohen, A.F. Philips, J.T. Tai, D. David Weill. Many of the objects are well known having been, since the early 1920's, recorded in important publications and included in major Chinese art exhibitions held at Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris, in 1937 and by the Oriental Ceramic Society, London, in 1947.

## Acknowledgement

We would like to express our gratitude to Elizabeth Knight and everyone from *Oriental Ceramics* for the production of this catalogue; and Mr. Routhier (Studio Lourmel, Paris) who has spent several days photographing each object.

Of the many others who have helped us in different ways in preparation of this exhibition, we would particularly like to thank the following for their invaluable assistance: Prudence Cuming, Bon and Cy Dale, Simone and Alan Hartman, Anna Plowden and Martin Bale.

Christian Deydier

## Chronology of Chinese Dynasties and Periods

(according to Professor Dong Zuobin and based on the oracle bone inscriptions of the Shang Dynasty).

	BC	AD
Neolithic	circa 7000-1600	
Xia Dynasty	circa 2100-1600	
Shang Dynasty	circa 1600-1111	
Anyang phase	1370-1111	
Zhou Dynasty	1111- 256	
Western Zhou	1111- 770	
Eastern Zhou	770- 256	
Spring and Autumn period	722- 481	
Warring States period	453- 221	
Qin Dynasty	221- 206	
Han Dynasty	206-	220
Western Han	206-	6
Xin Dynasty (Wang Mang)		9- 22
Eastern Han		25- 220
Six Dynasties		220- 581
Three Kingdoms		220- 280
Western Jin		265- 316
Southern Dynasties		
Eastern Jin		317- 420
Liu Song		420- 479
Southern Qi		479- 502
Liang		502- 557
Chen		557- 589
Northern Dynasties		
Sixteen Kingdoms		304- 439
Northern Wei		386- 535
Eastern Wei		534- 550
Western Wei		535- 557
Northern Qi		550- 577
Northern Zhou		557- 581
Sui Dynasty		581- 617
Tang Dynasty		618- 906
Five Dynasties		907- 960
Liao Dynasty		916-1125
Song Dynasty		960-1279
Northern Song		960-1127
Southern Song		1127-1279
Jin Dynasty		1115-1234
Yuan Dynasty		1271-1368
Ming Dynasty		1368-1644
Qing Dynasty		1644-1911

Catalogue

**OPENING EXHIBITION**

1

**ARCHAIC BRONZE TAOTIE MASK**

Early Western Zhou Dynasty, 11th-10th centuries BC

Length: 19.5 cm.

Height: 19.5 cm.

Archaic bronze taotie mask made of a thin bronze sheet. The metal was probably beaten or cast differently from bronze vessels. The two bulging eyes are separated by a prominent central ridge ending with a snout flanked by recessed jaws. Two small ears are placed on each side of the mask. The upper part of the taotie is decorated with two large curved bull horns.

**Provenance:**

—J.T. Tai Collection, New York.

**Similar examples:**

— *International Exhibition of Chinese Art 1935-36*, London 1935, catalogue no. 138.

— C.T. Loo, *Exhibition of Chinese Arts, 1941-42*, New York 1941, catalogue no. 129.

Large taotie masks like this one were probably used in religious rites as part of the ritual equipment of a shaman.



2

**ARCHAIC BRONZE VESSEL DING**

Shang Dynasty, Anyang Period 14th-13th centuries BC

Height: 24 cm.

Diameter: 19 cm.

Archaic bronze ritual vessel supported on three columnar legs, each decorated with pendant cicada blades. The round bowl shaped body is cast in high relief with three taotie masks. Each mask is centred on a hooked flange and divided from the other by further hooked flanges. The taotie are composed of two confronted dragons with C-shaped horns, protruding eyes and hooked talons. The whole design is on a ground of leiwen. The bevelled rim is set with tall loop handles. The vessel has a nice green patina.

**Provenance:**

— Albright Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, N.Y.

— J.T. Tai Collection, New York.

**Exhibited:**

— Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Chinese Bronzes of the Shang Through the T'ang Dynasty*, 19 October -27 November, 1938 - Catalogue p. 2 no. 20.

**Similar examples:**

— Honolulu Academy of Arts (no. 4838); illustrated by Dr. R.J. Poor, *Ancient Chinese Bronzes, Ceramics and Jade in the Collection of the Honolulu Academy of Arts*, Honolulu 1979, p. 86-87 no. 32.

— Cleveland Museum of Art (J.L. Severance Fund no. 62.281); illustrated by J.G. Moor, *An Introduction to the Art of China in The Cleveland Museum of Art*, Cleveland, catalogue p. 1.

— Minao Hayashi, *Conspectus of Yin and Zhou Bronzes*, Tokyo 1984, volume I, tome plates, colour plate no. 2 and p. 10 no. 118.

— a similar piece was found in 1969, in Anyang, tomb AGM 907:3, and illustrated in: *Henan Chutu Shang Zhou Qingtongqi (The Unearthed Bronzes of Shang - Zhou Dynasty in Henan Province)*, Beijing 1981, plate 240 p. 191.





3

**ARCHAIC BRONZE VESSEL JUE**

Shang Dynasty, 12th century BC

Height: 19 cm.

Archaic bronze wine vessel supported on three legs. The deep U-shaped body is cast in high relief with two taotie masks on a leiwen ground, interspersed with three shallow notched flanges. A bovine head, surmounting the loop handle, is flanked by cicada blades. The gutter spout and opposite peak are decorated with long cicada blades on the undersides. Two upright finials are covered with whorl caps. The vessel has a nice green patina. A single pictogram is cast beneath the handle.



**Similar examples:**

— Ch. Deydier, *Les Bronzes Chinois*, Fribourg 1980, p. 220 no. 32.  
— a very similar jue vessel was found in 1953 in Anyang, tomb YPM4, piece number 53YPM4:6, and is illustrated in: *Henan Chutu Shang Zhou Qingtongqi (The Unearthed Bronzes of Shang - Zhou Dynasty in Henan Province)*, Beijing 1981, p. 243 plate 310.



4

#### ARCHAIC BRONZE XIZUN

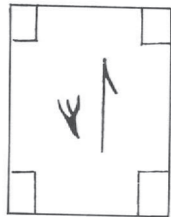
Early Western Zhou Dynasty, 11th century BC

Height: 21.5 cm.

Length: 24 cm.

Exceptional and unique archaic bronze xizun in the shape of a standing animal.

The sturdy body is naturalistically modelled, with nice fine legs. The stylized bovine head has a pair of horns decorated with incised broken lines and spirals which extend obliquely with a pair of long inverted hooks. The mouth is indicated by incised lines. The two round eyes are cast in high relief. Two long ears are placed on the external side of the horn. The vessel has an extraordinarily pleasing green patina. The inscription engraved in the centre of the vessel is transcribed by Chen Mengjia as: “yaci” 亞此.



#### Provenance:

- Chen Jieqi Collection, China (1813-1884).
- Kezhai Collection (Collection of Wu Dacheng, Qing dynasty)
- J.T. Tai Collection, New York.

#### Published:

- Chen Mengjia, *Yinzhou Qingtongqi Fenlei Tulu (A Corpus of Chinese Bronzes in American Collections)*, Tokyo 1977, volume II, p. 978 no. A 676.
- Mino Hayashi, *Conspectus of Yin and Zhou Bronzes*, Tokyo 1984, volume I, tome plates, plate 17 p. 247.

#### Inscription recorded:

- Luo Zhenyu, *Kezhai Jiqu Lu (Collection of Imprinted Inscriptions on the Ancient Bronze Vessels of Kezhai)*, 1897, vol. 13, no. 21.
- Luo Zhenyu, *Sandai Jijin Wencun*, 1937, vol. 11.3.10-11 R131, reprinted Hong Kong.

Bronze vessels of animal shape are extremely rare in early Chinese art. Mino Hayashi, in his book *Conspectus of Yin and Zhou Bronzes*, has recorded only twenty-five zun (op. cit. p. 245-248) and five guang in shape of animals (op. cit. p. 372-373).







Very similar animal heads are cast on the covers of archaic bronze vessels guang which are preserved in the following Museums:

- Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, Avery Brundage Collection. Piece number B60 B976, illustrated in M. Hayashi op. cit. p. 375 no. 37, and by R.Y. Lefebvre d'Argencé, *Bronze Vessels of Ancient China in the Avery Brundage Collection*, Japan 1977, p. 67.
- Shanghai Museum. Illustrated by M. Hayashi, op. cit. p. 375 no. 38.
- Shanghai Museum. Illustrated by M. Hayashi, op. cit. p. 375 no. 39 and by Hong Kong Museum of Art, *Ancient Chinese Bronzes in The Collection of The Shanghai Museum Exhibited at The Hong Kong Museum of Art*, Hong Kong 1983, Catalogue no. 15 p. 67.
- Fitzwilliam Museum. Piece illustrated by M. Hayashi, op. cit. p. 376 no. 41.
- Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1943 number 43.26ab, and illustrated by M. Hayashi, op. cit. p. 376 no. 42.
- bronze vessel guang, recently unearthed in China, and illustrated by M. Hayashi, op. cit. p. 376 no. 47.

Most of these bronze vessels guang are dated from the late Shang or early Zhou Dynasty. Professor M. Hayashi is the only scholar to ascribe these pieces to the Western Zhou date.

This classification seems to be confirmed by the new excavations in China, and specially by the discovery in 1984 at Zhangjiapo, Chang'an (Shaanxi province) of a bronze animal xizun. This piece of the Western Zhou period is illustrated in *Kaogu* 1986, no. 1 colour plate 1.



5

**ARCHAIC BRONZE VESSEL LIDING**

Late Shang Dynasty/Early Western Zhou Dynasty, 11th century BC

Height: 21 cm.

Diameter: 17 cm.

Archaic bronze ritual food vessel supported on three cylindrical legs. The round bowl body is cast in three shallow lobes, each decorated with a taotie mask. The large C-shaped horns and the round eyes cast in high relief are flanked by vertical dragons. The whole decoration is on a background of leiwen. The flanged rim is set with double upright loop handles.

The vessel has a light green patina.

The single pictogram inside the bowl can be read: “ju” 舉.



**Provenance:**

— J.T. Tai Collection, New York.

**Similar examples:**

— *Sen-Oku Sei-Sho (The Collection of Old Bronzes of Baron Sumitomo)*, Kyoto 1934, plate 1.

— B. Karlgren, *Yin and Chou Chinese Bronzes*, B.M.F.E.A., no. 8, Stockholm 1936, plate 2 no. 24A.

— B. Karlgren, *New Studies on Chinese Bronzes*, B.M.F.E.A., no. 9, Stockholm 1937, plate IX, no. 214.

— W. Watson, *Ancient Chinese Bronzes*, London 1962, plate 28a.

— H. Brinker, *Bronzen aus dem Alten China*, Museum Rietberg, Zurich 1975, plate 2 no. 2.

— *Mayuyama Seventy Years*, Tokyo 1976, volume II, p. 22 plate 7.

— M. Hayashi, *Conspectus of Yin and Zhou Bronzes*, Tokyo 1984, volume I, tome plates, p. 55-56 no. 62-70.



6

**ARCHAIC BRONZE WINE VESSEL YOU**

Western Zhou Dynasty, 10th-8th century BC

Height: 26 cm.

Height without handle: 23 cm.

Ritual wine vessel with a cylindrical spout. The pear-shaped body, supported by a conical foot, is covered with a domed lid. The high swing handle, attached to two lugs protruding from the shoulder, is decorated with a pattern of stylized dragons. The foot is cast with a similar but larger frieze. The body of the vessel is decorated in high relief around the shoulders with a frieze of four crested birds. Each bird possesses a raised eye and a long plumed tail. The same bird design embellishes the cover.

The vessel has a very pleasant light green patina.

The interiors of both the vessel and the cover are inscribed: "Father Ding of X" (X = clan name) 父丁口.



**Provenance:**

— J.T. Tai Collection, New York.

**Similar examples:**

— National Palace Museum, Taipei, published in *Masterworks of Chinese*

*Bronzes in the National Palace Museum*, Taipei 1969, colour plate 32.

— Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm, no. K. 11398

illustrated in *B.M.F.E.A.* no.21, Stockholm 1949, plate 12.

This particular shape of archaic ritual bronze vessel is extremely rare.

Two similar pieces are recorded:

— one in The Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm: the vessel has no decoration and the cover is missing.

— the other in the National Palace Museum, Taipei: it contains a different decoration. The inside inscription is "Father Geng of X". The name of the clan appears to be quite similar to the one of the exhibition but is written differently.

A third piece of an earlier period (Shang Dynasty) with a cover and a very different mouth is now in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York no. 1985-214.1. It is illustrated by M.K. Hearn, *Ancient Chinese Art, The Ernest Erickson Collection in The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, New York 1987, Catalogue no. 1.



7

**JADE FISH PENDANT**

Shang Dynasty, 14th-12th century BC

Length: 10 cm.

Jade fish pendant of curved shape. The dorsal and the two pectoral fins contain engraved hatching. The eyes are indicated by simple incised circles. The mouth is pierced with a small round hole. Brownish-green stone, largely calcified, and with traces of cinnabar.

**Provenance:**

— D. David-Weill Collection, Paris, no. D.W. 2554-2.

— J.T. Tai Collection, New York.

**Similar examples:**

— *Sekai Bijutsu Zhenshu* no. 12, Tokyo 1962, p. 149 plate 18.

— pieces excavated in the Royal Tomb of Fuhao, published in *Yinxu Fuhao mu (Tomb of Lady Hao at Yinxu in Anyang)*, Beijing 1980, plate 146 no. 1.



8

**JADE PENDANT (HUANG)**

Warring States Period, 5th-4th centuries BC

Length: 9.5 cm.

Height: 2.5 cm.

Fine open-work jade pendant huang carved on each side with two addorsed dragons. The heads are raised and turned looking back. Their bodies are decorated with a low relief spiral pattern. The thin border is incised with spirals. Grey jade partially calcified.

**Provenance:**

— D. David-Weill Collection, Paris, no. D.W. 3302.

— J.T. Tai Collection, New York.

**Exhibited:**

— Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris 1937, *Arts de la Chine Ancienne*, Catalogue, Paris 1937, no. 129.

**Similar examples:**

— Freer Gallery of Art, no. 31.15; illustrated by T. Lawton, *Chinese Art of the Warring States Period, Change and Continuity*, Washington 1982, p. 148 no. 95.



9

### INLAID BRONZE SWORD JIAN

Warring States Period, 5th-4th centuries BC

Length: 47 cm.

This extremely rare bronze sword has an ovoid hilt with two ring rolls crowned by a concave pommel disk. The underside of the pommel is gilt and decorated with incised lines.

The guard of winged shape is also gilt.

The tapered two edged blade with a median ridge on either side, is decorated overall with a geometrical design inlaid in gold and silver. The patterns symmetrically arranged on each side of the gilt median ridge are spirals, scalloped curved, spirals in negative, gilt or silvered triangles, and a long silvered broken line.

This sword can be dated to the Warring States period by its shape, technique of inlay, designs and material.

The *Kaogonji* (compiled in the 2nd century BC) divided the Eastern Zhou swords in three classes according to their lengths:

- the longest swords, with blade's length five times longer than the hilt, were forged for men of the higher class;
- swords with a blade length four times the length of the hilt were for men of middle class;
- swords with a blade length only three times longer than the hilt, were for men of the lower class.

According to the *Kaogonji*, this sword was probably owned by a man of the highest class. This possibility is confirmed by recent excavations. All the important swords scientifically found were owned by kings (Gou Jian, King of Yue; Fu Chai, King of Wu; King He Lu) and princes (Prince Gu Fa; Prince Liu Sheng).





10

**GILT BRONZE STEM-CUP**

Tang Dynasty, 7th/8th century AD

Height: 6.2 cm.

The deep U-shaped bowl with a shallow straight foot chased with a toothed border is raised on a knopped and splayed foot decorated with a band of pendant petals. The body of the goblet is decorated with a version of a classic hunting scene depicting horsemen interspersed with running deer. The figures are complemented by a stylized landscape composed of plant motifs, tufts of grass, and rocks placed on the overall punched ground. The rim is encircled by a band of stylized lotus leaves on a punched ground.

**Similar examples:**

— Kempe Collection, illustrated by Bo Gyllensvärd, *Chinese Gold and Silver in the Kempe Collection*, Stockholm 1953, catalogue no. 109.

— The Avery Brundage Collection, illustrated by J. Fontein and Wu Tung, *Unearthing China's Past*, Boston 1973, p. 180 no. 93.

— British Museum.

— few similar examples but in silver were found in 1972 in the hoard of Hujiaocun near Xi'an and are illustrated in *Wenhua Dageming Qijian Chutu Wenwu*, Beijing 1972, plate 51.

The evidence of Persian influence on this piece is revealed through the depiction of galloping hunters practising their skill in the "Parthian shot" (shooting backward on horseback).



11

**GILT BRONZE SLEEVE WEIGHT**

Tang Dynasty, 7th century AD

Height: 7.5 cm.

Gilt bronze sleeve weight cast in the form of two lovebirds nestling side by side. The male with a long plumed crest is gazing forward with the female resting her beak on his throat. Their claws are intertwined. The half opened wings reveal a finely engraved design of feathers, and the long tails are elaborately curved.

**Similar examples:**

— *Chinesische Kunst*, Exhibition Catalogue, Berlin 1929, number 93 from the L. Wannieck collection.

— *Burlington House Exhibition*, Catalogue, 1935/3, number 732, now in the British Museum.

— Dubosc, J.P., *Exhibition of Chinese Art*, Venice 1954, number 162, from the W.W. Winkworth collection.

— Eskenazi, *Ancient Chinese Bronze Vessels, Gilt Bronzes and Early Ceramics*, London, 13 June - 14 July 1973, Catalogue no. 20.



12

**EARTHENWARE INKSTONE TORTOISE**

Eastern Han Dynasty, 25 - 220 AD

Height: 5 cm.

Length: 14 cm.

Grey pottery figure of an inkstone in the shape of a tortoise. The cover is decorated with a pattern of pentagon-shaped forms, and incised with the eight trigram of the Yijing. The body of the inktablet, of concave shape and forming a container, represents a tortoise with its four legs and raised head.

**Similar example:**

— The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, The William Hood Dunwoody Fund, published by E. Schloss, *Art of the Han*, China Institute in America, March 14 - May 27, 1979, Catalogue no. 52.

This type of inkstone in the shape of a tortoise with removable cover is quite rare.



13

**EARTHENWARE LADY MUSICIAN**

Tang Dynasty, 7th century AD

Height: 24.5 cm.

Painted pottery figure of a seated lady musician, with the left leg stretched out in front, and the right one on the side. She wears a long dress, painted with black lines and traces of gilding, tied around her with a sash, and falling to the ground around her. Her low bodice, with traces of red painting, has large sleeves trailing from her hands. Her face has delicately modelled features defined in black and red. Her hair is drawn up in an elegant coif, a double chignon fixed with an elaborate clasp. She has her arms raised, probably holding drumsticks and playing on the large drum in front of her.

**Provenance:**

- Bluett & Sons Ltd., London.
- J.T. Tai Collection, New York.

Musicians are generally shown kneeling or standing. It is quite rare to find seated ones with only a few pieces of the type known:

- a group of five male musicians seated on circular wicker stools, now in The Detroit Institute of Arts, are illustrated by E. Schloss, *Foreigners in Ancient Chinese Art*, New York 1969, plate 32.
- an exceptional seated Court Lady with cymbals, from the J.D. Rockefeller 3rd Collection, now exhibited at The Asia Society, is published in *Handbook of Mr. & Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd Collection*, New York 1981, Catalogue p. 54.



14

**EARTHENWARE LADY MUSICIAN**

Tang Dynasty, 7th century AD

Height: 24.5 cm.

Painted pottery figure of a seated lady musician, with the right leg stretched out in front, and the left one on the side. She wears a long dress painted with black lines, tied around her with a sash, and falling to the ground around her. Her low bodice, with traces of red painting, has large sleeves trailing from her hands.

Her face has delicately modelled features defined in black and red. Her hair is drawn up in an elegant coif, a double chignon fixed with an elaborate clasp.

The lady, slightly bent forward, is holding in her hand a pipa, the four-stringed, pear-shaped guitar or lute.

**Provenance:**

- Dennis Cohen Collection.
- Bluett & Sons Ltd., London.
- J.T. Tai Collection, New York.

**Exhibited:**

- *Oriental Ceramic Society, Chinese Ceramic Figures*, illustrated catalogue of an exhibition held by The Oriental Ceramic Society, from April 8th to June 21st 1947, London, Catalogue no. 34.

The pipa is one of the more popular musical string instruments in China.



15

**EARTHENWARE HORSE**

Tang Dynasty, 7th century AD

Height: 36.5 cm.

Length: 39 cm.

Unglazed pottery figure of a horse standing on a rectangular base, the right foreleg raised as if prancing.

The finely modelled head with pricked ears is turned slightly to the left with its mouth open to show its teeth. The thick and wavy mane falls over the near side of the neck. The saddle is covered with a long red painted saddle cloth roughed and wavy, falling on each side.

The muscular body is applied with ornate studded leather trappings hung with moulded floral pendants.



16

**EARTHENWARE FALCONER**

Tang Dynasty, 8th century AD  
Height: 35 cm.

Finely modelled sancai glazed pottery figure of a falconer. He is shown standing with his hips thrust slightly to one side. His right arm is extended to the side, and he has a small green glazed bird perched on his hand. His left arm is held to the chest with an outstretched forefinger. On his head, he has an elaborate felt hat moulded with trefoil and wing motifs. He wears a chestnut glazed Persian or Turk style coat with green lapels splashed with cream coloured glaze. His shoes are green glazed.

**Similar examples:**

- E. Schloss Collection, New York.
- *Chinesische Kunst*, Berlin 1929, catalogue p. 140 no. 324.
- *Zui To no Bijitsu* (Art of the Sui and Tang), Osaka Municipal Museum, pl. 182.
- E. Schloss, *Ancient Chinese Ceramic Sculpture from Han through T'ang*, New York 1972, vol. I fig. 9 p. 43.

Mr. E. Schloss, in his book: *Ancient Chinese Ceramic Sculpture from Han through T'ang*, vol I p. 157 no. 92, mentions that this type of tail felt hat with brocaded silk and embroidered designs, was worn by Uighur Turks.



17

**EARTHENWARE LADY MUSICIAN**

Tang Dynasty, 8th century AD

Height: 21 cm.

Sancai glazed pottery figure of a lady musician kneeling on a square base, the grooved edge glazed in green and cream.

She wears a short brown glazed jacket and a long green glazed robe tied with a sash around her waist, falling to the ground and neatly tucked beneath her legs. A large unglazed scarf covering her shoulder, falls on one side to the ground. Her raised hands were probably holding a flute.

Her head is unglazed and her face has finely chiselled features. Her hair is drawn up into a high upswept twisted double knot.

**Provenance:**

— Bluett & Sons Ltd., London.

**Similar examples:**

— two very similar glazed pottery kneeling figures from the Eric Vio Collection, Hong Kong, are illustrated by M. Prodan: *La Poterie T'ang*, Paris 1960, plate XXVII, p. 130.

**Similar examples but with different headdress:**

— kneeling musician holding cymbals, University Museum, Philadelphia, illustrated by W. Watson, *L'Art de l'Ancienne Chine*, Paris 1979, colour plate 54.

— kneeling figure holding a flute, *Idemitsu Museum of Arts, The 15th Anniversary Catalogue*, Tokyo 1981, no. 625.

Glazed pottery figures of kneeling musicians of this type are extremely rare.



18

**EARTHENWARE KNEELING LADY**

Tang Dynasty, 8th century AD

Height: 21 cm.

Three coloured glazed pottery figure of a kneeling lady holding in her hand a small animal.

She wears a short jacket with long sleeves glazed in green and cream, and a long robe splashed with a green, brown and cream glaze, tied around her waist with a sash.

Her head is unglazed and her face has finely chiselled features. Her hair, painted in black, is drawn up into a high upswept twisted double knot.

**Provenance:**

— Bluett & Sons Ltd., London.

**Similar example:**

— see catalogue no. 17.





19

### EARTHENWARE HORSE

Tang Dynasty, 8th century AD

Height: 60 cm.

Length: 65 cm.

Large sancai glazed pottery figure of a harnessed horse standing four-square on a rectangular base with head slightly turned to the left and ears pricked. His tail is neatly bound and docked. The mane is hogged apart from an uncut lock. The body is largely covered with a cream coloured glaze. Green splashes run down the body and legs in long streaks. The elaborate saddle is glazed in green with a large brown splash. The saddle cloth is attractively splashed in cream and brown. The trappings which decorate the head, breast and flanks are moulded in relief with pendants in the form of bronze plaques. Each, with green and cream glaze, is decorated with a polo player.

Similar example:

— Eisei Bunko, Tokyo, illustrated in *Seikai Toji Zenshu*, vol. 11, Tokyo 1976, colour plate 75.

The horse trappings decorated with polo players or horse and rider are very unusual.

Polo originated in Persia, was adopted by the Tibetans and passed to China through the Silk Road. Li Shimin, founder of the Tang Dynasty, was an admirer of this game which became very popular at the Tang Court. Wonderful painting scenes of polo may be seen on the walls of the tomb of Prince Zhang Hui, near Xi'an (Shaanxi).



20

**LIMESTONE SEATED BUDDHA**

Northern Wei Dynasty, 5th century AD

Height: 33 cm.

Dark grey stone of a Buddha seated in dhyanasana. The right hand is raised in abhaya mudra (gesture of the absence of fear); the left hand rests on the knee.

He wears a long robe covering the shoulders and falling in a series of conventionalized pleats and folds. The rounded head of the Buddha, with features crisply carved, is topped by the ushnisha.

**Provenance:**

— probably from Lungmen.

— Dr. A.F. Philips Collection.

**Similar example:**

— C.T. Loo & Co, *An Exhibition of Chinese Stone Sculptures*, New York 1940, catalogue no. 10.



21

**LONGQUAN CELADON VASE**

Yuan Dynasty, 14th century AD.

Height: 14.4 cm.

Kunita glazed longquan celadon vase. The pear-shaped body rests on a slightly splayed base and is surmounted by a slender neck with widely flared trumpet mouth.

The sides are set below the rim with delicate knopped loop handles hung with rings.

The body is decorated with a central peony meander between a band of upright petals round the base and collars around the neck.

The glaze of rich blue-green tone leave the knife pared footrim unglazed.

**Provenance:**

— Edward T. Chow Collection.

**Similar examples:**

— Tokyo National Museum, published in catalogue no. 375.

— Museum Pusat, Jakarta, illustrated in *Oriental Ceramics, The World's Great Collections*, Tokyo 1977, volume 3, plate 138.

— Idemitsu Museum of Art, Tokyo, included in their exhibition 'Sung Ceramics, 1979', Catalogue no. 12.



22

**LONGQUAN CELADON VASE**

Yuan Dynasty, 14th century AD.

Height: 21.5 cm.

Longquan celadon bottle vase. The pear-shaped body is surmounted by a narrow cylindrical neck incised with a double line band. Two stylized animal handles of flattened form edged with raised bosses and with hooked terminals supporting a quatrefoil loop. The glaze of attractive bluish-green tone falls short of the neat footrim burnt orange in the firing.

Provenance:

— Edward T. Chow Collection.



23

**BLACK CARVED LACQUER DISH**

Yuan Dynasty, 14th century AD  
Diameter: 30 cm.

This carved black lacquer circular dish is decorated with a pair of birds in flight against a ground of flowers, leaves and blossoms.

The birds with long tails have a delicately carved plumage on the whole body.

The reverse side is carved with a "guri" design.

**Similar examples:**

- Linden Museum, Stuttgart, illustrated in *Laques Chinois du Linden Museum de Stuttgart*, Musée Guimet, Paris 11 Avril - 26 Mai 1986, Catalogue no. 11 p. 51.
- Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh, illustrated by Lee Yu-kuan, *Oriental Lacquer Art*, Tokyo 1972, p. 155 no. 89.
- Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm, published in *Chinese Art from the Collection of H.M. King Gustaf VI Adolf of Sweden*, Stockholm Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, no. 7 November 1967.
- Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, published in *Lunsingh - Scheurleer, Asiatic Art*, 1985 no. 38.
- Honolulu Academy of Arts, illustrated by F. Low-Beer, *Carved Lacquer of the Yuan Dynasty: A Reassessment*, *Oriental Art*, vol. 23 no. 23, 1977 p. 304 fig. 6.
- Victoria and Albert Museum, London, published by H. Garner, *Chinese and Associated Lacquer from the Garner Collection*, London, British Museum, exhibition October 2 - December 2, 1973, catalogue no. 29 pl. 11.
- Tokyo National Museum, published by Y. Nishioka, *Minjindai no choshitsu, Kobijutsu*, no. 51, 1977, p. 51-78 and no. 52, 1978 p. 156-157.
- Detroit Institute of Arts, published by J. Figgess, *A Masterpiece of Chinese Carved Lacquerware*, *Bulletin of the Detroit Institute of Arts*, vol. 59, no. 2/3, 1981, p. 66 - 77, fig. 1 and cover.
- Okayama Art Museum, Ikeda Museum, Okayama; illustrated by H. Arakawa & Y. Nishioka, *Toyo no Shikko-gei*, Tokyo National Museum, 1977, exhibition catalogue.





— Okayama Art Museum, Ikeda Museum, Okayama, illustrated by H. Arakawa & Y. Nishioka, *Toyo no Shikko-gei*, Tokyo National Museum, 1977, catalogue no. 461.

— British Museum, London, published by H. Garner, *Chinese and Associated Lacquer from the Garner Collection*, London, British Museum, exhibition October 2 - December 2, 1973, catalogue no. 28 pl. 10.

— Daitoku-Ji (daisen-in), Kyoto, illustrated by F. Low-Beer, *Carved Lacquer of the Yuan Dynasty: A Reassessment*, *Oriental Art*, vol. 23 no. 23, 1977 p. 302 fig. 3.

— Daitoku-Ji, (korin-in), Kyoto, illustrated by F. Low-Beer, *Carved Lacquer of the Yuan Dynasty: A Reassessment*, *Oriental Art*, vol. 23 no. 23, 1977 p. 302 fig. 4.

Important Cultural Property.

This theme of birds flying against a ground of flowers was very popular during the Yuan Dynasty and can be found on silverwork and on many blue and white porcelain wares.

This kind of carved black lacquer dish is unusual. Only thirteen are recorded in museums around the world and this may be why one of two similar pieces from the Daitoku-ji is indexed in Japan as an Important Cultural Property.

24 (on loan)

**PORCELAIN BLUE AND WHITE BARBED DISH**

Ming Dynasty, Early 15th century AD.

Diameter: 38 cm.

Fine porcelain dish, painted in underglaze blue.

The centre is ornate with blossoming lotus, peony and formal foliage.

The central design is encircled by twelve alternating floral sprigs between barbed double line borders around the slightly recessed centre and on the edge of the well.

A narrow band of connecting lingzhi fungus scroll decorate the everted rim.

The underside is encircled by twelve alternating floral sprigs.

The wedge-shaped foot and flat base are unglazed and burnt slightly orange in the firing.

**Similar examples:**

— Copenhagen Museum of Decorative Arts, *Catalogue of Selected Objects of Chinese Art*, 1959, no. 108.

— Mayuyama, *Seventy Years*, Tokyo 1976, volume I, p. 252, plates 762 and 763.

— National Palace Museum, Taiwan, illustrated in *Blue and White Ware of the Ming Dynasty*, Book I, plate 22.



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**PORCELAIN BLUE AND WHITE DISH**

Ming Dynasty, Yongle Period, 1402 - 1424.

Diameter: 37.5 cm.

Porcelain dish, painted in underglaze blue, set on a wedge-shaped foot ring.

The centre is well decorated with a vine branch bearing three slender bunches of grapes among leaves and spiral tendrils. This central design is enclosed within a double line border. The cavetto has a composite and continuous floral scroll including lotus, chrysanthemum, peony, hibiscus, dianthus and pomegranate. The slightly lipped everted rim is orate with a continuous band of breaking waves.

The underside is encircled by a composite floral scroll.

The unglazed base has traces of orange firing.

**Similar examples:**

— *Mayuyama, Seventy Years*, Tokyo 1976, Volume I, p. 250, plate 755.

— *Sekai Toji Zenshu*, Tokyo 1976, volume 14, p. 164, plate 147.

— Matsuoka Museum, illustrated in *Selected Masterpieces of Oriental Ceramics*, Tokyo 1984, Catalogue no. 53.

— Topkapi Saray Museum no. TSK 15/1456, illustrated by R. Krahl, *Chinese Ceramics in The Topkapi Saray Museum, Istanbul, A Complete Catalogue*, London 1986, volume II, p. 164, plate 606.





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## Previous Exhibitions

- \* December 1985 — Chinese Gold, Silver and Gilt Bronze up to the Tang Dynasty.
- \* June 1986 — Ancient Chinese Bronze Vessels, Gilt Bronzes and Early Ceramics.

# Christian Deydier

Oriental Bronzes Ltd

96 Mount Street

London W1Y 5HF

Telephone: (01) 493-0309