



# The Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection

New York / Asia Week / March 16<sup>th</sup>—24<sup>th</sup>, 2012



Cover: *Sancai* glazed earthenware lady polo player. Tang dynasty, 618 – 907. (Cat. n°26)  
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Printer: Soler

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# Foreword

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I have the privilege of presenting an exceptional collection formed in the 1990's. In fact my friends Marcel and Chantal Gerbe as well as their adviser and friend Louis Depagne have always followed my career with interest and have supported my efforts. Since 1983 when I first set up my business in London my pursuit of this profession, their support has been constant and unflinching. This is the reason why this collection means so much to me.

During the 20 years Mr. Marcel and Mrs. Chantal Gerbe have gathered with passion a selection of treasures from the Shang, Han and Tang dynasties, among other pieces coming from superior international collections such as those of George I. Tsing Tsai, Lady Mitchell and the British Rail Pension Fund. Some of the objects are already well known, having been exhibited in major museums such as the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, and the Dallas Museum of Art.

A particular object deserves a special note:

The exceptional and extremely rare Tang dynasty *sancai* earthenware figure of a lady polo player leaping through the air on her horse (Cat. n°26). This world-known piece has an impeccable pedigree and was exhibited for years in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, and was later part of the famous British Rail Pension Fund Collection.

Through this exhibition of The Marcel and Chantal Gerbe Collection will contribute to the ever growing interest in Chinese Art.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who have helped me in the various stages in the production of this exhibition and this catalogue. I would like to thank Ms. Raphaelle de Sigalony, my assistant, Mr. Bouchara for the production of this catalogue, Mr. Alex Barlow for helping us set up the room in New York in the Friedman and Vallois Gallery in New York, and Mr. O'Neill for translating the manuscript into English. I should also like to express my gratitude to Mr. Vincent Girier Dufournier for devoting several days to the photographing of the objects.

Christian Deydier



# Chronology

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## Neolithic Period

Yangshao Culture (north central China)  
 Hongshan Culture (northeastern China)  
 Liangzhu Culture (southeastern China)  
 Longshan Culture (eastern China)

**circa 7 000 - circa 2 000 B.C.**

circa 5 000 - circa 3 000 B.C.  
 circa 3 600 - circa 2 000 B.C.  
 circa 3 600 - circa 2 000 B.C.  
 circa 3 000 - circa 1 700 B.C.

## Xia Dynasty

Erlitou Culture

**circa 2 100 - circa 1 600 B.C.**

circa 2 100 - circa 1 600 B.C.

## Shang Dynasty

Zhengzhou / Erligang phase  
 Anyang phase

**circa 1 600 - circa 1 111 av. B.C.**

circa 1 600 - 1 400 av. B.C.  
 1 400 - 1 111 av. B.C.

## Zhou Dynasty

Western Zhou  
 Eastern Zhou  
     Spring and Autumn Period  
     Warring States Period

**1 111 - 265 B.C.**

1 111 - 770 B.C.  
 770 - 256 B.C.  
 722 - 481 B.C.  
 453 - 221 B.C.

## Qin Dynasty

**221 - 206 B.C.**

## Han Dynasty

Western Han  
 Xin Dynasty (Wang Mang usurpation)  
 Eastern Han

**206 B.C. - 220 A.D.**

206 B.C. - 9  
 9 - 22  
 25 - 220

## Six Dynasties

Three Kingdoms  
 Western Jin  
 Southern Dynasties  
     Eastern Jin  
     Liu Song  
     Southern Qi  
     Lian  
     Chen  
 Northern Dynasties  
     Sixteen Kingdoms  
     Northern Wei  
     Eastern Wei  
     Western Wei  
     Northern Qi  
     Northern Zhou

**220 - 581**

220 - 280  
 265 - 316  
 317 - 420  
 420 - 479  
 479 - 502  
 502 - 557  
 557 - 589  
 304 - 439  
 386 - 535  
 534 - 550  
 535 - 557  
 550 - 577  
 557 - 581

## Sui Dynsaty

## Tang Dynsaty

## Five Dynsaties

## Jin Dynsaty

## Liao Dynsaty

## Song Dynsaty

Northern Song  
 Southern Song

**581 - 617**

**618 - 907**

**907 - 960**

**1 115 - 1 234**

**916 - 1 125**

**960 - 1 279**

960 - 1 127

1 127 - 1279

# Introduction

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When a part of one's life has passed, it is good to stop and look back at the road already travelled. The following few lines will, I hope, enable you to share with me, by way of my collection, one of my greatest passion: Chinese Art.

I believe in the continuing transmission of certain inherited characteristics, certain inherited interests from one generation to another; my grandfather had three great passions: Oriental Art, precious stones and real estate; the combination of all three has been and still is now when I am writing these lines, the driving force, the animating force of a great part of my life.

My grandmother was an artist, in the true sense of the term: when a young girl her hand was requested in marriage by the nephew of the Emperor of Japan, who, of course, presented her with several beautiful Japanese objects, one of which, a small bronze elephant, I especially loved. It became my 'doll': I took it to bed with me every night, and although my mother, fearing that I'd hit my head on it, would quietly take it away after I had fallen asleep, I would search for it first thing every morning after awakening. This same grandmother knew how to foster in me the desire to be surrounded by beautiful things. When I was only five, she was already taking me to sculpture and painting exhibitions and to the museums. In spite of having spent my whole childhood in a house whose walls were covered with European paintings and tapestries, my personal taste leaned more towards Japanese simplicity and Chinese Art.

My activities in the field of real estate made it financially possible for me over the years to purchase classical Chinese objects of the kind that I had been drawn to in the museums and had passionately desired to possess; but merely possessing such objects was not enough for me. I wanted to know them, to understand them, in order to appreciate them better. In attempting to succeed in this difficult task, I was fortunate enough to meet in my hometown of Nice, a great sinologist, an expert in Chinese Art, Mr. Louis Depagne, to whom I shall be grateful all my life, even though he has unfortunately already left this world. Mr. Depagne took me to all the museums of Chinese Art and all the sales rooms, while trying to impart to me a little of his knowledge as well as his high standards in selecting objects for purchase: only beautiful objects and



in the best condition possible. He used to say to me, 'the pebbles on the beach are thousands of years old, but that alone does not make them of any value'. He passed on to me this high standard for collecting: the object must be rare, of a high quality and in the best possible state of preservation. Without doubt, it is difficult to acquire objects that satisfy these high standards, especially in the case of Shang dynasty bronzes, my preferences since they embody perfection in casting, in alloy and in form, and in the magnificence of their patination created after long years buried in tombs and caches, often enveloped in textiles with marvelous pigments that sometimes bring an element of added beauty to the object's present surface.

In this way, I have had over the years the pleasure of forming the present collection. My second husband, equally passionate about Chinese Art and especially about the Tang dynasty, has let me indulge myself, while at the same time enabling me to experience the pleasure of sharing with him the joys of discovering and contemplating these objects on a daily basis and of becoming acquainted with the greatest dealers in Chinese Art and of sharing memories of several unforgettable trips together.

To us Christian Deydier seemed to be the most qualified and experienced to sell our collection. In our eyes, he has the greatest knowledge of the field combined with great talent and high moral values and he is well respected by his peers; after 35 years of collecting we have decided to let other collectors have a chance to acquire these objects that we have so cherished and so wanted, since for us these objects have a soul, inanimate objects though they are, but with souls.

Dividing our lives among three different countries, Switzerland, France and an island in Belize, we have developed a fourth passion, a passion for natural beauty. Our children are rather more attracted by this the last of our passions and they are more interested in real estate. That is why we hope these objects will find new owners who will appreciate and love them as we have.

Chantal and Marcel

# 1. Ritual vessel *gu*

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**Shang Dynasty, Anyang Period, 13<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> century B.C.**  
**Height: 32.1 cm**

An archaic bronze wine vessel, with a tall trumpet-shaped neck decorated in high relief with four slender cicada blades, each of which is ornated with stylized *taotie* masks topped by a band of silk-worms with angular heads and hooked tails, all on a *leiwen* background. The central section decorated with two *taotie* masks on a *leiwen* background, is divided by shallow notched flanges. The splayed foot, with similar *taotie* masks and flanges, below a band of *kui* stylized dragons, is supported by a plain shallow cylindrical foot. The vessel has a light grayish green patina.

**Inscription:**

- A single pictogram is cast inside the foot of the vessel, a clan name “Ju”.



**Provenance:**

- Rappaport Collection, San Francisco
- Earl and Irene Morse Collection, New York
- Weisbrod, 1987
- L. Depagne Collection, London
- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland

**Published:**

- Thorp R.L and Bower V., *Spirit and Ritual*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1982, n°8, p.24.
- Weisbrod M.B, *Religion and Ritual in Chinese Art*, New York, 1987, n°6, p.28-29.



**Exhibited:**

- Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Spirit and Ritual*, New York, 1982.
- Elvehjem Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin, 1982.
- Rhode Island School of Design Museum of Art, Providence, 1983.
- Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, 1984.
- Memphis-Brooks Museum of Art, Memphis, 1984.
- Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, 1984.
- Joseph and Margaret Muscarelle Museum of Art, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, 1984.
- Weisbrod M.B., *Religion and Ritual in Chinese Art*, New York, 1987.

**Similar examples:**

- A similar *gu* from a private collection is illustrated in Deydier Ch., *Les Bronzes Archaiques Chinois, Archaic Chinese Bronzes – I – Xia & Shang*, Paris 1995, p. 102 color plate.
- A similar example from the Musée Guimet, Paris, is published in Deydier Ch., *Les Bronzes Archaiques Chinois, Archaic Chinese Bronzes – I – Xia & Shang*, Paris 1995, p. 226 n° 1.



## 2. Archaic bronze wine vessel *jue*

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**Late Shang dynasty, 12<sup>th</sup> century B.C.**  
**Height: 20.7 cm**

An archaic bronze wine vessel *jue* supported by three triangular outwardly extending legs. The U-shaped body is cast with a frieze of two *taotie* masks, each composed of two short-bodied dragons, infilled with scrolls and with hooked feathery projections, centered on large oval eyes. A bovine head surmounts the vessel's loop handle. The vessel's long pouring spout and opposite beak-like protrusion are not decorated. The vessel's two upright tenons are topped with "mushroom"-shaped caps.

The vessel has a nice light green patina.

### **Inscription:**

- An inscription consisting of three pictograms cast beneath the vessel's handle can be read "Father Yi of X clan".



### **Provenance:**

- George Lake Collection, before 1989.
- Sotheby's London, June 13<sup>th</sup>, 1989, lot n° 6.
- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

### **Exhibited:**

- O.C.S. London 1951, Exhibition of Early Chinese Bronzes, catalogue n° 2.

### **Published:**

- O.C.S., *Exhibition of Early Chinese Bronzes*, London 1951, catalogue n° 2.
- Sotheby's, *Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art*, London, June 13<sup>th</sup>, 1989, lot n° 6.



### 3. Archaic bronze wine vessel *zun*

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**Early Western Zhou dynasty, 11<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> century B.C.**  
**Height: 24.5 cm**

An archaic bronze wine vessel *zun* of cylindrical shape with a broad flaring neck and foot. The vessel's rounded mid-section is decorated in low relief with two large *taotie* masks topped by small confronting stylized dragons, and flanked by larger vertical S-shaped dragons with two heads, all on a *leiwen* background. The vessel has a very nice light green patina with some malachite encrustations.

**Inscription:**

- A single pictogram in the shape of a human figure, cast inside the vessel, can be read either *da* (large) or *tian* (heaven)



**Provenance:**

- J.T. Tai Collection, New York before 1995.
- Christie's New York, 2008, lot n° 266.
- S. & A. Hartman Collection, New York.
- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Published:**

- Christie's, *Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art*, New York, September 17<sup>th</sup> 2008, lot n° 226.

**Similar example:**

- A similar *zun* from the Arthur M. Sackler Collection is illustrated by Rawson J., *Western Zhou Ritual Bronzes from the Arthur M. Sackler Collections*, vol. IIB, Washington 1990, p. 548 – 9 n° 79.





## 4. Archaic vessel *liding*

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**Early Western Zhou Dynasty, 11<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> century B.C.**  
**Height: 23.5 cm**

An archaic bronze food vessel supported on three cylindrical legs. The vessel's round, deep bowl-like body is cast in three shallow lobes, each decorated in high relief with a large, unusual *taotie* mask with an elongated curling tooth-filled mouth all on a deeply incised *leiwen* background. The incisions of the *leiwen* are filled with a carbonated substance, perhaps traces of some sort of inlay. The vessel's everted rim is set with two upright loop handles. The vessel has a light green patina.

**Inscription:**

- A seven-character inscription inside the vessel translates “*Shi Bo Chi Zuo Fu Gui Yi*” “The Count Shi of Chi has had this vessel made for Father Gui”.





**Provenance:**

- L. D. Collection, Nice – London.
- Christian Deydier / Oriental Bronzes Ltd, London 1986.
- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Exhibited:**

- *The Arts of China, a Retrospective*, CW Post Art Gallery, Long Island University, New York, 4 February – 27 March 1977, catalogue number 7.
- Deydier Christian / Oriental Bronzes Ltd, *Ancient Chinese Bronze Vessels, Gilt Bronzes and Early Ceramics*, London 1986, catalogue n° 7, p. 18 – 19.

**Similar examples:**

- A *liding* with a similar *taotie* mask is published in Hayashi M., *Conspectus of Yin and Zhou Bronzes*, Tokyo 1984, volume I – plate, p.57, n° 76.
- Another *liding* with the same motif is published in Cheng Peifeng, *Xia Shang Qingtongqi Yanjiu, Xia Zhou Bian*, volume *Shang*, Shanghai, p. 46 – 47 n° 213.



## 5. Archaic bronze wine vessel *Bianhu*

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**Late Warring States Period – Early Han dynasty, circa 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.**  
**Height: 30.8 cm**

An archaic bronze wine vessel *bianhu* and cover. The vessel's oval-shaped body has lightly repoussed oval panels on its elongated sides, and is topped by a low flaring cylindrical neck and supported on a rectangular pedestal foot.

The sides of the vessel are decorated with two *taotie* masks in high relief with looped muzzles holding movable rings.

The bronze vessel has retained its original golden hue with areas of green and red-dish patina.

**Provenance:**

- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Notes:**

- It is quite rare and unusual to see a vessel with its original "gold" hue.
- Some wine from this period is still preserved inside the vessel.



## 6. Archaic bronze goose-headed vessel

**Han dynasty, 206 B.C. – 220 A.D.**

**Height: 34 cm**

An archaic bronze vessel with a wide bulbous body from which rises a long curved goose neck bound with a rounded collar. An opening with a high circular rim protrudes from the curve in the goose's neck before it ends in a well-modelled goose's head with a long beak.

The vessel has a nice light green patina with areas of reddish encrustation.

**Provenance:**

- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Note:**

- Bronze vessels in this shape are quite unusual.

**Similar example:**

- A similar bronze vessel was included in the exhibition *Bestiaire*, Beurdeley & Cie, Paris, March 1993, n°15.
- Another similar example is published in Sir Percival David, *Hsiang and his album*, T.O.C.S, 1933-1934, vol. 11, pl. XVIII, fig.29.





## 7. Pair of bronze wine vessels *fanghu*

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**Early Western Han dynasty, 3<sup>rd</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C.**  
**Height: 39,7 cm**

Two square bronze wine vessels and covers or *fanghu*. Each of the square-shaped containers has an elegantly curved and bulging body supported on a splayed rectangular pedestal foot.

At the base of each vessel's narrowing neck, the shoulders are ornated with two *taotie* masks in high relief with looped muzzles holding movable rings.

The truncated flat cover is surmounted by four knobs in the shape of stylized dragons.

Areas of green and reddish patina cover parts of the 'gilt' color of the bronze.

**Provenance:**

- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.







## 8. Earthenware horse

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**Western Han dynasty, 206 B.C. – 9 A.D.**  
**Length: 53.3 cm Height: 51.2 cm**

A large painted grey pottery figure of a horse's torso and detachable head. The vigorous body of the animal is strongly molded. Its detachable head supported by a long neck is finely molded with protruding eyes, large open nostrils, and a long open mouth revealing large teeth.

Pottery with traces of red and black pigmentation.

**Provenance:**

- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Similar examples:**

- A similar horse is illustrated by Hentze C., *Chinese Tomb Figures*, London 1928, plate 35.
- Others are illustrated in Desroches J.P., *Compagnons d'Eternité*, Paris 1977, P. 39 – 41.



## 9. Earthenware horse and rider

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**Western Han dynasty, 206 B.C. – 9 A.D.**  
**Length: 31 cm Height: 38.6 cm**

A painted pottery figure of a horse and rider. The statuette consists of two parts: a horse with the seat and legs of its rider, and the upper half of the rider. The horse is shown standing on its four legs, with a well modeled head with an open mouth, and a small plaited tail. The rider wears a short tunic covering tight trousers. The piece is covered with nice reddish and white pigments.

**Provenance:**

- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Similar examples:**

- A similar rider is illustrated in *The Quest of Eternity*, Los Angeles 1987, p. 46.
- Another is published in Yu Weichao, *Le Chemin de la Nation Chinoise, Tome II Des Royaumes Combattants aux Dynasties du Sud et du Nord*, Beijing 1997, p. 94.
- Another rider is recorded in *Zhongguo taoci quanji, vol. Qin - Han*, Shanghai 2000, pl. 82.

**Note:**

- Eighty-three similar horsemen were excavated near the burials of General Zhou Bao (died in 169 B.C.) and General Zhou Yafu (died in 143 B.C.), near Yanjiawan village in 1965.





## 10. Glazed earthenware ear-cup *Erbei*

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**Han dynasty, 206 B.C. – 220 A.D.**  
**Length: 14 cm**

A green glazed pottery ear-cup of oval shape embellished on each side with raised crescent-shaped handles known as “ears”.  
The green glaze is covered with a silvery iridescence.

**Provenance:**

- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Similar examples:**

- A similar ear-cup from a late eastern Han dynasty tomb, excavated at Wiling, Qingjiang, Jiangxi province, is illustrated in Kaogu, 1976, n° 5, p. 333, fig. 4.
- He Li, *La Céramique Chinoise*, Paris 2006, p. 74 n° 66.



## 11. Glazed earthenware bowl and spoon

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**Han dynasty, 206 B.C. – 220 A.D.**

**Spoon's length: 15.7 cm**

**Bowl's diameter: 15.5 cm**

A green glazed pottery round bowl with steep sides, a lipped rim, and a flat base. The spoon consists of a wide, deep bowl and a short, hooked shaft. The green glaze is, in some places, covered with a silvery iridescence.

**Provenance:**

- Sotheby's London, June 13<sup>th</sup> 1989, lot n° 76.
- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Published:**

- Sotheby's, *Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art*, London, June 13<sup>th</sup>, 1989, lot n° 76.

**Similar examples:**

- Some similar spoons of this type are illustrated in Hobson R.L., *Catalogue of the Eumorfopoulos Collection of Chinese and Korean Pottery and Porcelain*, London 1925-1928, Catalogue vol. 1, pl. VIII, n° 51 – 52.



## 12. Glazed earthenware scoop *dou*

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**Han dynasty, 206 B.C. – 220 A.D.**  
**Length: 23 cm**

A green glazed pottery scoop *dou*. The vessel's wide rounded bowl is set on one side with a long jutting dragon- headed handle.  
The light green glaze is now covered in some parts with a silvery iridescence.

**Provenance:**

- Sotheby's London, June 13<sup>th</sup>, 1989, lot n° 77.
- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Published:**

- Sotheby's, *Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art*, London, June 13<sup>th</sup>, 1989, lot n° 77.

**Similar example:**

- A similar scoop is illustrated by Ayers J., *Chinese Ceramics, The Koger Collection*, New York 1985, n° 5.



## 13. Glazed earthenware granary jar

**Han dynasty, 206 B.C. – 220 A.D.**  
**Height: 25.5 cm**

A green glazed pottery granary jar in the form of a high cylindrical jar supported by three small feet modeled as bears.  
The tile roof was originally covered with a small dome-shaped cover.

**Provenance:**

- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Similar examples:**

- A similar granary jar is illustrated in Jenkins D., *Mysterious Spirits, Strange Beasts, Earthly Delights*, Portland Art Museum, 2005, p.119.
- Another one is published in He Li, *La Céramique Chinoise*, Paris 2006, n° 69.





## 14. Glazed earthenware hill jar and cover

**Han dynasty, 206 B.C. – 220 A.D.**  
**Height: 23.5 cm**

A green glazed pottery hill jar and cover. The cylindrical body is supported by three feet in the shape of crouching bears. The vessel is decorated in low relief with a continuous hunting scene depicting numerous animals including tigers, bears, monkeys and rabbits. Two high relief *taotie* masks and mock ring handles are set on the body of the hill jar.

The cover is modeled in the shape of a mountain with four groups of peaks around a central fifth group of peaks. Those peaks and valleys are decorated with tiger and hare- like animals and with hunting scenes.

The green glaze is covered in a silvery iridescence.

**Provenance:**

- Sotheby's London, June 13<sup>th</sup> 1989, lot n° 80.
- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Published:**

- Sotheby's, *Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art*, London, June 13<sup>th</sup>, 1989, lot n° 80.

**Similar examples:**

- A similar hill jar is illustrated in Ardenne de Tizac, *L'Art Chinois Classique*, Paris 1926, plate 75a.
- Medley M., *The Chinese Potter, A Practical History of Chinese Ceramics*, Oxford 1976, p. 53.



## 15. Glazed earthenware vessel *hu*

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**Han dynasty, 206 B.C. – 220 A.D.**  
**Height: 45 cm**

A green glazed pottery jar *hu*. The vessel's wide bulbous body is molded around its widest part with a raised line. Two *taotie* masks in high relief with mock ring handles are set on the shoulders of the vessel. The vessel has a tall neck topped by a bowl-like mouth thickened around the rim. The jar stands on a high splayed foot.

The green glaze is covered in a very nice silvery iridescence.

**Provenance:**

- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Similar examples:**

- Similar *hu* are illustrated in *A Selection of Chinese Art from Private Collections*, China House Gallery, New York 1986 – 1987, p. 28 - 29



## 16. Glazed earthenware dog

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**Han dynasty, 206 B.C. – 220 A.D.**

**Length: 23.5 cm**

A green glazed pottery figure of a standing dog. The well modeled animal is standing four-square, looking forwards.

The dog is represented in an aggressive posture, with alert ears, protruding eyes and a wide open mouth filled with menacing teeth. His tail is curling inwards and he wears a harness on the front part of his body.

The animal is covered with a bright green lead glaze that has become iridescent in places.

**Provenance:**

- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Similar examples:**

- A similar piece is illustrated in Ayers J., *Far Eastern Ceramics in the Victoria and Albert Museum*, London 1980, color plate n° 3.
- Another similar dog is published in *Providing for the Afterlife, Brilliant Artifacts from Shandong*, China Institute, New York 2005, p. 63 n° 22.



## 17. Earthenware dancing figure

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**Eastern Han dynasty, Sichuan province, 25 – 220 A.D.  
Height: 56.4cm**

A painted pottery figure of a dancer with the right sleeved arm raised high to its side.

The dancer's left hand gathers up his coat as he steps forward. His head is held high, and he has a sweet, smiling expression on his face. He wears an elaborate costume consisting of three V-necked robes worn one on top of the other and overlapped to the right, with large, long sleeves.

**Provenance:**

- Oriental Bronzes Ltd – Christian Deydier, London 1980s.
- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Similar examples:**

- A similar dancer is illustrated in Bagley R., *Ancient Sichuan, Treasures from a Lost Civilization*, Seattle 2001, p. 300, n° 113.
- D. Jenkins, *Mysterious Spirits, Strange Beasts, Earthly Delights*, Portland Art Museum, 2005, p.134.





## 18. Glazed earthenware camel

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**Tang dynasty, 618 – 906.**  
**Height: 37.5 cm**

A chestnut and cream glazed pottery figure of a standing camel. The camel's raised head, wide open mouth, tufted head and mane, large, well-incised eyes and flared nostrils combine to give the camel a lively sense of realism. The animal's well-proportioned mid-section is topped by a pair of furry humps between which is placed a long unglazed polychromed saddle bag that extends downwards on both of the animal's sides towards its belly. A rich combination of chestnut and cream glazes cover the camel's entire body and most of its saddle blanket.

**Provenance:**

- Christie's London, December 8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>, 1986, lot n° 131.
- Oriental Bronzes Ltd/ Ch. Deydier, London 1986.
- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Published:**

- Christie's London, *Fine Chinese Ceramics, Jades and Works of Art*, December 8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>, 1986, lot n° 131.



## 19. Pair of earthenware prancing horses

**Tang dynasty, 618 – 906.**  
**Height: 59 cm**

A well-modeled pair of buff pottery figures of prancing horses. Both animals have their heads turned slightly to the left, their crisply molded ears tilted forward and their open mouths wide open. A deep groove runs along each horse's neck, originally meant to be used for the attachment of a real horsehair mane. Each animal's right foreleg is elegantly raised and each carries a saddle covered with a long, squared saddle-cloth flaring outwards beneath its belly. The fore and hindquarters of the animals are decorated with tasseled trappings in high relief.

Both horses bear traces of red pigmentation.

**Provenance:**

- Christie's London, June 8<sup>th</sup> 1987, lot 255.
- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Published:**

- Christie's, *Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art*, London, June 8<sup>th</sup> 1987, lot 255.







## 20. Earthenware figures of a court lady and a male attendant

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**Tang dynasty, 618 – 906.**  
**Height: 35 cm**

Two standing painted pottery figures of court attendants. The male attendant is shown raising his left hand to his chest and holding his belt with his right hand. He wears a doubly lobed hat and upturned shoes. The plump court lady is depicted with both sleeve-covered hands raised up in front of her. Her hair is arranged in a very large chignon flaring extravagantly to one side.

The robes, hands and faces of both figures are covered with white pigment, their lips bear traces of red pigment and their hair of black pigment.

**Provenance:**

- Christie's London, June 8<sup>th</sup> 1987, lot 252.
- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Published:**

- Christie's, *Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art*, London, June 8<sup>th</sup> 1987, lot 252.





## 21. Earthenware camel

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**Tang dynasty, 618 – 906.**  
**Length: 33.5 cm**

A painted buff pottery figure of a recumbent camel with its alert-looking well-modelled head raised high. The back of the animal is richly decorated with large bulging saddlebags secured between its humps and hanging over both its sides together with meat, poultry and other provisions. The animal's legs are folded under its body which bears traces of red pigmentation.

**Provenance:**

- Christie's London, December 14<sup>th</sup> 1987, lot 74.
- Christie's London, June 6<sup>th</sup> 1988, lot 47.
- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Published:**

- Christie's, *Fine Chinese Ceramics, Jades and Works of Art*, London December 14<sup>th</sup>, 1987, Lot 74.
- Christie's, *Important Chinese Ceramics, Jades and Works of Art*, London, June 6<sup>th</sup> 1988, lot 47.



## 22. Glazed earthenware groom

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**Tang dynasty, 618 – 906.**

**Height: 32.5 cm**

A brown glazed figure of a foreign groom represented standing on a square base, his right arm raised at the elbow and his left arm lowered in the movement of a caravaner reining in his horse. The groom wears a coat with large, elongated, triangular lapels, belted at the waist in the style known as 'hufu' or 'foreign wear'. This foreign attire together with the figure's large nose and wide mustache distinguish this groom as a foreigner from the western regions along the Silk Road.

**Provenance :**

- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.



## 23. Glazed earthenware camel

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**Tang dynasty, 618 – 906.**

**Height: 51 cm**

A chestnut and cream glazed pottery figure of a Bactrian camel standing four squares on a rectangular base. The animal is modeled with its head raised, its mouth wide open and its nostrils flared. The long fur on the underside of its powerful neck, its long mane, its full-bodied humps and the long, flowing tufts of hair that cover the tops of its front legs are all covered with a creamy white glaze. The rest of the camel's body is bathed predominantly in a rich chestnut glaze.

**Provenance:**

- L. Depagne Collection, France – UK, before 1976.
- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Similar example:**

- A similar camel is illustrated in *The Quest of Eternity*, Los Angeles 1987, n° 75.



## 24. Glazed earthenware horse

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**Tang dynasty, 618 – 906.**

**Height: 57.5 cm**

A large cream and chestnut glazed pottery figure of a horse. The animal stands four squares on an unglazed base with its partially cream glazed head inclined slightly to one side. Its wide open mouth displays a fine set of teeth, its nostrils are flared and its large round eyes are set beneath heavy eyelids. The center of the horse's powerful arched neck is grooved for the attachment of a natural horse-hair mane. The horse's powerful body is covered all over with a pleasant chestnut glaze.

**Provenance:**

- Sotheby's New York, 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 1974, lot 240.
- Sotheby's Los Angeles, 26<sup>th</sup> October 1977, lot 798.
- European Private Collection.
- Sotheby's London, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 1986, lot n° 27.
- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Published:**

- Sotheby's, *Fine Chinese Works of Art, New York*, 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 1974, lot 240.
- Sotheby's, Los Angeles, 26<sup>th</sup> October 1977, lot 798.
- Sotheby's, *Highly Important Chinese Tang Pottery Metalwork and Sculpture from A European Private Collection*, London, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 1986, lot n° 27.





## 25. *Sancai* glazed earthenware polo equestrian figure

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**Tang dynasty, 618 – 906.**  
**Height : 34 cm**

A rare *sancai* glazed pottery equestrian figure. The standing horse is shown with its raised head slightly turned to the left, its mouth open and its ears flicking. The animal's body is covered with a chestnut glaze, its docked mane with a straw glaze, and its docked tail is unglazed.

The slightly inclined upper part of the lady rider's body is turning leftwards with her right arm raised and her hands clenched in an animated gesture similar to that of a polo player. She wears an amber, green and cream blouse and long green trousers. Her unglazed face shows traces of red pigment and her hair, drawn up into a high topknot, bears traces of black pigment.

**Provenance:**

- Sotheby's London, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 1985, lot n° 109
- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Published:**

- Sotheby's, *Fine Chinese Ceramics Bronzes and Works of Art*, London, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 1985, lot n° 109

**Similar examples:**

- A similar lady polo player in Musée Cernuschi Paris, is illustrated by Lion-Goldschmidt D., *Les Poteries et Porcelaines Chinoises*, Paris 1978 pl. VI (C).
- Another similar piece in the Nelson Gallery of Art, Atkins Museum, Kansas City, is illustrated in *Three Colour Glaze Pottery of the Tang Dynasty*, Kansas City 2005, vol. I, pl. 36.



## 26. *Sancai* glazed earthenware lady polo player

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**Tang dynasty, 618 – 907.**

**Height : 22 cm**

**Length : 35 cm**

An Extremely rare *sancai* glazed pottery figure of a lady polo player.

The finely molded horse is depicted in full gallop leaping gracefully through the air with his slightly lowered head turned leftwards and his ears and eyes lowered in perfect co-ordination with the movements of his rider. The body of the animal is covered with a pleasant chestnut glaze, while its docked mane and tail, its forelocks and the front of its head are all bathed in a creamy white glaze. The hooves, the saddle cloth and the saddle are all glazed in green.

The lady rider is seated sideways in the saddle with her upper torso and head bent forward and right hand lifted high in the air as if preparing to strike the ball with her now missing mallet. She is dressed in a straw glazed split-ended tunic over trousers with chestnut glaze on one side and green glaze on the other side. Her unglazed head is topped with hair tightly tied in a double chignon.



**Provenance:**

- Sotheby's London, December 8<sup>th</sup> 1964, lot n° 9.
- Sotheby's London, April 6<sup>th</sup>, 1976, lot n° 41.
- Collection of Lady Mitchell,
- British Rail Pension Fund, London, 1985 – 1989.
- Sotheby's London, December 12<sup>th</sup> 1989, lot 59.
- Private collection, Switzerland.
- Christian Deydier – Oriental Bronzes Ltd, London, 2000.
- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Exhibited:**

- Victoria and Albert Museum, London 1977 – 1985.
- Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas 1985 – 1988.
- Christian Deydier – Oriental Bronzes Ltd, Twentieth Anniversary, London, 2000, catalogue n° 14.

**Published:**

- Sotheby's London, December 8<sup>th</sup> 1964, lot n° 9.
- Sotheby's London, April 6<sup>th</sup>, 1976, lot n° 41.
- Sotheby's, *Important Early Chinese Ceramics, Archaic Bronzes, Sculpture, Silver and Lacquer from the Works of Art Collection of the British Rail Pension Fund*, London, December 12<sup>th</sup> 1989, lot 59.
- Deydier Ch., – Oriental Bronzes Ltd, *Twentieth Anniversary*, London, 2000, catalogue n° 14.

**Similar examples:**

- It is extremely rare to find *sancai glazed* “flying” polo players, as most such figures are unglazed. Only three other *sancai* flying polo players are actually recorded:
  - one published by Beurdeley M., *La Céramique Chinoise*, Fribourg 1974, plate 11.
  - another one from the J.M.A.J. Dawson Collection and illustrated in Eskenazi Ltd, *Chinese Works of Art from the Collection of J.M.A.J. Dawson*, London, December 1980, n° 23.
  - a third excavated in 1975 in the area of Xi'an and illustrated in *Gilded Dragons, Buried Treasures from China's Golden Ages*, London 1999, n° 40.

**Notes:**

- Polo originated in Persia and was introduced into China, through Tibet, during the Tang dynasty.
- Polo was extremely popular in the Tang dynasty.
- Emperor Xuanzong (712 – 756) encouraged this sport as a very good form of training for the military.
- The west wall of the tomb of Li Xian, (an Imperial Prince of the Tang dynasty) is decorated with a large painting showing the prince engaged in his favorite sport: polo.









## 27. Sancai glazed earthenware lokapala

**Tang dynasty, 618-907.**

**Height: 80 cm**

A large *sancai* pottery figure of a lokapala, or guardian king standing on an ox with his right forearm extended forward and his left hand on his hip. His head is slightly turned to the left and he has a fierce expression, protruding eyes, a prominent nose and large moustache.

The guardian's armor and elaborate helmet are especially magnificent and with the exception of the figure's head and hands, the whole figure and its mount are bathed in a well-preserved rich, multi-coloured glaze. The head and hands are left unglazed.

The Lokapala probably once held a weapon in his right hand to increase the sense of terror the figure was meant to strike into the hearts of potential malefactors, both human and spirit.

**Provenance:**

- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Similar example:**

- A similar lokapala is illustrated in Rastelli S., *China at the Court of the Emperors*, Milano, 2008, n°64 p. 178-1979.



## 28. *Sancai* and blue glazed earthenware court lady

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**Tang dynasty, 618 – 906.**

**Height: 39 cm**

A *sancai* and blue glazed figure of a standing Court Lady. She holds her sleeve-covered arms and hands up to her chest. She wears a long robe falling in folds to her feet: the robe's lower half is green, and its jacket-like bodice is blue with strips of cream. A chestnut-coloured scarf draped elegantly over her shoulders ends in pleats down her back and in green and chestnut-coloured strands tied in a bow midway down the front of her robe.

She wears green slippers with pointed up-turned ends.

Thick hair falls on both sides of her plump face to below her ears and down to the back of her neck while a long, thick topknot of hair falls slightly forward over her brow.

Her cheeks are decorated with rouge-like make-up and her forehead with a flower in rouge.



**Provenance:**

- Wang Jui Chin Collection, Taipei and Hong Kong 1992.
- Christian Deydier / Oriental Bronzes Ltd, London 1992.
- Private Japanese collection, 1992.
- Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland.

**Exhibited:**

- Christian Deydier / Oriental Bronzes Ltd, *XVI<sup>e</sup> Biennale des Antiquaires*, Paris 1992, catalogue n° 24.

**Published:**

- Christian Deydier / Oriental Bronzes Ltd, *XVI<sup>e</sup> Biennale des Antiquaires*, Paris 1992, catalogue n° 24, p. 78 – 81.

**Notes :**

- A similar hairdress called the *woduoji* is illustrated in *Wenwu* 1984 n° 4, p. 67 n° 8.
- The *woduoji* hairstyle consisted of straight, thick hair covering the ears and a false hairpiece covered with red silk placed in the centre of the top of the head and falling forward over the brow.
- This type of hairstyle was very popular during the most prosperous period of the Tang dynasty and was especially favoured by court ladies and the wives of officials.



## Previous Exhibitions

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|-------------|------|--|
| December    | 1985 | Chinese Gold, Silver and Gilt Bronze up to the Tang Dynasty, London                                  |
| June        | 1986 | Ancient Chinese Bronze Vessels, Gilt Bronzes and Early Ceramics, London                              |
| December    | 1987 | Opening Exhibition, London   |
| June        | 1989 | Archaic Chinese Bronzes from Shang to Zhou Dynasties, London   |
| June        | 1990 | Imperial Gold from Ancient China, London   |
| June        | 1991 | Imperial Gold from Ancient China, Part II, Grosvenor House, London                                   |
| June        | 1991 | The Art of the Warring States and Han Periods, London  |
| September   | 1992 | XVI <sup>e</sup> Biennales des Antiquaires, Paris  |
| December    | 1992 | An Exceptional Horse from the Han Dynasty, London  |
| November    | 1994 | L'Or des Qin, XVII <sup>e</sup> Biennales des Antiquaires, Paris                                     |
| December    | 1995 | Le Banquet des Dieux, Ritual Bronzes of Ancient China, London  |
| January     | 1996 | Le Banquet des Dieux, Bronzes Rituels de la Chine Ancienne, Paris                                    |
| September   | 1996 | XVIII <sup>e</sup> Biennales des Antiquaires, Paris  |
| February    | 1997 | Arts de la Chine et de l'Himalaya, XIV <sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C.—XV <sup>e</sup> s. ap. J.-C., Paris |
| January     | 1998 | L'immortalité de l'Âme chez les Han, Paris   |
| March       | 1998 | Timeless China, New York   |
| October     | 1998 | L'Art et la Matière, Paris   |
| October     | 1999 | Caravanes sur la Route de la Soie, Paris   |
| September   | 2000 | XX <sup>e</sup> Biennales des Antiquaires, Paris   |
| October     | 2000 | Twentieth Anniversary, Paris-London  |
| October     | 2001 | Rituels pour l'Éternité, Paris-London  |
| September   | 2002 | XXI <sup>e</sup> Biennale des Antiquaires, Paris   |
| September   | 2004 | L'or des Qidan, XXII <sup>e</sup> Biennale des Antiquaires, Paris                                    |
| September   | 2006 | XXIII <sup>e</sup> Biennale des Antiquaires, Paris   |
| April-May   | 2007 | L'Inde Sensuelle : Terres Cuites de l'époque Gupta, IV <sup>e</sup> —VI <sup>e</sup> siècles, Paris  |
| February    | 2008 | Exposition Inaugurale, Paris   |
| September   | 2008 | XXIV <sup>e</sup> Biennale des Antiquaires, Paris  |
| March-April | 2009 | Treasures from Ancient China—I, New York-Paris   |
| Feb.-March  | 2010 | Treasures from Ancient China—II, New York-Paris  |
| September   | 2010 | XXV <sup>e</sup> Biennale des Antiquaires, Paris   |
| March-April | 2011 | Treasures from Ancient China—III, New York-Paris   |
| September   | 2011 | Extraordinary Animals from Ancient China, Paris  |
| October     | 2011 | The Frank Arts Collection of Ancient Chinese Bronzes, Hong Kong                                      |





