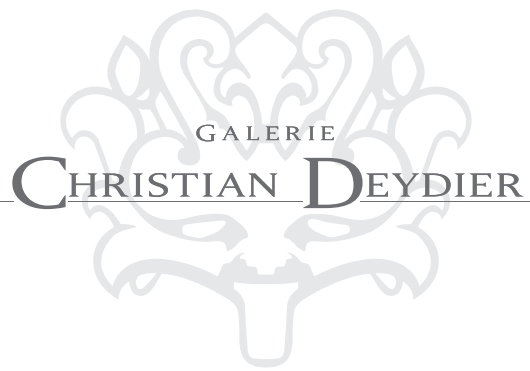


# Ancient Chinese Ritual Bronze Vessels

Hong Kong / Fine Art Asia / October 4<sup>th</sup>—7<sup>th</sup>, 2013





GALERIE

CHRISTIAN DEYDIER

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Cover: Ritual bronze vessel *lei*, Shang dynasty, Yinxu period, circa 13<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.  
Photographes: Vincent Girier-Dufournier  
Graphic design: René Bouchara

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**FINE ART ASIA**  
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# Foreword

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After the exceptional success of my first two exhibitions at the Hong Kong International Art and Antiques Fair, where I met so many enthusiastic collectors from Hong Kong, Taiwan and Mainland China who are interested in archaic Chinese bronze vessels, I felt that I had no choice but to participate in this great fair once again and exhibit some important ancient Chinese ritual bronze vessels.

As in my two previous exhibitions, I am presenting a number of exceptional archaic bronze vessels from major international private collections, such as those of Wahl - Rostagni, Frau Dr. Emma Gross, Nakamura, the Neiraku Bijutsukan Museum, P.C. Lu, the Meiyintang Collection and Warren King. Most of the objects are already well-known, having been recorded in important European and Japanese publications, and with one also having been included in major Chinese art exhibitions held in the Kyoto Imperial Museum and in the Neiraku Museum, Nara.

Three objects included in this exhibition deserve special note:

- The exceptional bronze vessel lei from the Anyang period of the Shang dynasty (13<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.), coming from the Neiraku Bijutsukan Museum in Nara. (Cat. no. 8),
- The rare bronze vessel fangyi from the Anyang period of the Shang dynasty (13<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.), previously in the Dr Emma Gross Collection. (Cat. no. 9),
- The superb Western Zhou (11<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.) bronze vessel gui supported by three legs, with its very important inscription recording a royal gift. (Cat. no. 13),

I hope this, my latest exhibition of Ancient Chinese Bronzes, 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 should first of all like to thank Ms. Raphaelle de Sigalony, my assistant, for her invaluable help, Mr. René Bouchara for the production of this catalogue and for organizing the presentation of the objects, as well as designing and setting up my booth in the Hong Kong International Art and Antiques Fair and Mr. Ed 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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Xia dynasty 夏

- Erlitou culture 二里頭文化 19<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.
- 

Shang dynasty 商

- Erligang period 二里岡 16<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.
  - Yinxu period 殷墟 14<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.
- 

Zhou dynasty 周

- Western Zhou dynasty 西周 11<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.
  - Eastern Zhou dynasty 東周
    - Spring and Autumn period 春秋 8<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.
    - Warring States period 戰國 5<sup>th</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BC.
- 

Western Han dynasty 西漢 206 BC. – 9 AD.

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# 1. Ritual bronze vessel *jue*

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**Xia dynasty, Erlitou period, circa 19<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.**

夏代二里頭文化期青銅爵

**Height: 16.8 cm, Length: 17 cm**

A ritual bronze tripod vessel *jue* used for warming fermented beverages. The wide, rounded lower body of the oval, flat-bottomed vessel narrows in its centre before spreading outwards as it rises towards its top. The vessel is supported by three, short, outwardly extending triangular legs which taper off to end in pointed, almost sword-blade-like tips.

One side of the vessel is decorated with two horizontal lines in light relief, while from the other, undecorated side, a wide semi-circular handle extends downwards from below the upper lip of the vessel to the centre of the vessel's wide, rounded, lower body. Each end of the handle is cast in open-work and is broader than the slightly indented central section of the handle. The vessel's long spout is embellished with a pair of upwardly protruding tendons just above the area where it extends from the oval-shaped body.

The vessel has a grey patina speckled with patches of maroon.

## **Similar examples:**

- Several bronze *jue* of the Erlitou period, of different sizes and forms, are illustrated in Deydier Ch., *Les Bronzes Archaiques Chinois - Archaic Chinese Bronzes - I - Xia & Shang*, Paris 1995, p. 16 to 30 and in *Zhongguo Qingtongqi Quanji*, Vol. 1 Xia - Shang, Beijing 1996, nos. 2 to 10, 《中國青銅器全集 - 夏商,》北京1996年.
- Two *jue* in the Meiyintang Collection are illustrated by Wang Tao, *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, London 2009, nos. 2 and 3.

## **Notes:**

- Bronze vessels from this very early period are extremely rare. A few pieces were excavated from the Erlitou III strata period, a period which witnessed the birth of bronze production in China and which thus marks an important turning point in Chinese cultural history.
- The *jue* wine cup is one of the most ancient forms of Chinese ritual bronzes; it first appears in bronze in the Erlitou culture, which is, according to some scholars, the last period of the Xia dynasty.



## 2. Ritual bronze vessel *jia*

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**Shang dynasty, Yinxu period, circa 13<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.**

商代殷墟時期青銅罍

**Height: 25 cm**

A ritual bronze tripod vessel *jia* used for warming fermented beverages. The vessel's flat-bottomed body is composed of two parts: a slightly bulging belly, and a slightly longer, flaring neck.

The vessel's belly and the lower part of its neck are both decorated with a frieze cast with three *taotie* masks, each formed by a pair of highly stylized confronting dragons with small, protruding, round eyes, meeting at a central vertical flange.

Two high, mushroom-like tenons, each consisting of a square stem surmounted by an umbrella-like top, emerge from the vessel's upper rim. From one side of the vessel, a very simple handle extends.

The vessel is supported on three triangular pointed legs.

The vessel has a nice light-green patina.

### **Similar examples:**

- Similar *jia* vessels are illustrated in Hayashi M., *In Shu Jidai Seidoki no Kenkyu (In Shu Seidoki Soran Ichi), Conspectus of Yin and Zhou Bronzes*, Tokyo 1984, Vol. I - plates p. 194 nos. 15, 16 and 19, and p. 195 no. 34. 林巳奈夫《殷周時代青銅器の研究: 殷周青銅器綜覽(一)圖版》東京1984年版, 第194頁15,16和19號, 第195頁34號.



### 3. Ritual bronze vessel *gu*

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**Shang dynasty, Yinxu period, circa 13<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.**

商代殷墟時期獸面紋青銅觚

**Height: 24 cm**

An archaic bronze fermented beverages vessel with a tall trumpet-shaped neck and a splayed conical foot. The vessel's protruding rounded central section is decorated with two *taotie* masks with round eyes, encircled by narrow bands of small circles and bordered above and below by two horizontal lines in high relief.

The vessel has a nice light olive-green patina with large incrustations of malachite and cuprite.

**Provenance:**

- Meiyintang Collection, Switzerland.

**Published:**

- Wang Tao, *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, London 2009, p. 38 – 39, no. 13.
- Deydier Ch., *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, Vol. 1 Annexe, Hong Kong 2013, p. 26 no. 13.

**Similar example:**

- A similar *gu* vessel is illustrated by Hayashi M., *In Shu Jidai Seidoki no Kenkyu (In Shu Seidoki Soran Ichi), Conspectus of Yin and Zhou Bronzes*, Tokyo 1984, Vol. I – plates p. 328 no. 138. 林巳奈夫《殷周時代青銅器の研究：殷周青銅器綜覽（一）圖版》東京 1984年版，第328頁 138號。



## 4. Ritual bronze vessel *zun*

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**Shang dynasty, Yinxu period, circa 13<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.**

商代殷墟時期獸面紋青銅尊

**Height: 26.7 cm**

A large ritual bronze fermented beverages vessel *zun* with a long, trumpet-shaped neck and a shorter splayed foot. The vessel's central protruding section is decorated with two *taotie* masks with eyes in low relief and centered on a vertical flange. The whole mid-section is encircled by two narrow bands of small circles bordered above and below by two horizontal lines in high relief.

The vessel has a nice olive-green patina.

**Inscription:**

- An inscription cast inside the bottom of the vessel and consisting of a bordered clan mark and two characters reads: "(From clan) Ya – Mei Father Yi". 《亞眉父乙》

**Provenance:**

- Meiyintang Collection, Switzerland.

**Published:**

- Wang Tao, *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, London 2009, p. 134, no. 61.
- Wu Zhenfeng, *Shang Zhou Qingtongqi Mingwen Ji Tuxiang Jicheng*, Shanghai 2012, Vol. 21, p. 35, no. 11536. 吳鎮烽《商周青銅器銘文暨圖像集成》上海 2012年版, 第21冊, 第35頁11536號.
- Deydier Ch., *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, Vol. 1 Annexe, Hong Kong 2013, p. 102 no. 61.

**Similar examples:**

- Similar *zun* but with different decoration are recorded by Hayashi M., *In Shu Jidai Seidoki no Kenkyu (In Shu Seidoki Soran Ichi), Conspectus of Yin and Zhou Bronzes*, Tokyo 1984, Vol. I – plates, p. 222 – 223 nos. 5 – 15 and p. 227 – 228 nos. 49 – 62 林巳奈夫《殷周時代青銅器の研究: 殷周青銅器綜覽(一)圖版》東京 1984年版, 第 222 - 223頁 5 - 15 號, 第 227 - 228頁 49 - 62 號.





## 5. Ritual bronze vessel *you*

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**Late Shang dynasty or early Western Zhou dynasty, circa 11<sup>th</sup> century BC.**

商代晚期 — 西周早期提梁青銅卣

**Height including the handle: 31.5 cm**

A ritual bronze vessel *you* used for storing fermented beverages. The vessel's pear-shaped lower body stands on a circular, raised foot and is topped by a high-sided, domed cover surmounted by a small knob.

The shoulder of the vessel is decorated with a narrow frieze of diamond patterns enveloped by narrow bands of small circles. On each side of the vessel, a bovine head in high relief emerges from the centre of the decorated frieze.

A similar frieze of diamond patterns is cast on the domed cover.

The vessel's high, arched handle is cast in the form of a twisted rope.

The vessel has a nice green patination with large areas of malachite incrustation.

### **Inscription:**

- A single pictogram, probably a clan mark, is cast inside the vessel.

### **Provenance:**

- Meiyintang Collection, Switzerland.

### **Published:**

- Wang Tao, *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, London 2009, p.63 no. 26.
- Deydier Ch., *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, Vol. 1 Annexe, Hong Kong 2013, p. 46 no. 26.

### **Similar examples:**

- Two similar *you* from the Sackler Collection are published by Bagley R., *Shang Ritual Bronzes in the Arthur M. Sackler Collections*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1987, nos. 68 – 69.
- A similar *you*, now in the Guimet Museum, Paris, is illustrated by Girard-Geslan M., *Bronzes Archaiques de Chine*, Paris 1995, p. 80 – 83.
- Others are recorded by Hayashi M., *In Shu Jidai Seidoki no Kenkyu (In Shu Seidoki Soran Ichi), Conspectus of Yin and Zhou Bronzes*, Tokyo 1984, Vol. I – plates p. 265 nos. 80 - 81. 林巳奈夫《殷周時代青銅器の研究：殷周青銅器綜覽（一）圖版》東京 1984年版，第265頁 80 - 81號。





## 6. Ritual bronze vessel *hu*

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**Shang dynasty, Yinxu period, circa 13<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.**

商代殷墟時期獸面紋青銅壺

**Height: 36.3 cm**

A ritual bronze vessel *hu* used to store fermented beverages or water. The vessel's pear-shaped, oval body with two small lug handles near its top is supported on a high, conical foot decorated on each side with a *taotie* mask centered on a vertical flange.

At the level of the lug handles, the neck of the vessel is decorated on each of its sides with a large band cast with a *taotie* mask with two round, bulbous eyes and centered on a vertical flange.

The vessel has a green patina.

### **Inscription:**

- A single pictograph cast inside the vessel reads: “Guang” 《光, meaning ‘bright’ or ‘Imperial favour’ shown to a consort or minister》 or “Kuang” 《貺, meaning ‘bestow’ or ‘grant’ as a gift from a superior to one lower in the hierarchy. 》

### **Provenance:**

- Meiyintang Collection, Switzerland.

### **Published:**

- Wang Tao, *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, London 2009, p. 82 – 83, no. 37.
- Deydier Ch., *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, Vol. 1 Annexe, Hong Kong 2013, p. 64 - 65 no. 37.

### **Similar examples:**

- Similar *hu* vessels are illustrated in Hayashi M., *In Shu Jidai Seidoki no Kenkyu (In Shu Seidoki Soran Ichi), Conspectus of Yin and Zhou Bronzes*, Tokyo 1984, Vol. I - plates p. 299 nos. 37 and 38 and p. 300 no. 40. 林巳奈夫《殷周時代青銅器の研究：殷周青銅器綜覽（一）圖版》東京 1984年版，第 299頁 37 - 38號，第 300頁 40號。





## 7. Ritual bronze vessel *lei*

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**Shang dynasty, Yinxu period, circa 13<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.**

商代殷墟時期渦紋青銅罍

**Height: 36.5 cm**

A large urn-shaped bronze vessel used for the storage of fermented beverages or water. The vessel's sloping rounded shoulders are decorated with six large medallions cast with spiral motifs in high relief. From each of the vessel's two sides at the level of the vessel's shoulders, a semi-circular handle topped by an ox-head arises. Another, larger, semi-circular handle surmounted by a bovine head in low relief, is positioned at the centre of the lower part of the vessel's front side.

The vessel has a rich green and blue patina.

**Provenance:**

- Meiyintang Collection, Switzerland.

**Published:**

- Wang Tao, *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, London 2009, p. 116 – 117, no. 52.
- Deydier Ch., *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, Vol. 1 Annexe, Hong Kong 2013, p. 88 - 89 no. 52.

**Similar examples:**

- Similar *lei* are illustrated in Hayashi M., *In Shu Jidai Seidoki no Kenkyu (In Shu Seidoki Soran Ichi), Conspectus of Yin and Zhou Bronzes*, Tokyo 1984, Vol. I - plates p. 290 nos. 19 – 20, and p. 291 no. 30. 林巳奈夫《殷周時代青銅器の研究: 殷周青銅器綜覽(一)圖版》東京1984年版,第290頁19 – 20號,第291頁30號.



## 8. Ritual bronze vessel *lei*

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**Shang dynasty, YinXu period, circa 13<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.**

商代殷墟時期渦紋青銅罍

**Height: 34.3 cm**

An urn-shaped bronze vessel used for the storage of fermented beverages or water. The upper part of the body is cast with a frieze of three large *taotie* masks in low relief, each of which is composed of a pair of confronting *kui* dragons on a *leiwen* background. The jar's lower half is decorated with elongated triangular motifs with stylized cicada borders enclosing *taotie* masks composed of pairs of vertically placed conjoining *kui* dragons. A thick ring handle surmounted by a finely cast horned buffalo emerges from the elongated triangular motif at the centre of the vessel's lower front side.

The vessel's shoulders are adorned with friezes of stylized *kui* dragons interspersed with revolving spirals in high relief and a pair of thick ring handles topped by uplifted buffalo heads.

The vessel has a green patina.

### **Provenance:**

- Neiraku Bijutsukan Museum, Nara, Japan.
- Nakamura Collection, Kyoto, Japan.
- Christian Deydier / Oriental Bronzes Ltd, London, U.K.
- Private European Collection.
- Galerie Christian Deydier, Paris, France.

### **Exhibited:**

- Kyoto Imperial Museum, Kyoto, Japan.
- Neiraku Bijutsukan Museum, Nara, Japan.

### **Published:**

- Neiraku Bijutsukan, *Neiraku Museum Catalogue*, Nara 1969, p. 28, no. 5.
- Hayashi M., *In Shu Jidai Seidoki no Kenkyu (In Shu Seidoki Soran Ichi), Conspectus of Yin and Zhou Bronzes*, Tokyo 1984, Vol. I - plates p. 290 no. 15, 林巳奈夫《殷周時代青銅器の研究: 殷周青銅器綜覽 (一) 圖版》東京 1984年版, 第 290頁 15號.
- Deydier Ch., *XVI<sup>e</sup> Biennale des Antiquaires Paris 1992*, London 1992, p. 24 – 27.
- Deydier Ch., *Les Bronzes Archaiques Chinois, Archaic Chinese Bronzes – I – Xia & Shang*, Paris 1995, P. 87.

### **Similar examples:**

- Similar bronze vessels *lei* now in the Hakutsuru Museum, Japan, and the Shanghai Museum are published in Hayashi M., *In Shu Jidai Seidoki no Kenkyu (In Shu Seidoki Soran Ichi), Conspectus of Yin and Zhou Bronzes*, Tokyo 1984, Vol. I - plates p. 290 nos. 16 – 18, 林巳奈夫《殷周時代青銅器の研究: 殷周青銅器綜覽 (一) 圖版》東京 1984年版, 第 290頁 16 - 18號.









## 9. Ritual bronze vessel *fangyi*

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**Shang dynasty, Yinxu period, circa 13<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.**

商代殷墟時期獸面紋青銅方彝

**Height: 22.5 cm**

A ritual bronze vessel *fangyi* used to hold fermented beverages. The vessel's covered, long rectangular body is supported by a high foot with arched openings. Each side of the vessel's body is cast with two large friezes. The upper of these, just below the rim, is decorated with two *taotie* masks in high relief on a *leiwen* background separated by a vertical flange. The larger frieze, covering two thirds of the vessel's body, is cast with large *taotie* masks in high relief, with protruding round eyes, triangular ears, and horns in the shape of *kui* dragons shown in profile, all on a *leiwen* background and separated by a vertical flange

The vessel's foot is decorated on each of its sides with a frieze of two *taotie* masks in high relief on a *leiwen* background and separated by a vertical flange and an arched opening.

The vessel's large, sloping, roof-like cover is topped by a small, similarly shaped knob decorated with *taotie* masks. Each side of the cover's sloping surface is cast with a large *taotie* mask composed of two confronting *kui* dragons in high relief on a *leiwen* background, facing each other over a vertical flange.

The vessel has a fine light-green patina.

### **Inscription:**

- A clan mark in the form of a partly anthropomorphic pictograph is cast inside the vessel.







**Provenance:**

- Collection Frau Dr. Emma Gross, Zurich, Switzerland.
- Sotheby's London, March 2<sup>nd</sup> 1971.
- Alan & Simone Hartman, New York, USA.
- Wahl – Rostagni Collection, Rome, Italy.

**Exhibited:**

- Sotheby's London, March 2<sup>nd</sup> 1971, catalogue no. 50.
- Twentieth Anniversary, Paris, September – November 2000, Deydier Ch. / Oriental Bronzes Ltd, London 2000.

**Published:**

- Moreau- Gobard J.C. & Lion- Goldschmidt D., *Chinese Art*, New York 1966, p. 28, pl. 2.
- Sotheby's London, March 2<sup>nd</sup> 1971, lot no. 50.
- Deydier Ch., *Les bronzes Chinois*, Fribourg 1980, p. 42, pl. 23.
- Hayashi M., *In Shu Jidai Seidoki no Kenkyu (In Shu Seidoki Soran Ichi), Conspectus of Yin and Zhou Bronzes*, Tokyo 1984, Vol. I - plates p. 251 no. 16, 林巳奈夫《殷周時代青銅器の研究: 殷周青銅器綜覽(一) 圖版》東京 1984年版, 第251頁 16 號.
- Deydier Ch., *Twentieth Anniversary, Paris, September – November 2000*, London 2000, catalogue no. 4.
- Liu Yu, *Jin Chu Yin Zhou Jinwen Jilu*, 2002, no. 991. 劉雨《近出殷周金文集錄》2002年版 991號.
- Liu Yu & Wang Tao, *Liu San Oumei Yin Zhou You Ming Qingtongqi Jilu (A selection of Early Chinese bronzes with inscriptions from Sotheby's & Christie's sales)*, Shanghai 2007, no. 322. 劉雨 & 汪濤《流散歐美殷周有銘青銅器集錄》上海 2007年版 322 號.
- Wu Zhenfeng, *Shang Zhou Qingtongqi Mingwen Ji Tuxiang Jicheng*, Shanghai 2012, Vol. 24, p. 356, no. 13480. 吳鎮烽《商周青銅器銘文暨圖像集成》上海 2012年版, 第24 冊, 第356頁 13480號.

## 10. Ritual bronze vessel *jia*

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**Late Shang dynasty, circa 11<sup>th</sup> century BC.**

商代晚期青銅罍

**Height: 26.5 cm**

A ritual bronze tripod vessel *jia* used for warming fermented beverages. The vessel is composed of two sections. Its lower part is in the shape of a *li* with a tri-lobed bulbous body supported on three cone-shaped tapering legs that resemble long trunks descending from the elephant-head-like lobes. The vessel's cylindrically shaped upper section flares outwards as it ascends to the vessel's rim.

Each lobe of the vessel's body is decorated with a large, horned, *taotie* mask with protruding round eyes, on a *leiwen* background, while the neck is cast with a frieze of six elongated stylized *kui* dragons, also on a *leiwen* background.

Two vertical tenons of rectangular shape, topped with mushroom-shaped caps decorated with spirals, emerge from the vessel's rim.

A very simple, flat-bottomed, rounded handle springing from a bovine head in the round is attached to one side of the vessel.

The vessel has a nice green patina with areas of cuprite.

### Notes:

- According to Rawson J., in *Western Zhou Ritual Bronzes from the Arthur M. Sackler Collections*, Washington D.C. and Cambridge 1990, p. 659, "Most of the late Shang and early Western Zhou *jia* (of this type) are plain, or decorated only with narrow friezes". Ones like the present example, decorated as it is with large *taotie* masks, are a rarity.

### Similar examples:

- A *jia*, similar in shape, but with a very different *taotie* mask, from the Arthur M. Sackler Collection, is illustrated by Rawson J., *Western Zhou Ritual Bronzes from the Arthur M. Sackler Collections*, Washington D.C. and Cambridge 1990, p. 658 and 660.
- Other quite similar *jia* are published in Hayashi M., *In Shu Jidai Seidoki no Kenkyu (In Shu Seidoki Soran Ichi), Conspectus of Yin and Zhou Bronzes*, Tokyo 1984, Vol. I - plates p. 199 nos. 85 to 88, and p. 200 to 202 nos. 95 to 108, 林巳奈夫《殷周時代青銅器の研究：殷周青銅器綜覽（一）圖版》東京 1984年版，第 199頁 85 - 88 號，第 200- 202頁 95 - 108 號。









## 11. Ritual bronze vessel *fangyi*

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**Early Western Zhou dynasty, circa 11<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.**

西周早期青銅簋

**Height: 14 cm, Diameter: 26 cm**

A ritual bronze food vessel *gui*. The body in the form of a straight-sided bowl with two large semi-circular handles is supported by a high conical foot. The vessel's narrow neck is cast on both sides with an elongated taotie mask composed of two confronting, highly stylized *kui* dragons facing each other over a small *taotie* mask in high relief. The vessel's foot is decorated on both sides with a band cast with the same motif, but the stylized *kui* dragons are facing each other over a vertical flange. The vessel's two thick handles are surmounted by bovine heads in the round and have stylized claw-like appendages hanging from their ends.

The vessel has a dark olive-green patina with malachite incrustations.

### Inscription:

- A six – character inscription inside the base of the vessel reads: “X made (for) Father Ding (this) precious ritual vessel.” 《X作父丁寶尊彝》

### Provenance:

- Warren King, Hong Kong.
- Meiyintang Collection, Switzerland.

### Published:

- Wang Tao, *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, London 2009, p. 204 – 205, no. 100.
- Wu Zhenfeng, *Shang Zhou Qingtongqi Mingwen Ji Tuxiang Jicheng*, Shanghai 2012, Vol. 9, p. 165, no. 04411. 吳鎮烽《商周青銅器銘文暨圖像集成》上海 2012年版, 第9冊, 第165頁 04411號.
- Deydier Ch., *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, Vol. 1 Annexe, Hong Kong 2013, p. 162 no. 100.

### Similar examples:

- Similar *gui* vessels are illustrated in Hayashi M., *In Shu Jidai Seidoki no Kenkyu (In Shu Seidoki Soran Ichi), Conspectus of Yin and Zhou Bronzes*, Tokyo 1984, Vol. I - plates p. 100 nos. 161- 163, and p. 101 nos. 168 - 170 林巳奈夫《殷周時代青銅器の研究: 殷周青銅器綜覽(一) 圖版》東京 1984年版, 第100頁 161- 163 號, 第101頁 168- 170 號.





## 12. Ritual bronze vessel *gui*

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**Early Western Zhou dynasty, circa 11<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.**

西周早期青銅簋

**Height: 15 cm, Diameter: 25.5 cm**

A ritual bronze food vessel *gui*. The body in the form of a bowl with two large handles is supported by a high conical foot. The vessel's narrow neck is cast with four pairs of elongated taotie masks, each composed of two highly stylized confronting *kui* dragons, one pair on each side facing each other over a small *taotie* mask in high relief, and the other two pair facing each other across the bovine heads that grace the tops of the vessel's side handles. The body of the vessel is decorated with large vertical rib-like motifs in high relief. The foot is decorated with a frieze similar to that on the neck, but the stylized *kui* dragons are facing each other over vertical flanges. The vessel's two thick loop handles are decorated with spirals and seem to emerge from the bovine heads at their tops.

The vessel has a dark olive-green patina with malachite incrustations.

**Provenance:**

- Private European Collection since 1980.
- Boisgirard C., Auction Catalogue, Paris, April 26<sup>th</sup> 1979.
- Wahl – Rostagni Collection, Rome, Italy.

**Exhibited :**

- Boisgirard C., Paris, April 26th 1979, Auction Catalogue no.128

**Published:**

- Boisgirard C., Auction Catalogue, Paris, April 26<sup>th</sup> 1979, lot no. 128.

**Similar examples:**

- Similar *gui* vessels are illustrated in Hayashi M., *In Shu Jidai Seidoki no Kenkyu (In Shu Seidoki Soran Ichi), Conspectus of Yin and Zhou Bronzes*, Tokyo 1984, Vol. I – plates p. 103 nos. 178 & 181. 林巳奈夫《殷周時代青銅器の研究: 殷周青銅器綜覽(一) 圖版》東京 1984年版, 第 103頁 178 和 181 號.









## 13. Ritual bronze vessel *gui*

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**Early or middle Western Zhou dynasty, circa 11<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.**

西周早中期獸耳高足青銅簋

**Height: 28.5cm, Diameter: 19 cm**

A ritual bronze food vessel *gui*. The body in the form of a bowl with two large semi-circular handles is supported by a high, conical, flaring base propped up on three animal-shaped legs. Each side of the vessel's narrow neck is decorated with two long-tailed mythological birds facing each other over a small *taotie* mask in high relief. The upper part of each leg is decorated with a bovine head in high relief. The vessel's two thick loop handles seem to spring from bovine heads in the round that emerge from the vessel's upper sides and have stylized claw-like appendages hanging from their ends.

The vessel has a nice green and dark patina, with silvered areas.



**Inscription:**

- An inscription of twenty - seven characters (two of them 《子孫》 with double signs 《二》 on their lower bottom right sides) inside the vessel reads: “(The) king, in the 7th month, (on the) first auspicious (day) *xinchou* (when) Count X (was) in the lower palace, presented X (with) 20 strings (of cowries). (To commemorate this, X) made (this) precious *gui*. (May his) children, grandchildren, (for) ten thousand years treasure (it).” 《惟王七月初吉, 辛丑, 伯X于下宮錫(以 / 易)X廿朋, 用作寶簋, 子(二)孫(二)其萬年寶》

**Provenance:**

- Warren King, Hong Kong.
- Meiyintang Collection, Switzerland.

**Published:**

- Wang Tao, *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, London 2009, p. 210, no. 103.
- Wu Zhenfeng, *Shang Zhou Qingtongqi Mingwen Ji Tuxiang Jicheng*, Shanghai 2012, Vol. 11, p. 11, no. 05091. 吳鎮烽《商周青銅器銘文暨圖像集成》上海2012年版, 第11冊, 第11頁 05091號.
- Deydier Ch., *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, Vol. 1 Annexe, Hong Kong 2013, p. 165 no. 103.

**Similar examples:**

- A similar *gui*, but with a different decor, from the Avery Brundage Collection, is published in Lefebvre d'Argencé R.Y., *Bronze Vessels of Ancient China in The Avery Brundage Collection*, San Francisco 1977, p. 78.
- Other three-legged *gui* are illustrated by Hayashi M., *In Shu Jidai Seidoki no Kenkyu (In Shu Seidoki Soran Ichi), Conspectus of Yin and Zhou Bronzes*, Tokyo 1984, Vol. I - plates p. 108 nos. 234 - 236 and p. 111 no. 260 林巳奈夫《殷周時代青銅器の研究: 殷周青銅器綜覽 (一) 圖版》東京 1984年版, 第 108頁 234- 236 號, 第 111頁 260 號.



## 14. Ritual bronze vessel *ding*

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**Eastern Zhou dynasty, late Spring and Autumn period,  
circa 6<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.**

東周春秋晚期竊曲紋青銅鼎

**Height: 30.5 cm, Diameter: 31 cm**

An important ritual food vessel *ding*, with a round bowl-shaped body supported by three short cabriole legs, and covered with a domed lid. Two powerful inverted handles are fixed on each side of the upper section of the vessel's body.

The cover and body of the vessel are decorated, respectively, with one and two friezes of large interlaced C-shaped stylized dragons filled with spirals and scrolls.

The vessel has a nice green and reddish patina.

**Provenance:**

- Warren King, Hong Kong
- Meiyintang Collection, Switzerland.

**Published:**

- Wang Tao, *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, London 2009, p. 176 – 177, no. 81.
- Deydier Ch., *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, Vol. 1 Annexe, Hong Kong 2013, p. 138 no. 81.

**Similar example:**

- A quite similar *ding* from the Eric Lidow Collection, and now in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, is illustrated by So J., *Eastern Zhou Ritual Bronzes from the Arthur M. Sackler Collections*, Volume III, Washington 1995, p. 153 fig. 18.2.



## 15. Ritual bronze vessel *bianhu*

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**Eastern Zhou dynasty, Warring States period,  
circa 5<sup>th</sup> – 3rd centuries BC.**

東周戰國時期青銅扁壺

**Height: 36.5 cm**

A ritual bronze fermented beverages vessel *bianhu*. The vessel's oval-shaped, flat-sided body is topped by a low flaring, cylindrical neck and supported on a rectangular pedestal foot.

The back and front faces of the vessel are cast with large rectangular panels of tight, abstract curl patterns, arranged in five registers and separated by plain bands. The similarly decorated sides of the vessel are each decorated with a *taotie* mask in high relief with a looped muzzle holding a movable ring.

The vessel's convex cover is decorated with abstract curl patterns and is surmounted by three stylized curling dragons.

The vessel has a nice blue patina.

### Notes:

- The *bianhu* or pilgrim's bottle was used to hold fermented beverages.
- This shape was an innovation of the Eastern Zhou period which apparently started around 400 BC. and continued to be fashionable into the Han Dynasty.
- The *bianhu* is commonly found in tombs of the Warring States period nobility.

### Similar examples:

- A *bianhu* unearthed from a Warring States tomb in 1975 at Shangcunling at Sanmenxia, Henan Province, is illustrated in *Wenwu* 1976, no. 3, plate 3 no. 1 and p. 53 drawing no. 3.
- Similar examples in the Shanghai Museum are illustrated in *Xia Shang Zhou Qingtongqi Yanjiu*, *Eastern Zhou*, Volume II, *Dong Zhou Bian, Xia*, nos. 618 - 620, p. 422 - 429.









## 16. Pair of ritual bronze vessels *hu*

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**Eastern Zhou dynasty, Warring States period,  
circa 5<sup>th</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BC.**

東周戰國時期獸耳青銅壺（一對）

**Height: 32.5 cm**

A pair of covered ritual bronze vessels used for the storage of fermented beverages. The vessels' round pear-shaped bodies, with high necks ending in flared rims, stand on circular feet. Ring handles, one on each side, are attached to the small tigers' heads cast on the sides of the bottoms of the vessels' necks.

The body of the vessel is decorated with four narrow friezes each containing a kind of stylized dragon.

The vessels' domed covers are decorated with two circular bands and topped by three small loop rings.

The vessels are covered with a very pleasant blue patina.

**Provenance:**

- Warren King, Hong Kong.
- Meiyintang Collection, Switzerland.

**Published:**

- Wang Tao, *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, London 2009, p. 100 – 101, no. 45.
- Deydier Ch., *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, Vol. 1 Annexe, Hong Kong 2013, p. 77 no. 45.



## 17. Ritual bronze vessel *ding*

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**Eastern Zhou dynasty, late Spring and Autumn period,  
circa 6<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.**

東周春秋晚期環耳青銅鼎

**Height: 39.5 cm, Diameter: 36 cm**

Large ritual food vessel *ding*. The round and deep bowl-shaped body, covered with a domed lid, is supported by three short cabriole legs. Two powerful inverted handles are fixed on either side of the vessel's body, near its rim.

The vessel's body is decorated with two different patterns. The upper part, near the rim, is cast with a large band of interlaced stylized C-shaped dragons. This is separated from the lower part of the body by a narrow, protruding, rope-like band, under which a wider, undecorated band gradually merges into a wide band of stylized hanging cicada-shaped lozenges filled with yet more interlaced stylized C-shaped dragons.

The vessel's cover is topped by a circular handle on a low openwork base and the surface of the cover is cast with interlaced stylized C-shaped dragons.

The vessel's legs are decorated in their upper parts with very elaborate stylized *taotie* masks in high relief.

All the incisions of the vessel's decoration are filled with a carbonated substance, perhaps traces of some sort of inlay.

The vessel has a green and reddish patina.

### **Provenance:**

- P.C. Lu Collection, Paris, France, before 1979.
- Boisgirard C., Auction Catalogue, Paris, October 12<sup>th</sup> 1979.
- Wahl – Rostagni Collection, Rome, Italy.

### **Exhibited:**

- Boisgirard C., Paris, October 12<sup>th</sup> 1979, Auction Catalogue no. 50

### **Published:**

- Boisgirard C., Auction Catalogue, Paris, October 12<sup>th</sup> 1979, lot no. 50



## 18. Ritual bronze vessel *dui*

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**Eastern Zhou dynasty, Warring States period,  
circa 5<sup>th</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BC.**

東周戰國時期龍足青銅敦

**Height: 25 cm**

A ritual bronze food vessel *dui*. The body is in the form of two joined half-spherical bowls, which, when separated, become two identical globular dishes used for food offerings.

Each half of the vessel is supported by three legs cast in the form of curling dragons with scale-covered bodies and horned heads.

Four ring handles are fixed near the vessel's rims, one on each side of each half of the vessel's body.

The vessel has a brown patina.

**Provenance:**

- Meiyintang Collection, Switzerland.

**Published:**

- Wang Tao, *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, London 2009, p. 228 – 229, no. 111.
- Deydier Ch., *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, Vol. 1 Annexe, Hong Kong 2013, p. 175 no. 111.





## 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> Biennale des Antiquaires, Paris
December	1992	An Exceptional Horse from the Han Dynasty, London
November	1994	L'Or des Qin, XVII <sup>e</sup> Biennale 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> Biennale 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> Biennale 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, Fine Art Asia Fair, Hong Kong
March	2012	Treasures from Ancient China, The Gerbe Collection—IV, New York
September	2012	XXVI <sup>e</sup> Biennale des Antiquaires, Paris
October	2012	Archaic Bronze Vessels from Private Collections, Fine Art Asia Fair, Hong Kong





