

Chinese Masterpieces from a French Collection

Paris, October 9th – 31st, 2020 / Hong Kong, December 4th – 23rd, 2020









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Foreword

I have the privilege of presenting an exceptional French private collection. During the past 35 years this “secret” collector has gathered with passion some exceptional treasures of Chinese art, among them pieces coming from major international collections such as those of P.P. Chiu, Meiyintang, M. Komor, G. de Batz, J.T. Tai, and Yamanaka. Some of the objects are already well known having been recorded in important publications and included in major Chinese art exhibitions held in the Springfield Museum, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Portland Art Museum and the Denver Art Museum.

Three particularly exceptional objects deserve special note:

- The exceptional bronze vessel *fangyi* from the Yinxu period of the Shang dynasty (circa 14th – 12th / 11th centuries B.C.).
- The superb *sancai* and blue-glazed earthenware monkey, Tang dynasty, early 8th century A.D.
- The exceptional bronze seated Buddha, end of the 4th century – beginning of the 5th century A.D.

I hope this exhibition of a French 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 should especially like to thank Mr. Vincent Pradier for producing this catalogue and for organizing the presentation of the objects 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

1 – Ritual bronze wine vessel *jue*

Shang dynasty, Yinxu period
circa 14th – 12th / 11th centuries B.C.
H.: 19 cm

爵
商代,殷墟時期
約西元前14 – 12/11世紀
高: 19公分

Archaic bronze wine vessel supported by three outwardly descending legs. The vessel's deep U-shaped body is cast in low relief at the centre of one of its sides with a large *taotie* mask on a *leiwen* background divided into two sections by a horizontal notched flange and crowned with three triangular protrusions decorated with a stylized cicada motif. The other side of the vessel bears the same design with a semi-circular handle surmounted by a bovine head in high relief emerging from it. The vessel's long pouring spout and opposite horn-like pointed side are cast on their undersides with long blade-like designs decorated with stylized cicada motifs. Two upright finials covered with whorl caps grace the top of the vessel just above the area where the spout emerges from the vessel's body.

The vessel has a pleasant green patina.





Inscription

– A single pictogram is cast beneath the handle.

Provenance

– L. Depagne Collection, Nice, France – London, U.K., before 1987.
– Oriental Bronzes Ltd, London, U.K., 1987.
– Cukierman Collection, London, U.K.
– Galerie Christian Deydier, Paris, France, 2012.
– Private French Collection.

Exhibited

– Oriental Bronzes Ltd, *Opening Exhibition*, London, December 1987.
– Galerie Christian Deydier, *Archaic Bronzes Vessels from Private Collections*, Hong Kong, Fine Art Fair, October 4th – 7th, 2012.

Published

– Oriental Bronzes Ltd, *Opening Exhibition*, London, December 1987, catalogue no. 3, p. 16 – 17.
– Galerie Christian Deydier, *Archaic Bronzes Vessels from Private Collections*, Hong Kong, Fine Art Fair, October 4th – 7th, 2012, catalogue p. 10 – 13, no. 2.

Similar examples

– A similar *jue* is published by Deydier Ch., *Les Bronzes Chinois*, Fribourg, 1980, p. 220, no. 32.
– A very similar *jue* vessel, found in 1953 in Anyang, tomb YPM4, piece no. 53YPM4:6, is illustrated in *Henan Chutu Shang Zhou Qingtongqi (The Unearthed Bronzes of the Shang – Zhou Dynasties in Henan Province)*, Beijing, 1981, p. 243, plate 310.

2 – Ritual bronze wine vessel *jue*

Shang dynasty, Yinxu period
circa 14th – 12th / 11th centuries B.C.
H.: 20.5 cm

爵
商代,殷墟時期
約西元前14 – 12/11世紀
高: 20.5公分

Archaic bronze wine vessel supported by three triangular legs. The vessel's deep U-shaped body is cast in high relief on each side with a large and powerful *taotie* mask on a *leiwen* background, interspersed with shallow notched flanges and crowned with triangular protrusions decorated with a stylized cicada motif. The vessel's long pouring spout and opposite horn-like pointed side are cast on their undersides with long blade-like designs decorated with stylized cicada motifs. The semi-circular handle is surmounted by a bovine head in high relief. Two upright finials covered with "mushroom-shaped" caps grace the top of the vessel just above the area where the spout emerges from the vessel's body.

The vessel has a nice green patina.





Inscription

– Two pictograms are cast beneath the handle.

Provenance

– Deydier Ch. / Oriental Bronzes Ltd., London, U.K., 1995.
– Private French Collection.

Exhibited

– Deydier Ch. / Oriental Bronzes Ltd., *Le Banquet des Dieux, Ritual Bronzes of Ancient China*, London / Paris, 1995.

Published

– Liu Xinyuan, *Qi Gu Shi jijin wen shu*, 1922, 7.8.
– Luo Zhenyu, *Yin wen cun*, 1917, xia 8.
– Liu Tizhi, *Xiaojiao jingge jinwe taben*, 1935, no. 6.29.1.
– Luo Zhenyu, *Sandai jijin wen cun*, 1937, no. 15.30.8.
– Yen Yiping, *Jinwen zongji*, Vol. 5, p. 2101, no. 3559.
– Deydier Ch. / Oriental Bronzes Ltd., *Le Banquet des Dieux, Ritual Bronzes of Ancient China*, London / Paris, 1995, catalogue no. 8, p. 24 - 25.
– Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Institute of Archaeology 中國社會科學院考古研究所, *Yin Zhou Jinwen Jicheng: Xiuding Zengbuben*, 2007, no. 08073.
– Wu Zhenfeng, *Shang Zhou Qingtongqi Mingwen Ji Tuxiang Jicheng*, Shanghai, 2012, Vol. 15, p. 223, no. 07390.
– Deydier Ch., *Understanding Ancient Chinese Bronzes, Their Importance in Chinese Culture, Their Shapes, Functions and Motifs*, Paris, 2015, plate p. 60.

Similar examples

– A similar *jue* from the Freer Gallery of Art Collection no. 54 - 15, is published by Pope J.A., Gettens R.J., Cahill J., Barnard N., *The Freer Chinese Bronzes*, Vol. I catalogue, Washington, 1967, plate 24.
– Another similar *jue* in the Seattle Art Museum, is illustrated by Knight M., *Early Chinese Metalwork in the Collection of the Seattle Art Museum*, Seattle, 1989, no. 3, p. 3 and 6.

3 – Ritual bronze wine vessel *gu*

Shang dynasty, Yinxu period
circa 14th – 12th / 11th centuries B.C.
H.: 32.1 cm

觚
商代,殷墟時期
約西元前14 – 12/11世紀
高: 32.1公分

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 lower section, 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 greyish green patina.





Inscription

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

Provenance

– Rappaport Collection, San Francisco, USA.
 – Earl & Irene Morse Collection, New York, USA, before 1987.
 – Weisbrod, New York, USA, 1987.
 – L. Depagne Collection, London, U.K., 1991.
 – Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection, Switzerland, before 2012.
 – Galerie Christian Deydier, Paris, France, 2012.
 – Private French Collection.

Exhibited

– Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Spirit and Ritual*, New York, USA, 1982.
 – Elvehjem Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin, USA, 1982.
 – Rhode Island School of Design Museum of Art, Providence, USA, 1983.
 – Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, USA, 1984.
 – Memphis-Brooks Museum of Art, Memphis, USA, 1984.
 – Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, USA, 1984.
 – Joseph & Margaret Muscarelle Museum of Art, College of William & Mary, Williamsburg, USA, 1984.
 – Weisbrod M.B., *Religion and Ritual in Chinese Art*, New York, USA, 1987.
 – Galerie Christian Deydier, *The Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection*, New York – Asia Week, March 16th – 24th, 2012.

Published

– Thorp R.L. & Bower V., *Spirit and Ritual*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art New York, 1982, no. 8, p. 24.
 – Weisbrod M.B., *Religion and Ritual in Chinese Art*, New York, 1987, no. 6, p. 28 - 29.
 – Deydier Ch., *The Marcel & Chantal Gerbe Collection*, New York – Asia Week, March 16th – 24th, 2012, catalogue no. 1, p. 10 - 13.
 – Deydier Ch., *Understanding Ancient Chinese Bronzes, Their Importance in Chinese Culture, Their Shapes, Functions and Motifs*, Paris, 2015, plate p. 40.

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, colour 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, no. 1.

4 – Ritual bronze wine vessel *jiao*

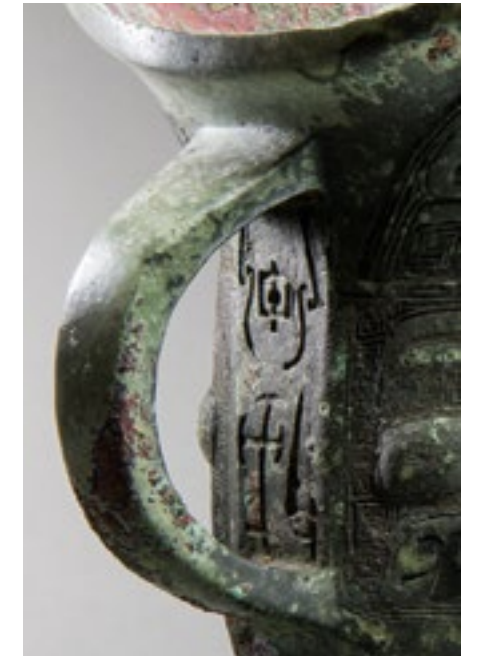
Shang dynasty, Yinxu period
circa 14th – 12th / 11th centuries B.C.
H.: 23.5 cm

角
商代,殷墟時期
約西元前14 – 12/11世紀
高: 23.5公分

Archaic bronze wine vessel supported by three triangular-shaped legs. Each side of the vessel's deep U-shaped body is cast in low relief with a large *taotie* mask on a *leiwen* background.
The vessel's two horn-like pointed sides are decorated on their undersides with stylized cicada motifs.
A semi-circular handle is cast on one side of the vessel.

The vessel has a pleasant green patina.





Inscription

– A three-character inscription under the handle reads: “Father Wu (from) X (a clan name)”.

Provenance

– Chen Rentao, Hong Kong, 1952.
 – Sotheby’s, London, U.K., July 18th, 1961.
 – Sotheby’s, New York, USA, December 4th, 1984.
 – The Bella and P.P. Chiu Collection, Hong Kong.
 – Eskenazi Ltd, London, U.K.
 – Meiyintang Collection, Rapperswil, Switzerland.
 – Private French Collection.

Exhibited

– Sotheby’s, London, U.K., July 18th, 1961, lot no. 83.
 – Sotheby’s, New York, USA, December 4th, 1984, lot no. 6.
 – Musée national des arts asiatiques – Guimet, *Trésors de la Chine ancienne, Bronzes rituels de la collection Meiyintang*, Paris, March 13th – June 10th, 2013.

Published

– Chen Rentao, *Jingui lungu chui*, Hong Kong, 1952, no. 155, 157.
 – Sotheby’s, London, U.K., July 18th, 1961, lot no. 83.
 – Sotheby’s, New York, USA, December 4th, 1984, lot no. 6.
 – Rawson J., *The Bella and P.P. Chiu Collection of Ancient Chinese Bronzes*, Hong Kong, 1988, p. 54 - 55, no. 13.
 – Wang Tao, *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, London, 2009, p. 32 - 33, no. 10.
 – Wu Zhenfeng, *Shang Zhou Qingtongqi Mingwen Ji Tuxiang Jicheng*, Shanghai, 2012, Vol. 17, p. 212, no. 08777.
 – Musée national des arts asiatiques – Guimet, *Trésors de la Chine ancienne, Bronzes rituels de la collection Meiyintang*, Paris, 2013, p. 48, no. 25.
 – Deydier Ch., *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, Vol. 1 Annexe, Hong Kong, 2013, p. 22 - 23, no. 11.
 – Deydier Ch., *Understanding Ancient Chinese Bronzes, Their Importance in Chinese Culture, Their Shapes, Functions and Motifs*, Paris, 2015, plate p. 59.

5 – Ritual bronze wine vessel *zhi*, with cover

Shang dynasty, Yinxu period
circa 14th – 12th / 11th centuries B.C.
H.: 18 cm

觥
商代,殷墟時期
約西元前14 – 12/11世紀
高: 18公分

Archaic bronze vessel with cover, used for the conservation of fermented beverages. The pear-shaped body with an everted neck is supported by a small ring foot. The center of each side and the outer edges of the vessel are cast with narrow notched flanges.

The vessel's body is cast, on each side, with two horizontal friezes. The larger lower one is decorated with two confronting *kui* dragons, shown in profile, on a *leiwen* background, which when viewed together form a large *taotie* mask. The upper frieze is decorated with a pair of large flaming-eye motifs on a *leiwen* background. The upper part of the vessel's foot is ornated with four stylized dragons shown in profile, each with a long elephant-trunk-like snout, all on a *leiwen* background. On the vessel's cover, two *taotie* masks on a *leiwen* background are divided by narrow notched flanges. The top of the cover is graced with a small upright finial topped with a whorl cap.

The bronze vessel has a pleasant light green patina.





Provenance

- Reputedly from Otto Burchard, Leipzig, Germany, 1923.
- Reputedly from M. Gobard Collection, Paris, France, in the 1960s.
- Wui Po Kok Antiques Co. Ltd, Hong Kong.
- Private French Collection.

Exhibited

- Galerie Christian Deydier, *XXV^e Biennale des Antiquaires*, Paris, 2010.

Published

- Deydier Ch., *XXV^e Biennale des Antiquaires*, Paris, 2010, catalogue p. 18 - 21.
- Deydier Ch., *Understanding Ancient Chinese Bronzes, Their Importance in Chinese Culture, Their Shapes, Functions and Motifs*, Paris, 2016, photo p. 86.

Similar example

- Few similar vessels *zhi* are published by Hayashi M., *In Shu jidai seidoki no kenkyu (In Shu seidoki soran ichi), Conspectus of Yin and Zhou bronzes*, Japan, 1984, Vol. 1 - plates, p. 337 to 341.

Note

- From 1978 up to 1982, Christian Deydier served as assistant to Mr. Moreau-Gobard, the nephew of Mrs. Gobard.

6 – Ritual bronze wine vessel *fangyi*, with cover

Shang dynasty, Yinxu period
circa 14th – 12th / 11th centuries B.C.
H.: 22.8 cm

方彝
商代,殷墟時期
約西元前14 – 12/11世紀
高 : 22.8公分

Archaic bronze wine vessel of rectangular shape. The large central section of each side of the vessel is cast with a large taotie mask in high relief set below a small *taotie*, both on a *leiwen* background. The upper frieze is decorated with a pair of confronting bottle-horn dragons, shown in profile, on a *leiwen* background. The lower frieze, at the foot of the vessel, is ornated with a pair of addorsed dragons, also shown in profile, on a *leiwen* background. The center of each side and the edges of the vessel are cast with narrow notched flanges.

The cover, decorated on each of its faces with an inverted *taotie* mask on a *leiwen* background, is cast with narrow notched flanges in the centres and along the edges of its four sides. The top of the cover is surmounted by a small faceted sloping roof-like finial, decorated on each of its sides with a small incised stylized *taotie* mask.

The bronze has a mottled milky green and grey patina.







Provenance

- Raymond A. Bidwell (1876 – 1954) Collection.
- The Springfield Museums, Springfield, Massachusetts, accessioned in 1962.
- Christie's, New York, March 19th – 22nd, 2013.
- Private French Collection.

Exhibited

- C.W. Post Center, Long Island University, Greenvale, New York, *The Arts of China*, February 4th – March 27th, 1977, no. 6.
- Christie's, New York, March 19th – 22nd, 2013, lot no. 1126.

Published

- *The Raymond A. Bidwell Collection of Chinese Bronzes and Ceramics*, Museum of Fine Arts, Springfield, Massachusetts, 1965, p. 24 - 25.
- Spelman R., *The Arts of China*, C.W. Post Center, Greenvale, New York, 1976, p. 19, no. 6.
- Christie's, New York, March 19th – 22nd, 2013, lot no. 1126.
- Deydier Ch., *Understanding Ancient Chinese Bronzes, Their Importance in Chinese Culture, Their Shapes, Functions and Motifs*, Paris, 2015, plate p. 34, detail p. 109.

7 – Ritual bronze wine vessel *zun*

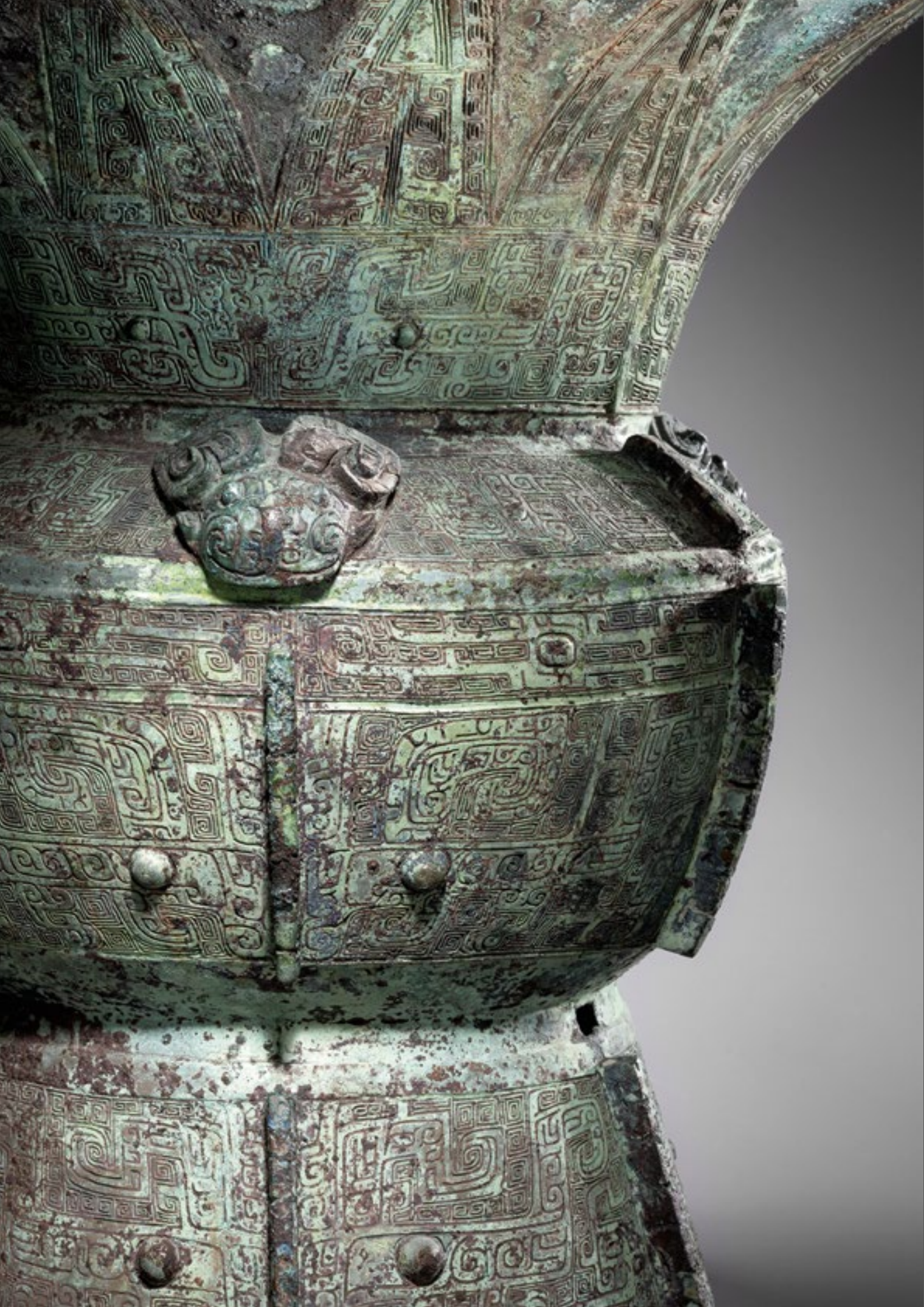
Shang dynasty, Yinxu period
circa 14th – 12th / 11th centuries B.C.
H.: 35 cm

尊
商代,殷墟時期
約西元前14 – 12/11世紀
高: 35公分

Large ritual bronze vessel used to hold fermented beverages. The vessel is composed of three sections. The upper section in the shape of an opening-out wide-mouthed trumpet is decorated at its base with a horizontal band of confronting *kui* dragons, shown in profile on a *leiwen* background and surmounted by wide, rising, triangular leaf-like patterns, each decorated with a stylized cicada motif. The vessel's central section is decorated on its shoulder with a band of *kui* dragons, and stylised buffalo heads cast in high relief. The main part of the vessel's body and its foot are decorated with three large *taotie* masks on a *leiwen* background, each composed of two *kui* dragons confronting each other over a vertical flange.

The bronze vessel has a green patina.





Inscription

– A two-character inscription inside the vessel reads: “Fu Xian” (Lady Xian).

Provenance

- J.T. Tai Collection, New York, USA, before 1989.
- Oriental Bronzes Ltd, London, U.K., 1989.
- Wahl-Rostagni Collection, Rome, Italy.
- Iokai Collection, Tokyo, Japan.
- Galerie Christian Deydier, Paris, France, before 2008.
- Private French Collection.

Exhibited

– Galerie Christian Deydier, *Exposition Inaugurale*, Paris 2008.

Published

- Deydier Ch., *Exposition Inaugurale*, Paris, 2008, p. 8 - 11.
- Deydier Ch., *Understanding Ancient Chinese Bronzes, Their Importance in Chinese Culture, Their Shapes, Functions and Motifs*, Paris, 2015, p. 89.

Similar examples

- The very famous *zun* vessel from the H.E. Hoppenot’s Collection, now in the Meiyintang Collection, and illustrated by Deydier Ch. in *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, Vol. 1 Annexe, Hong Kong, 2013, p. 100 - 101, no. 60, is very similar in its decoration and shape to the present *zun* vessel. The difference lies in the lack of décor on the collar of Hoppenot’s vessel.
- A similar *zun* vessel excavated from Fu Hao’s Tomb (tomb no. 5) in 1976 in Xiaotun 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. 1 plates, p. 217, no. 31.
- Another *zun* vessel now in the Arthur H. Sackler Gallery, The Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C., no. V 19, is published in Bagley R.W., *Shang Ritual Bronzes in the Arthur H. Sackler Collections*, Washington, 1987, p. 264.

8 – Set of four mat weights in the form of frolicking bears

Gilt bronze inlaid with agate and turquoise
Western Han dynasty, 2nd – 1st centuries B.C.
W.: 7.4 cm each

四個銅鑲金熊鎮
銅鑲金鑲嵌瑪瑙和綠松石
西漢,公元前2至1世紀
高: 7.4公分

Extremely rare set of four bronze mat weights, each identically cast in the form of a bear.

Cast in the round, lying on their backs, the animals are realistically modelled with their mouths wide open, their crisply cast tongues moving, their eyebrows and side whiskers sharply etched, their rounded ears raised and their deeply set eyes and pointed noses highlighted with inlays of semi-precious stones.

The animals' sharp claws and the small fur-simulating incisions that cover their bodies add to the over-all feeling of realism that pervades these masterpieces produced by ancient Chinese craftsmen.

Each bear is bathed in a fine creamy gold gilding and inlaid in agate and turquoise. All the weights are decorated with a thick, braided, rope-like border.





Provenance

- David Aaron Collection, London, U.K., 2004, inventory no. D. 1051.
- Horiuchi Collection, Tokyo, Japan, inventory no. 8827.
- Galerie Christian Deydier, Paris, France, 2012.
- Private French Collection.

Exhibited

- Galerie Christian Deydier, *XXVI^e Biennale des Antiquaires*, Paris, September 14th – 23rd, 2012.

Published

- Galerie Christian Deydier, *XXVI^e Biennale des Antiquaires*, Paris, September 14th – 23rd, 2012, catalogue no. 3, p. 24 - 27.

Notes

- It is extremely rare to find a complete set of four identical weights.
- During the Han dynasty, the bear was associated with military prowess, shamanism and immortality.

Similar examples

- Weights in the shape of bears are extremely rare.
- A dagger dated between the 1st century B.C. and the 1st century A.D., discovered in Tillia Tepe, in Northern Afghanistan, and now in the Kabul Museum, has a gold handle decorated with a bear inlaid with turquoises. This piece is an example of the cultural exchanges between Central Asia and China at that time.

9 – Earthenware Court lady holding a bottle

Sui dynasty, 581 – 617 A.D.
H.: 48 cm

持瓶女俑
隋朝,公元581 – 617年
高: 48公分

An elegantly modelled standing court attendant wearing a long coat over an even lengthier pleated dress drawn in at the waist with a sash tied in a bow at the middle. Her slightly uplifted, extended arms and delicately formed fingers grasp a bulbous pear-shaped bottle with a long, outwardly expanding neck topped by a domed cover. Pottery with white and traces of light red pigmentation.





Provenance

- J.T. Tai Collection, New York, USA, before 1984.
- Oriental Bronzes Ltd, London, U.K., 1984.
- Private French Collection.

Exhibited

- Galerie Christian Deydier, BRAFA, Brussel, Belgium, January 2006.

Published

- Le Figaro, January 20th, 2006.

Note

- The front part of the pottery figure is moulded in the round, while its back is flat.

10 – *Sancai* earthenware wrist pillow

Tang dynasty, 618 – 907 A.D.
H.: 5.3 cm L.: 12.3 cm

三彩陶腕托
唐代,公元618 – 907年
高:5.3公分

Sancai earthenware rectangular shaped pillow.
The glazed concave top is covered with a lozenge checkerboard pattern.
Each lozenge, glazed either in blue, cream or green, is ornated with incised multi-coloured floral patterns.
The sides of the pillow are decorated with splashes of cream, brown and green glaze.

Provenance
– Private French Collection.





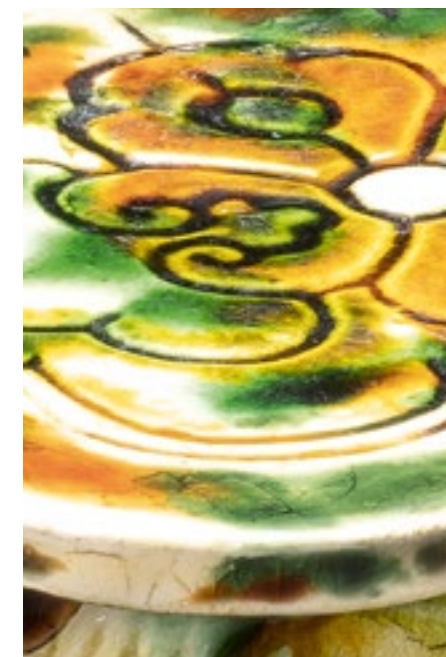
11 – *Sancai* earthenware wrist pillow or pulse pillow

Tang dynasty, 618 – 907 A.D.
H.: 6.5 cm L.: 14.5 cm

三彩陶腕托
唐代,公元618 – 907年
高:6.5公分

Delightful, small *sancai* earthenware pillow made in the shape of a buffalo lying on a rectangular base and supporting on its back a kind of tray in the shape of a stylized leaf. The animal is covered with a cream glaze with green splashes. Its head is glazed in chestnut and green. The *sancai* glazed “tray” is decorated with an incised leaves’ motif and scrolls.





Provenance

– Private French Collection.

Similar example

– A quite similar wrist or pulse pillow, but in the shape of a lion was sold at Sotheby's London, on November 7th, 2012, lot no. 214.

Note

– This kind of small pillow was used either for supporting the arm while the pulse was being taken, or was used by Chinese scholars when practising calligraphy.



12 – Two brown glazed earthenware greyhounds

Tang dynasty, 618 – 907 A.D.
H.: 14.2 cm, and 14.3 cm

两个棕色釉陶靈緹犬
代,公元618 – 907年
高: 14.2公分

Two brown glazed earthenware dogs standing four-square on rectangular bases. The dogs are portrayed with elongated muzzles, round eyes, long floppy ears, slim bodies, and long tails. Both greyhounds are covered with a pleasant light brown glaze, but one of them also has some splashes of green.

Provenance

- Eskenazi Ltd, London, U.K., 1987.
- Roger Keverne Ltd, London, U.K.
- Private French Collection.

Exhibited

- The Denver Art Museum, Denver, USA, 1962 – 1963.
- Eskenazi Ltd, *Tang*, London, June 9th – July 3rd, 1987.

Published

- Eskenazi Ltd, *Tang*, London, June 9th – July 3rd, 1987, catalogue p. 64 - 65, no. 32.

Similar example

- Two similar greyhounds excavated in Luoyang are illustrated in *Luoyang Tang Sancai*, 洛阳唐三彩, Beijing, 1980, plate 87.

13 – *Sancai* earthenware model of an ox pulling a cart

Tang dynasty, 618 – 907 A.D.
H.: 28 cm L.: 46 cm

三彩陶牛拉車
唐代,公元618 – 907年
高:28公分

A brown glazed earthenware ox standing four-square on a rectangular base pulling a cart with two very large, unglazed wheels. The cart's cubic-shaped body, now propped up on a modern wooden frame, is topped with a long brown-glazed arched roof. The cart's brown and green glazed body is pierced in the back with a rectangular door and is closed on the front with thin vertical planks.

Provenance

- Christie's, London, U.K., December 9th, 1991.
- Oriental Bronzes Ltd, London, U.K., 1991.
- Private European Collection, 1992.
- Galerie Christian Deydier, Paris, France, 2011.
- Private French Collection.



Exhibited

- Christie's, London, U.K., December 9th, 1991.
- Deydier Ch., *Bestiaire extraordinaire de la Chine ancienne*, Paris, September 6th – 24th, 2011.

Published

- Christie's, London, December 9th, 1991, catalogue lot no. 110.
- Deydier Ch., *Bestiaire extraordinaire de la Chine ancienne*, Paris, September 6th – 24th, 2011, catalogue p. 18 - 19.

Notes

- From the Han up to the Tang periods, the oxcart was a common means of transport on the west part of the Silk Road.
- The most simple form of two-wheeled oxcart consisted of a stretcher-like floor with a roof supported by a wicker frame.

14 – *Sancai* earthenware horse

Tang dynasty, 618 – 907 A.D.
H.: 34.5 cm

三彩陶馬
唐代,公元618 – 907年
高:34.5公分

Sancai earthenware horse standing four-square on an unglazed rectangular base, with its head slightly turned to its left. The animal's body is bathed in a pleasant light chestnut glaze and its chamfers, mane and hooves are covered with a pleasant cream glaze. The saddle and the saddle blanket are both glazed in green with splashes of yellow.

Provenance
– Sotheby's, London, U.K., June 20th, 2001.
– Private French Collection, 2001.

Exhibited
– Sotheby's, London, U.K., June 20th, 2001.

Published
– Sotheby's, London, U.K., June 20th, 2001, catalogue lot no. 173.



15 – *Sancai* earthenware horse and rider

Tang dynasty, 618 – 907 A.D.
H.: 41 cm

三彩陶女騎士俑
唐代,公元618 – 907年
高: 41公分

Sancai earthenware horse with a noble lady rider.

The horse stands four-square on an unglazed rectangular base. The animal's body is bathed in a cream glaze that darkens into a rich chestnut shade as it flows over the front of the equine's lowered head.

The saddle and its blanket are both covered with chestnut and cream glaze.

The steed's noble rider sits upright in the saddle with her arms dangling by her sides and her sleeve-enveloped hands placed behind the raised front of the saddle. She wears a long green dress topped by a brown-glazed long-sleeved blouse. A small high bun adorns the top of her head.

Provenance

- L. Depagne Collection, Nice, France – London, U.K., before 1987.
- Private French Collection, before 1996.



16 – *Sancai* glazed earthenware lion

Tang dynasty, 618 – 907 A.D.
H.: 21 cm

三彩陶獅子
唐代,公元618 – 907年
高: 21公分

Exceptional tri-coloured glazed pottery figure of a lion. Perched on a high rockwork base, the regal feline sits back relaxedly on his haunches with his front legs firmly planted in front of him and his left back leg raised high enough for his paw to scratch an itch on the left side of his turned head.

His powerful body is twisted in an elegant curve and his leftward turning head reveals a rich curly mane.

The lion's glazed cream-colored earthenware body and the base are partly covered in green and amber glaze. The mane is glazed in brown and green.





Provenance

- Christie's, New York, USA, 2003.
- Galerie Christian Deydier, Paris, France, 2009.
- Galerie Christian Deydier, Paris, France, 2011.
- Private French Collection.

Exhibited

- Christie's, New York, September 18th, 2003.
- Galerie Christian Deydier, *Treasures from Ancient China*, New York – Asia Week, March 13th – 19th, 2009 / Paris, April 2nd – May 2nd, 2009.
- Deydier Ch., *Bestiaire extraordinaire de la Chine ancienne*, Paris, September 6th – 24th, 2011.

Published

- Christie's, New York, September 18th, 2003, catalogue lot no. 217.
- Galerie Christian Deydier, *Treasures from Ancient China*, New York – Asia Week, March 13th – 19th, 2009 / Paris, April 2nd – May 2nd, 2009, catalogue p. 20 - 23.
- Deydier Ch., *Bestiaire extraordinaire de la Chine ancienne*, Paris, September 6th – 24th, 2011, catalogue p. 38 - 39.

Note

- There were no lions in the wild in China during the Tang dynasty, but as the lion is a Buddhist symbol of the authority of the Buddha and the Dharma, lions were often portrayed in Chinese art. Chinese annals of the period also record live lions as being among the gifts presented as tribute to the Emperor by foreign envoys.

Similar examples

- A similar seating lion can be seen in the Rietberg Museum in Zurich; it is published in Helmut Brinker, *Treasures from the Rietberg Museum*, New York, 1980, p. 121, fig. 44.
- Another similar lion from the Meiyintang Collection is published in R. Krah, *Chinese Ceramics from the Meiyintang Collection*, Vol. Three (I), London, 2006, no. 1187, p. 178.
- Three lions from the T.T. Tsui collection are published in *The Tsui Museum of Art, Chinese Ceramics I*, Hong Kong, 1993, no. 98, 99, 100.

17 – *Sancai* with blue glaze earthenware monkey

Tang dynasty, early 8th century
H.: 25.5 cm

三彩陶猴
唐代,公元618 – 907年
高: 25.5公分

Important partially blue-glazed wine ewer, portrayed as an alert monkey perched upright on a indented cylindrical stool and tightly hugging a wine skin decorated in light relief with foliate tendrils. The pottery figure is covered with an extraordinarily rich *sancai* glaze of splashed brilliant dark and pale blues, apple and spinach-greens and rich tones of amber and chestnut with some splashes of ivory.





Provenance

- Mrs Eric Mayell Collection, Palo Alto, USA.
- Mathias Komor Collection New York, USA, 1943.
- Georges de Batz Collection, New York, USA.
- Christie's, New York, USA, 1983.
- Oriental Bronzes Ltd, London, U.K., 1983.
- Private French Collection.

Exhibited

- Mills College Art Gallery, Portland Art Museum, *Early Chinese Pottery*, April – June 1941.
- Boston Museum of Fine Arts, *Exhibition of Chinese Ceramics and European Drawings*, Boston, 1953.
- Christie's, *The Georges de Batz Collection of Chinese Ceramics*, New York, November 30th, 1983.
- Deydier Ch. / Oriental Bronzes Ltd, *Ancient Chinese Bronze Vessels, Gilt Bronzes and Early Ceramics*, London, June 1986.
- Deydier Ch. / Oriental Bronzes Ltd, *Arts de la Chine et de l'Himalaya, 14^e siècle avant J.C. – 15^e siècle après J.C.*, Paris, February 21st – March 29th, 1997.

Published

- Mills College Art Gallery, Portland Art Museum, *Early Chinese Pottery*, Portland, 1941, catalogue no. 123.
- Boston Museum of Fine Arts, *Exhibition of Chinese Ceramics and European Drawings*, Boston, 1953, catalogue no. 42.
- Christie's, *The Georges de Batz Collection of Chinese Ceramics*, New York, November 30th, 1983, catalogue no. 319.
- Deydier Ch., *Ancient Chinese Bronze Vessels, Gilt Bronzes and Early Ceramics*, London, 1986, catalogue no. 23.
- Deydier Ch., *Arts de la Chine et de l'Himalaya, 14^e siècle avant J.C. – 15^e siècle après J.C.*, Paris, 1997, catalogue no. 10.
- Deydier Ch., *30th Anniversary, 1980 – 2010*, Paris, 2011, catalogue p. 14 - 15.

18 – *Sancai* glazed court attendant holding a singing bird

Tang dynasty, 618 – 907 A.D.
H.: 37.5 cm

三彩陶捕鳥器俑
唐代,公元618 – 907年
高:37.5公分

Magnificently attired smiling court attendant holding a multi-glazed singing pet bird in his uplifted, outstretched right hand while leaning slightly towards his left with that arm hanging downwards by his side. He is dressed in a sumptuous, flowing, body-length robe bathed in a rich green, white and orange chestnut glaze and topped by an attractive opened-out wide collar covered in an equally rich orange chestnut glaze. A finely modelled cincture with a white-glazed pouch hanging from his right side draws his magnificent robe in at the waist. On his unglazed head, the life-like smiling courtier wears an elaborate unglazed felt hat decorated with deeply moulded trefoil and wing motifs.





Provenance

- Christie's, New York, USA, 1991.
- Oriental Bronzes Ltd, London, U.K., 1991.
- Private French Collection, since 1998.

Exhibited

- Christie's, New York, November 27th, 1991.
- Deydier Ch. / Oriental Bronzes Ltd, *Timeless China*, Jan Krugier Gallery, New York, spring 1998.

Published

- Christie's, New York, November 27th, 1991, lot no. 274.
- Deydier Ch. / Oriental Bronzes Ltd, *Timeless China*, Jan Krugier Gallery, New York, spring 1998.

Notes

- From time immemorial, the Chinese have loved birds and have tamed and kept various types of birds, from parrots, to mynas and warblers, as pets. This practice was especially prevalent during the prosperous Tang period.
- In the past, *sancai* and unglazed figures like the present one have most often been described in catalogues as “falconers”, but it is evident that the bird in the present magnificent figure's right hand is not a falcon or hunting bird of any type, but is, in fact, a small pet singing bird.

19 – A magnificent seated court lady

Sancai and blue glazed terracotta
Tang dynasty, 618 – 907 A.D.
H.: 47 cm

三彩仕女坐俑
唐代,公元618 – 907年
高: 47公分

An exceptional figure of a charmingly proportioned young court lady seated ‘European style’ on a wicker stool.

The young lady is dressed in a low cut, close-fitting chestnut-coloured bodice with a small short-sleeved blue and white bolero called a *banbi* worn over it. A magnificent long, wide, plaited blue skirt tied under her breasts and flowing loosely across the mid and lower parts of her body down to her feet is decorated all over with delicate four-petaled flowers moulded in high relief and highlighted with splashes of white, green and chestnut glaze. An elegantly knotted single-looped bow of ribbon graces the centre of the lady’s waist and its two strands stream naturally down the front of the robe to the young lady’s dainty feet elegantly shod in shoes with their points turned up in the shapes of clouds.

The lady’s face and upper chest are left in their natural state, covered simply with a bit of white and light pink to evoke the pale, delicate skin of a court lady, with her cheeks rouged as was the custom of the time. Around her neck hangs an elegant necklace evoking twisted strands of tiny pearls.

Her long hair is drawn up on the top of her head in a high chignon consisting of a lower, bun-like section topped by two thick, wing-like protrusions with a wide, open space between them, a hairstyle known in the Tang dynasty as ‘chignon with double loops in the form of sabers’.

Lifted high in front of her to shoulder length, each of her hands grasps a delicately modelled blue-glazed flower. The young lady is elegantly seated on a drum-like stool bathed in green, blue and chestnut glaze. Such stools, most probably made of wicker, were first introduced into China from India along with Buddhism. The stool on which this young court lady is seated is richly decorated with vertical medallion-like spiralling floral motifs suggesting interlacing hearts and three horizontal thick wicker-like bands, all of which endow the stool with an air of great refinement and luxury.





Provenance

- Oriental Bronzes Ltd, London, U.K.
- Galerie Christian Deydier, Paris, France, 2011.
- Private French Collection.

Exhibited

- Galerie Christian Deydier, *XXVI^e Biennale des Antiquaires*, Paris, September 2012.

Published

- Galerie Christian Deydier, *XXVI^e Biennale des Antiquaires*, Paris, September 2012, catalogue no. 5.

Similar example

- Only one piece of similar quality, both in size and fineness, is known. Measuring 47.8 cm, but green glazed, this piece now in the Shaanxi Provincial Museum is published in *The Shaanxi Provincial Museum*, 1988, p. 74.

Notes

- *Sancai* pieces with blue glaze are especially rare since in the Tang dynasty most blue pigment had to be imported along the Silk Road from Persia, making the process extremely expensive. As a result, blue-glazed pieces of such high quality were principally made for the Emperor or members of the Imperial Family or Imperial favourites.
- Several figures of court ladies seated in ‘European’ style are known, but the majority of them are of a smaller size.
- During the Tang dynasty the number and even the size of the funerary figurines permitted to be used for the funeral ceremonies and in the burial of any individual were clearly specified according to the rank of the person concerned and were promulgated in official government decrees which had to be strictly obeyed. The unusually large size of the present figure shows that it was created for a person of very high rank.
- The style in which the young court lady is seated, known as the ‘European style’, first became fashionable in China during the Tang dynasty after it was introduced from Asia Minor along the Silk Road, the grand highway of cultural exchanges. Before the Tang, the customary fashion of sitting in China was on a mat with one’s legs crossed under one, as is still the usual fashion in Japan, Korea and most of Southeast Asia.
- During the Tang dynasty great care was given to the hairstyles of the ladies of the Imperial Court, with a catalogue of elaborate hairstyles being available to the royal ladies, which included the various styles employed by Imperial favourites over the years. The young court lady depicted here has her hair arranged in the *daoxing shuangfang* or ‘chignon with double sections in the form of sabres’ style. Such a hairstyle, requiring long hours to complete, was held in place by a metal frame around which were skilfully rolled thick strands of hair.

20 – Large *sancai* earthenware horse

Tang dynasty, 618 – 907 A.D.
H.: 68 cm L.: 78.5 cm

三彩馬
唐代,公元618 – 907年
高:68公分

Magnificent glazed terracotta horse with its four sturdy feet planted firmly on an unglazed rectangular base.

The steed turns its slightly inclined head outwards with its mouth partially open, pointed ears upright, nostrils widely spread and attentive eyes looking downwards towards its saddle as if to ask when its rider will arrive. The top of the animal's neck is ridged with a 'crew-cut' style mane and its short, plaited upwardly turning tail is tied with a ribbon bow in the style popular among the high nobility of the Tang.

The equine's powerful body is covered with a rare light pink glaze with splashes of cream. Its beautifully modelled multi-layered saddle blanket is bathed in a rich green, white and orange ochre glaze and is topped by a simple and yet elegantly proportioned saddle covered in an equally rich orange ochre glaze.

The animal's body is caparisoned in a realistically modelled set of harness trappings in high relief from which hang large leaf-shaped medallions, each of which is decorated in its centre with a crouching frog which appears to be about to leap upwards.





Provenance

- Private European Collection, 1999.
- Galerie Christian Deydier, Paris, France, 2011.
- Private French Collection.

Exhibited

- Galerie Christian Deydier, *Treasures from Ancient China – III*, New York – Asia Week, March 18th – 27th, 2011 / Paris, May 6th – 27th, 2011.

Published

- Galerie Christian Deydier, *Treasures from Ancient China – III*, New York – Asia Week, March 18th – 27th, 2011 / Paris, May 6th – 27th, 2011, catalogue p 36 - 39.
- La Revue des Vieilles Maisons Françaises, Paris, July 2011.

21 – Exceptional bronze seated Buddha

End of the 4th century – beginning of the 5th century A.D.
H.: 40 cm

青銅坐佛
公元4世紀末至公元5世紀初
高：40公分

Extremely rare bronze figure of a meditating Buddha, represented seated cross-legged with his hands folded in front of him, in an unorthodox version of the *dhyana* mudra (the gesture of meditation).

His monastic robe is worn over both shoulders in the Gandharan style.

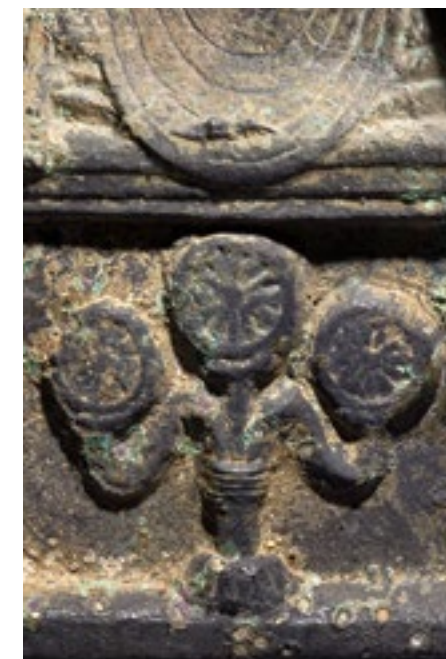
The Buddha's head is topped by an *ushnisha*, which is the symbol of the wisdom and spiritual power of the Buddha. The almond-shaped eyes, the straight nose and the delicate smile give to his face an expression of complete calmness and confidence.

The Buddha is seated on a high pedestal which is decorated with two seated lions depicted frontally, flanking three *dharmachakras* ("wheels of the law", the symbols of the teaching and path expounded by the Buddha as well as of wisdom, knowledge and insight).

Bronze with a dark grey patina.







Provenance

- From Yamanaka & Co, Osaka, Japan, by repute.
- Nakamura Collection, Kobe, Japan.
- Oriental Bronzes Ltd, London, U.K., before 2006.
- Private French Collection.

Exhibited

- Exhibited, by repute, in the Kyoto Imperial Museum, Kyoto, Japan.
- Deydier Ch. / Oriental Bronzes Ltd., *XXIII^e Biennale des Antiquaires*, Grand Palais, Paris, September 15th – 24th, 2006.

Published

- Deydier Ch. / Oriental Bronzes Ltd., *XXIII^e Biennale des Antiquaires*, Grand Palais, Paris, September 15th – 24th, 2006, p. 74 - 81.
- CANS, Taipei, August 2006.
- Casa y Jardim, Sao Paulo, September 2006, plate 13.
- Paris Capitale, Paris, September 2006, p. 53.
- Amex Magazine, December 2012, p. 35.
- A.D., Architectural Digest, Paris, December 2006 – January 2007.
- Galerie Christian Deydier, *30th Anniversary, 1980 – 2010*, Paris, 2010, p. 44 - 45.

Previous Exhibitions

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



September	2011	<i>Extraordinary Animals from Ancient China</i> , Paris
October	2011	<i>The Franck Arts Collection</i> , Fine Art Asia Fair, Hong Kong
March	2012	<i>Treasures from Ancient China IV</i> , The Gerbe Collection, New York
September	2012	<i>XXVI^e Biennale des Antiquaires</i> , Paris
October	2012	<i>Archaic Bronze Vessels from Private Collections</i> , Fine Art Asia Fair, Hong Kong
October	2013	<i>Ancient Chinese Ritual Bronze Vessels</i> , Fine Art Asia Fair, Hong Kong
May	2014	<i>Ancient Chinese Ritual Bronze Vessels</i> , International Antiques Fair, Hong Kong
September	2014	<i>XXVII^e Biennale des Antiquaires</i> , Paris
October	2014	<i>A Masterpiece of the Inlaid Art of Ancient China</i> , IAF, Hong Kong
May / June	2015	<i>International Antiques Fair</i> , Hong Kong
September	2015	<i>Terre Cuite Haniwa : L'Art funéraire au Japon</i> , Paris
May	2016	<i>The 'Oeder' Gui</i> , International Antiques Fair, Hong Kong
May	2016	<i>The Honolulu jia</i> , International Antiques Fair, Hong Kong
September	2016	<i>La Soie : Trésor des sables d'Asie Centrale</i> , Le Rendez-vous, Paris
May	2017	<i>The Niaozhuan Hu</i> , International Antiques Fair, Hong Kong
September	2017	<i>Treasures From Ancient China V - Les Merveilles du Néolithique</i> , Paris

Cover: *Sancai* with blue glaze earthenware monkey
Tang Dynasty, early 8th century

Photographer: Vincent Girier Dufournier
Graphic Design: Vincent Pradier
Print: Stipa - France

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