

GALERIE GOLCONDA

ARCHÉOLOGIE MUSÉALE
FOSSILES – BIJOUX RARES ET ANCIENS
CABINET DE CURIOSITÉS DES GRANDES CIVILISATIONS

CERTIFICATE

DING BRONZE VESSEL WITH A LID CHINA - HAN DYNASTY (206 BC – AD 220)

MATERIAL AND TECHNIQUE: large bronze vessel covered in patina from excavation, reserved for funerary rituals. Built with the lost wax method. The form is round and cylindrical and rest on four small foot decorated with *taotie*. Two *taotie* holding rings, as well as another placed on the lid, serve as handles. The lid is decorated with four fantastical birds in relief, each one having a hole that was probably used to pass through either a chain or rope. The drawings in relief on the perimeter probably represent dragons fighting in the clouds. Vessels of this form are among the most important in Chinese ritual, they served to present food to the gods and ancestors.

The entirety of the piece is coated with an excellent crusty patina showing large traces of oxidation. Excellent state of preservation.

ORIGIN: the vessels and vases used during funerary rituals of the nobility and dignitaries benefited from great care during their production. This piece is a perfect example, for the quality of its fascinating interlacing. The designs represent fighting dragons in the middle of clouds and symbols. The dragons represent the East of the world and embody the ideal mount of the deceased while they travel toward the afterlife. *Taotie* appearing under the Zhou dynasty are fantastic representations used as ornaments to ward off evil spirits. We still do not know if it was a religious symbol, a symbol of a clan or a fantastic animal linking man to the world of spirits. In any case this animal evokes both mystery and beauty.

DIMENSIONS: Height: 14 cm (5.5") – Diameter: 23.5 cm (9.2") - **Weight:** 2.9 kg.

CULTURAL PASSPORT: supplied with an export licence issued by the French Ministry of Culture number 189815, allowing this piece to travel worldwide.

PROVENANCE: old private English collection from the 1980's.

Police book registration N°: 1757