

# GALERIE GOLCONDA

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

## CERTIFICATE

### **BRONZE MIRROR WITH DEER MOTIFS CHINA – HAN DYNASTY**

**MATERIAL AND TECHNIQUE:** cast bronze mirror showing an interesting design in relief composed of a geometric Leiwen pattern composed of four motifs designing a T and depicting four deer. The decor is perfectly symmetrical. A central handle was used to hang the mirror on the wall using silk ropes.

It is from the Warring State period that the first bronze mirrors appear. Before they were mostly made of iron or of jade.

**ORIGIN:** The use of mirrors in ancient China dates back to an ancestral tradition: not only used for checking one's appearance, they also had ritual, medical, or talismanic functions. Production was at its height during the Han dynasty, when they were made small and fine, growing thicker over the course of the centuries. There are numerous references to cosmology in the mirror's decor: the round shape is linked to the moon/sun and sky symbols, and the four nipple shapes appear as constellations. The central square motif links to the earth, an image associated with the number four, which stands for materialism, stability and achievement. The T, L, and V motifs create subtle links to the astrolabe used in divination, and the game Liubo, both of which were engraved with the same motif. The four mythical creatures represent the celestial guardians of the four cardinal directions.

**DIMENSIONS:** Diameter 16.5 cm (6.4")

**CULTURAL PASSPORT:** supplied with an export licence issued by the French Ministry of Culture n° 161063.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** published in the book 'Collecting Masterpieces', Part One, by Beryl Cavallini., pages 170–171.

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