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CABINET DE CURIOSITÉS DES GRANDES CIVILISATIONS

CERTIFICATE

PAIR OF RITUAL AXES CHINA – CLASSICAL NEOLITHIC PERIOD

MATERIAL AND TECHNIQUE: pair of ritual axes in dark green nephrite jade speckled with light green. Signs of erosion and irregularity, red spots. Irregular edges, missing section on the larger piece. Each ax has a manually punctured central hole.

ORIGIN: one can truly speak of the art of jade. The subtleness of the forms produced in Neolithic cultures were found from the mouth of Yangzi River (Liangzhu culture) until South east Mongolia. This very hard stone was usually perfectly polished and cut following pure geometrical forms, portraying motifs that seemed to be harmoniously arranged. The polishing of this stone could only be done by using methods of friction, abrasion and polishing. The composite material of jade, which is extremely hard, was clearly chosen based on symbolic considerations that enhance the purity associated with its hardness, and many values in Chinese culture. Jade is attributed to the protection of the body by cultures that believe in the migration of the physical body from this life to that of our ancestors, or the realm of the immortals.

DIMENSIONS: Length: 12 cm (4.7”) and 8.5 cm (3.3”)

CULTURAL PASSPORT: issued by the French Ministry of Culture, n°167489.

MUSEOGRAPHY: a similar piece is exhibited at the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, United States, number F1917.30.

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