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

CERTIFICATE

AN OUTSTANDING WATCHTOWER CHINA - NORTHERN HAN DYNASTY (AD 25- 220)

MATERIAL AND TECHNIQUE: An outstanding model of ritual architecture built in terra cotta and covered with a glaze containing lead and copper oxide to create this typical green colour. Its time in the burial site has slightly changed the varnish, giving it a silvery iridescent look. The base is composed of a circular basin with a flat rim, showing a symbolical aquatic bestiary of ducks, turtles, crabs and frogs. The superstructure is made of three different elements assembled freely and piled up vertically. Different characters are represented, such as members of the nobility and archers. On the entrance door are two dancers in relief.

Well preserved, some possible ancient restoration.

ORIGIN: Ancient China. These towers were defence structures used in strategic areas such as the battlefield, the first floor being the best lookout post. The platform has a corbelled balcony, and archers are posted at the corners of the top floor. These towers have a very strong emblematic significance, which will be used later in the creation of pagodas.

DIMENSIONS: Height 90 cm / 35.43 in - Length 38 cm / 14.96 in. The dimensions of this watchtower are rare.

MUSEOGRAPHY: We have found only one similar watchtower at the Musée Guimet in Paris.

THERMOLUMINESCENT TEST: by Oxford Laboratory, n° C207j88.

PASSEPORT CULTUREL: supplied with an export licence issued by the French Ministry of Culture, numb. 147688.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: published in “ **Collecting Masterpieces**” Part One written by Beryl Cavallini at pages 48/49

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