

ANCIENT CHINESE SCULPTURE

Recent Acquisitions



ANCIENT CHINESE SCULPTURE: RECENT ACQUISITIONS

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CATALOGUE

1. A RED SANDSTONE SEATED FIGURE OF THE BUDDHA

Northern Wei Dynasty (A.D. 386–535)

carved in the round in a naïve provincial style, the Buddha Amitabha shown seated with legs crossed in *dhyanasana* as if on a cushion, with the forward corners compressed by his bare feet, his hands folded and resting in his lap, with long fingers entwined, with a benevolent expression on his face, his elongated narrow eyes half-closed under prominent arched eyebrows, and a 'mystical smile' on his lips, his ears of exaggerated size carved flat and plain with long lobes, a large domed *usnisa* on top of his head, wearing simple robes carved with an all-over pebbled surface except for the narrow crossed lapels, the brick-red sandstone showing widely scattered traces of white and pale reddish-tan pigment, especially on the face and arms, with remains of light green pigment in several places on the robes.

Height 16½ inches (41.9 cm)

Compare the relief figure of the Buddha shown seated in a niche, carved from similar coarse reddish sandstone in a naïve provincial style, exhibited at the National Museum of History, Taiwan, and illustrated in the catalogue entitled *The Splendour of Buddhist Statuaries: Buddhist Stone Carvings in the Northern Dynasties*, Taipei, 1997, pp. 70–71, no. 2.

北魏 紅砂岩坐佛 高 41.9 厘米



2. A SMALL DARK GRAY STONE RELIEF HEAD OF A BODHISATTVA

From the Buddhist Cave Temples at Longmen

Northern Wei Dynasty, *circa* A.D. 500

the face of the deity simplified, elongated and narrow, with half-closed almond-shaped eyes under arched eyebrows joined at the bridge of the nose, the small mouth with full lips set in a 'mystical smile,' the wide plain flattened ears with long lobes, the hair swept up behind a high diadem, the surface showing extensive remains of pigment or chalky slip under a soot-blackened surface, the back sheared off unevenly, showing the characteristic dense fine-grained rock; with fitted stand made by Inaba.

Height 5½ inches (14 cm)

Provenance Formerly in the collection of the distinguished French art historian
Élie Faure (1873–1937)

北魏 龍門菩薩頭像 高 14 厘米



3. A GRAY LIMESTONE HEAD OF THE BUDDHA

Northern Qi Dynasty (A.D. 550–577)

with delicately carved small features and full rounded face, the narrow eyes heavily lidded below arched eyebrows joined above the ridge of the nose, the mouth with pursed lips, the ears with long pendulous lobes carved with raised edges and the hair carved as rows of rounded pinwheel curls rising over the domed *usnisa* on top of the head, the fine-grained gray limestone with extensive remains of pale yellowish-tan colored pigment on the face, ears and neck; now raised on a pedestal base veneered in patinated bronze.

Height 6½ inches (16.5 cm)

Compare the larger Northern Qi period head of the Buddha very similarly carved from gray limestone, with remains of pigments on the face and with the same distinctive treatment of the hair, discovered at the site of Longxing temple in Qingzhou, Shandong province in 1996, illustrated in the catalogue of the exhibition at The National Museum of Chinese History entitled *Masterpieces of Buddhist Statuary from Qingzhou City*, Beijing, 1999, p. 126.

北齊 青石彩繪佛頭像 高 16.5 厘米



4. A LIMESTONE HEAD OF A BODHISATTVA

Northern Qi Dynasty (A.D. 550–577)

the deity shown wearing a high diadem tied with a plain band knotted at the sides, with ribbons hanging down over the ears, the face very well carved with small features set in a serene contemplative expression, the eyes half-closed under arched brows delineated by incised lines rising from the bridge of the nose, the full lips slightly pursed, the skin smooth and showing no lines of age, but marked at one side of the chin where one finger of the bodhisattva originally was attached, the fine-grained gray limestone left slightly rough at the top of the head and on the back, now mounted on a pedestal base veneered in patinated bronze.

Height 7 inches (17.8 cm)

This head of a bodhisattva comes from a figure seated in *siwei*, the 'pensive posture'. The mark at one side of the chin shows where the finger of the bodhisattva's right hand originally touched the cheek. Bodhisattvas in the *siwei* position are shown seated with one leg crossed over the opposite knee, leaning forward with one elbow on the knee, resting one or two fingers on the cheek. Early sixth century inscriptions found at Dunhuang refer to this iconography. The identification of the specific bodhisattva remains uncertain, but figures shown in this posture are usually identified as the bodhisattva Maitreya, shown waiting in Tushita Heaven before his final reincarnation when he will descend as Prince Siddharta, the Buddha Shakyamuni before his enlightenment.

Compare the two stone bodhisattva figures carved in *siwei*, the 'pensive posture' unearthed at the site of Longxing temple, in Qingzhou, Shandong province, in 1996, illustrated in the catalogue of the special exhibition *Return of the Buddha: The Qingzhou Discoveries*, London, 2002, pp. 156–157, no. 32, and fig. 80.

北齊 青石思維菩薩頭像 高 17.8 厘米



5. A SANDSTONE STANDING FIGURE OF A BODHISATTVA

From the Buddhist Cave Temples at Tianlongshan

Northern Qi–Sui Dynasty, *circa* A.D. 580

carved in three-quarter relief facing forward with half-closed eyes and benevolent expression, the ears with long lobes, the hair dressed in a high topknot behind a jeweled diadem tied at the sides with fan-shaped bows and ornamental ribbons which hang down and fall across the shoulders and down the arms, the chest decorated with a pectoral collar centered by a trefoil and the body draped with a long necklace of pearls and large ovoid beads, centered with a pearl-edged roundel and ending just above the knees on both sides where the chains appear to turn up and continue onto the back, wearing plain robes gathered by a wide belt at the waist, the skirt with pleated folds at the front and ending in an undulating hem above the ankles which are concealed by the straight-hemmed underskirt, the bare feet resting on a simple platform remaining from a lotus-pod support, with the right hand, now fragmentary, raised up in front of the chest and the left hand held down at the front, the characteristic buff sandstone showing faint traces of original pigment, especially in the crown, raised on a fitted base veneered in patinated bronze.

Height 34 inches (86.5 cm)

Provenance From the Vérité Family Collection, Paris

Acquired by Pierre Vérité in Japan

Inherited by his son, Claude Vérité

北齊—隋 天龍山菩薩立像 高 86.5 厘米



6. A PAINTED WHITE MARBLE TORSO OF THE BUDDHA

Late Northern Qi–Sui Dynasty, *circa* A.D. 575–585

draped in monastic robes falling in widely spaced sweeping folds from the left shoulder, the mantle secured by a triangular clasp hanging from a knotted cord threaded through a ring on a square plaque high on the back, the cloth gathered by the clasp into a pleated fan shape and falling over the left arm, the arms held close to the body, the right arm held slightly higher, broken off at the elbow, the left arm with truncated wrist turning down, the body very simply modelled with slightly protruding stomach in front but flattened on the back, with robes falling straight down to the ankles, the surface of the white marble showing extensive remains of original red and green pigment painted in squares to indicate a 'patchwork' fabric and detailed in black, and with tiny traces of gold leaf, the bare feet resting on a circular plinth with tapered sides, broken off at the end and now socketed into a block-form bronze-veneered base.

Height 18 inches (45.7 cm)

Compare the larger marble torso carved in a very similar style, in the collection of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm, illustrated by Siren in a monograph entitled "Chinese Marble Sculptures of the Transition Period" published in the *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities*, Stockholm, 1940, no. 12, pl. VIIIa, and referred to in the text on p. 491. The "Transition Period" in the evolution of Chinese sculptural style is defined by Siren as a developmental period which "... coincided approximately with the reigns of the Northern Ch'i and Northern Chou as well as the Sui (c. 560–618), but its particular style did not find full expression until the beginning of the 570s, and its best and most significant creations were produced within little more than a decade, i.e. before 585".

Compare the larger Northern Qi period painted limestone torso of the Buddha shown standing in a similar pose with right hand missing but with the wrist turned up indicating the hand was probably in the *abhaya mudra*, and with the left hand lowered in *varada mudra*, wearing robes gathered into pleated fan-shaped folds over the left shoulder and similarly painted in a 'patchwork' pattern, unearthed at the site of Longxing temple in Qingzhou, Shandong province in 1996, illustrated in the catalogue of the special exhibition *Return of the Buddha: The Qingzhou Discoveries*, London, 2002, pp. 108–109, no. 15.

北齊末—隋 大理石彩繪菩薩立像 高 45.7 厘米



7. A WHITE MARBLE HEAD OF A BUDDHIST GUARDIAN (*DVĀRAPĀLA*)

Sui–Early Tang Dynasty, *circa* A.D. 600–650

carved fully in the round, the deified guardian warrior shown with a menacing expression, his mouth open as if to speak, baring his teeth, his large round eyes bulging under ridged brows knotted in a scowl, the hair pulled up into a topknot behind a small diadem, and the ears fully detailed, the surface of the fine white stone with flecks of mica throughout and smoothly polished overall, now mounted on a pedestal base veneered in patinated bronze.

Height 11½ inches (29.2 cm)

Compare the Tang dynasty stone head of a guardian from the Buddhist cave temples at Longmen in Henan province which was included in a 1995 special exhibition at the Osaka Municipal Museum of Art, illustrated in the catalogue, *Chinese Buddhist Stone Sculpture: Veneration of the Sublime*, Osaka, 1995, no. 59, p. 63, with full description on p. 141.

Compare also the Tang dynasty stone figure of a guardian from the von der Heydt collection now in the Museum Rietberg, Zurich, and illustrated by Schlombs et. al., in the catalogue of special exhibition *The Heart of Enlightenment: Buddhist Art in China 550–600*, Cologne, 2009, pp. 110–113, no. 21.

隋—唐初 漢白玉力士頭像 高 29.2 厘米



8. A GILT-BRONZE FIGURE OF THE BODHISATTVA GUANYIN

Tang Dynasty, A.D. 8th Century

modelled fully in the round, shown standing in *tribhanga* with the left leg slightly bent, wearing a long *dhoti* gathered around the waist and falling in graceful pleated folds over the legs, the bare torso draped in jewels, including one long beaded chain hanging down to the ankles, with left arm extended down at the side, holding a long-necked *amrita* bottle, the right arm holding a willow branch up to the shoulder, the face with serene features and downcast eyes, the hair pulled back and piled up in a high chignon behind a diadem centered with a figure of Amitabha Buddha on a cloud-form plaque surmounted by an emblem of the sun and crescent moon, with ribbons and knotted tresses trailing onto the shoulders and long fluttering scarves hanging loosely down and flaring out at either side of the bare feet set on a lotus-pod shaped pedestal base with beaded edge, the surface richly gilded and the gilding very well preserved, showing areas of bright malachite green and azurite blue patination from burial widely scattered over the surface.

Height 10 inches (25.5 cm)

Provenance American Private Collection

J. J. Lally & Co., *Two Thousand Years of Chinese Sculpture*, New York, 2008, no. 15

Compare the Tang dynasty gilt-bronze bodhisattva cast in a very similar style, holding the same attributes and wearing a similar diadem including the crescent moon and sun over a seated Amitabha Buddha in the center, illustrated by Matsubara in *Chūgoku Bukkyō chokokushi ron* (Historical Discussion of Chinese Buddhist Sculpture), Tokyo, 1995, Vol. III, nos. 699 and 700a-b.

Compare also the Tang gilt-bronze bodhisattva in the Shanghai Museum shown standing in a similar pose but without emblems in the diadem or attributes held in the hands, published in the catalogue entitled *Shanghai Museum Ancient Chinese Sculpture Gallery*, Shanghai, 1996, no. 60. Another similar Tang dynasty gilt bronze standing figure of Guanyin in the collection of the Harvard University Art Museums is illustrated by Howard et. al., *Chinese Sculpture*, New Haven, 2006, p. 312, fig. 3.118.

唐 鑲金銅觀音菩薩立像 高 25.5 厘米





9. A *SANCAI*-GLAZED POTTERY FIGURE OF A SADDLED HORSE

Tang Dynasty, A.D. 8th Century

shown standing in a vigorous pose with head lowered and turned, mouth open and nostrils flared, the powerful arched neck with long mane combed over the near side and covered with a cream-colored glaze, the parted forelock swept back to each side across the forehead, with one ear pricked and the other ear folded back, the body covered in a strong chestnut-brown glaze, showing streaks of cream-colored glaze on the head and chest, caparisoned with an elaborate bridle ornamented with florettes on the noseband and crisply moulded palmette pendants on the nose, forehead and cheeks, the saddle covered with an amber-glazed cloth gathered into pleated folds draped on either side over a cream-dappled green-glazed saddle blanket, the multi-colored strap across the chest decorated with five white tassels, the trappings on the flanks with six palmette pendants on either side hung from alternating long and short straps and splashed with bright green glaze, linked over the hind quarters by six straps radiating from a central roundel moulded with scroll motifs, above a short docked and bound tail covered with straw glaze, the hooves also picked out in pale straw-toned glaze, on a flat rectangular unglazed base, the pinkish-buff-colored pottery splashed with brown glaze running down from the legs.

Height 18½ inches (47 cm)

Provenance American Private Collection, Washington D.C.
Ellsworth & Goldie, Ltd., New York, 1962
William Morrison Collection
Alfred Salmony Collection (1890–1958), acquired in China

Exhibited Lyman Allyn Museum, New London, Connecticut

A very similarly modelled and decorated *sancai*-glazed horse of the same size is illustrated in *Mayuyama, Seventy Years*, Volume One, Tokyo, 1976, p. 77, no. 207.

Compare also the similarly modelled larger *sancai*-glazed figure of a saddled horse dressed in very similar trappings illustrated by Wu, *Earth Transformed: Chinese Ceramics in the Museum of Fine Arts Boston*, Boston, 2001, pp. 40–41, from the John Gardner Coolidge Collection.

唐 三彩陶馬 高 47 厘米



10. A *SANCAI*- AND BLUE-GLAZED POTTERY FIGURE OF A COURTESAN
Tang Dynasty (A.D. 618–907)

shown standing with her hands clasped beneath the pleated folds of her dappled chestnut- and green-glazed shawl draped over her shoulders and hanging down the front of her long robes covered with blue, green, chestnut and cream colored glazes splashed freely on the front and back and falling in vertical stripes to the base, with the upturned toes of her shoes protruding at the hem of her skirt, her softly rounded face with delicately modelled features accentuated with red and black pigment over white slip on the unglazed clay, her hair drawn up and gathered in an elaborate double topknot, showing remains of original black pigment, with traces of encrusted earth from burial.

Height 15 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches (38.5 cm)

Provenance J. J. Lally & Co., *Chinese Archaic Bronzes, Sculpture and Works of Art*, New York, 1992, no. 20

Several similarly modelled Tang *sancai*-glazed figures of court ladies are known in museum collections, but examples decorated with blue glaze, which was the most highly prized glaze color in the Tang period, are rare. A similar Tang dynasty tomb figure of a courtesan from the Arthur M. Sackler Collections was included in *The Arts of Ancient China* exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and illustrated in the *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, No. 2, New York, 1973/1974, fig. 66.

Compare also the similar Tang dynasty pottery figure of a courtesan shown standing in the same pose with hands clasped beneath her long shawl, her hair swept up onto a wing-shaped coif, in the Musée Guimet, from the Collection of Michel Calmann, illustrated by Desroches in *Chine: des chevaux et des hommes*, Paris, 1995, pp. 158–159, no. 61.

唐 三彩女陶俑 高 38.5 厘米



11. A PAIR OF GRAY POTTERY SCHOLAR-OFFICIALS

Song Dynasty (A.D. 960–1279)

shown standing with heads turned as if engaged in serious debate, their faces expressively modelled and well detailed, one with eyes set in a concentrated, thoughtful gaze, wearing a simple robe with close-fitting sleeves and a knotted cloth belt, with his right arm raised as if to emphasize an important statement, the hand lost in antiquity, his headdress gathered to a crease at the front and rising up to a high rim at the back, the other with furrowed brow and a finely incised moustache, shown wearing more elaborate layered robes with deep sleeves and a court belt applied with square plaques visible across his back, his headdress of plain high domed form, standing quietly with his hands folded at his waist, each figure resting on a plain flat circular base with the toes of the shoes emerging beneath the hem of the robes, the hard gray pottery showing rust-red earth lightly encrusted on the surface, particularly on the back, the style and materials characteristic of Sichuan province.

Height each 11½ inches (29.2 cm)

Provenance American Private Collection

J. J. Lally & Co., *Ancient Chinese Tomb Sculpture*, New York, 2004, no. 12

Song dynasty tomb sculpture is quite rare. Tombs and tomb furnishings in the Song dynasty were far less elaborate than in the typical Han or Tang burial, and the use of pottery tomb sculpture was abandoned or greatly curtailed throughout China during the Song dynasty.

Compare the similarly modelled partially glazed red pottery figures of scholar-officials discovered in the Eastern outskirts of Chengdu, Sichuan province in the Northern Song dynasty tomb of Zhang Que and his wife, with an epitaph dated to A.D. 1093, illustrated in *Wenwu*, 1990, No. 3, pl. 1, figs. 4–6, with line drawings on p. 4, fig. 4, nos. 1–4.

宋 灰陶文侍俑一對 高 29.2 厘米



12. A PAINTED AND GILDED STONE FIGURE OF A LUOHAN

Song–Yuan Dynasty, A.D. 12th–14th Century

carved fully in the round, the youthful monk seated with hands clasped beneath his raised right knee and slender body slightly turned, his fine features deftly carved in an intense introspective expression, his trance-like gaze heightened by round protruding eyes and slightly parted lips, his head clean-shaven, his prominent brow with a small raised knob at the center, the face covered with pale traces of pinkish-tan pigments and with black paint over ochre pigment on the head, wearing monastic robes with deep sleeves painted with dark crimson lacquer showing through a layer of gilding, the wide borders painted in cinnabar red and white, the lapels and under-ropes showing traces of bright green pigment, the back of the figure finished flush with the back edge of the narrow slab-form seat, with a stepped base and rectangular platform projecting at the front, supporting the lowered left foot, the underside roughly finished and left unpainted revealing the fine-grained red sandstone.

Height 9¾ inches (24.8 cm)

Luohan are deified monks, followers of the Buddha, who have postponed their elevation to nirvana and chosen to remain in the world to defend the Buddha's Doctrine. Luohan are usually depicted in groups of sixteen or eighteen or, occasionally as many as five hundred.

A large set of wood Luohan sculptures dated to the Northern Song period preserved at Nanhua Temple in Shaoguan city, Guangdong province, illustrated in *Nanhuasi* (Nanhua Temple), Beijing, 1990, includes two luohan very closely comparable to the present example, *ibid.*, pls. 99 and 101.

宋 貼金彩繪石羅漢坐像 高 24.8 厘米



13. A LONGQUAN CELADON GLAZED STONEWARE FIGURE OF BUDAI

Late Ming Dynasty, A.D. 16th Century

the jolly corpulent deity shown seated at his ease on a straw mat, wearing loose monastic robes falling open at the front to reveal his bulging belly, his face well modelled with a wide grin framed by laughter lines on his chubby cheeks, and with a benevolent expression in his eyes, his right hand resting on his raised knee, holding a rosary and grasping the neck of his sack in his left hand, with impressed florettes around the hems of his robes, covered all over with a glossy translucent glaze of attractive bluish-green color thinning to beige over the raised areas, with the marks of the sculptor's fingers remaining on the underside, the unglazed stoneware at the edge of the base burnt reddish-brown in the firing, fitted wood stand.

Height 5½ inches (14 cm)

Width 5¾ inches (14.5 cm)

Provenance American Private Collection

Ex Sotheby's Hong Kong, 28 November 1979, Lot 66

晚明 龍泉窰布袋和尚 高 14 厘米 寬 14.5 厘米



14. A SINO-TIBETAN PAINTED WOOD FIGURE OF A BODHISATTVA
Qianlong Period (A.D. 1736–1795)

the deity shown seated in the regal posture of *lalitsana*, with compassionate expression and lowered gaze, the right hand in *vitarkamudra* and the left in *dhyanamudra*, wearing a long *dhoti* tied at the waist and falling in loose folds over the legs, a long, trailing scarf draped low across the shoulders and entwined around the arms, and an antelope skin over the left shoulder, the bare torso adorned with long gilded necklaces and a large pectoral pendant set with red and green painted cabochons, with bracelets at the wrists and armlets above the elbows, and with beaded chains across the lap and around the feet, the black hair gathered in a high double-knot behind a five-pointed gilded crown tied with red ribbons, with knotted tresses falling over the shoulders, and with large loop earrings on the pendulous lobes of the ears, the face and body painted white, with features painted in black and red, the skirts and scarf painted in red, green and gold with engraved and gilded decoration including lotus scroll, diaper patterns, cloud motifs and key fret.

Height 25 inches (63.5 cm)

Provenance From the Collection of Garrison Elwood Moyer (1913–2009), Menlo Park, CA,
acquired by him in the 1940s

清乾隆 彩繪木觀音菩薩坐像 高 63.5 厘米



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