

Bonhams



Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art

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82^Y

**A RARE SMALL RHINOCEROS HORN DOCUMENTARY
'VISHNU' BOWL**

Nepal, dated by inscription to 1678 and of the period
Carved in *yni* form and raised above a short flat base, the rounded
edge of the interior carved with a small figure of the deity Vishnu above
a lotus-petal pedestal, surrounded by a mandorla, the exterior carved
with a Nepalese inscription, the horn of dark-brown tone.
7.3cm (2 7/8in) long.

**HK\$250,000 - 350,000
US\$32,000 - 45,000**

尼泊爾 一六七八年銘 犀角毗濕奴像小杯

The present bowl bears a rare documentary inscription which reads
as follows:

*Lalitapaṭṭanādhipati śrī śrīnivāsa malla śrī śrī jogalyanda
Malla / śreyostu samvat 798 //X//*

Which may translated as:

*'During the auspicious year of 798 (CE 1678), Śrīnivāsa Malla, the king
of Patan (Lalitapaṭṭana) and (his son) Jogalyanda Malla (commissioned
this object).'*

Translation by G.V.Vajracharya, October 2018.

Compare with a related Nepalese rhinoceros horn bowl, illustrated by
J.Chapman, *The Art of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China*, London,
1999, p.274, figs.395-396.

此杯體量輕小，平口上陰刻兩道弦紋，內壁一側浮雕毗濕奴像，外壁
刻銘文兩周，銘文大義為「798年（公元1678年）吉日，帕坦國王斯
里尼瓦薩·馬拉和（兒子）約格蘭達·馬拉（委託製作此物）」一轉譯
自G.V Vajracharya之英文翻譯，2018年10月。

可參考一件類似尼泊爾犀角雕盃，見 J.Chapman 著，《The Art of
Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China》，倫敦，1999年，頁274，圖395
至396。

(two views)

A RARE AND LARGE RHINOCEROS HORN 'VAISHNAVA' BOWL

Nepal, 17th/18th century

Of *yoni* form raised on a short shallow foot and plain flat base, finely carved in relief to the rounded end of the interior with Vishnu adorned in body ornaments and crown framed by a mandorla, flanked by another pair of deities on lotus pedestals all above a lotus blossom in the centre issuing stems with two further deities flanking a conch shell, the exterior with a row of cartouches enclosing Hindu deities, the horn of a reddish-brown tone.

15.6cm (6 1/8in) long.

HK\$350,000 - 450,000**US\$45,000 - 57,000**

尼泊爾 十七/十八世 犀角雕毗濕奴像杯

Vishnu, the 'All Pervader' personifying solar energy and described as encompassing the whole universe in three strides, is one of the most important Hindu deities, along with Shiva and Brahma. He sustains the universe and occasionally descends to earth assuming various forms to redress the balance between good and evil, thus he is also known as the Preserver. In time, Vishnu came to represent the traditional order of society, ever mindful of maintaining orthodox standards of behaviour, standing for law and order. Therefore, the kings of Nepal, where this bowl was made, were traditionally considered to be incarnations of Vishnu.

Vishnu's usual attributes can be seen on the present lot, including the conch shell (*shanka*), symbol of the five existential elements and the lotus (*padma*) symbol of the powers of illusion from which the universe originates and the impulse towards liberation. Beside Vishnu are probably Shridevi and Bhudevi, representing wealth and earth respectively.

See a similar Nepalese rhinoceros horn bowl, illustrated by J.Chapman, *The Art of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China*, London, 1999, p.273, figs.393-394, which is offered in this catalogue **Lot 84**. Compare with a related but slightly larger rhinoceros horn 'Vaishnava' bowl, Nepal, 17th/18th century, which was sold at Bonhams Hong Kong, 29 May 2018, lot 61.

杯尖唇，兩側雕幾何形花紋，內壁雕毗濕奴像及無邊之蛇，外壁浮雕毗濕奴十大化身。毗濕奴為印度教神系中的主神之一，左上手握寶輪，左下手握法螺，右上手執仙杖，右手手執蓮莖。無邊大蛇又名阿南塔，多頭，毗濕奴枕於其身，乃印度教對「終極實在」理解的形象體現。杯心雕蓮花一朵，內嵌點狀黃色金屬。據印度教經典，毗濕奴肚臍生出蓮花一朵，蓮花綻開而生多頭梵天，梵天而生世界。參考一件類似的尼泊爾犀角碗，見 J.Chapman 著，《The Art of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China》，倫敦，1999年，頁273，圖393至394，即本場拍賣之拍品84號。另可參考一件略大之十七/十八世紀尼泊爾毗濕奴犀角雕碗，2018年5月29日售於香港邦瀚斯，拍品61。



(two views)

84^Y

A RARE AND LARGE RHINOCEROS HORN 'VAISHNAVA' BOWL

Nepal, 17th/18th century

Of *yonis* form raised on a short shallow foot with plain flat base, finely carved in relief to the rounded end of the interior with Vishnu wearing crowns and framed by a mandorla, his left hand holding a club aloft with his right hand raised in reassurance, the exterior with a continuous row of cartouches each of which represent incarnations of Vishnu, the horn of a chocolate tone. 17.2cm (6 3/4in) long.

**HK\$200,000 - 300,000
US\$26,000 - 38,000**

尼泊爾 十七/十八世紀 犀角雕毗濕奴像杯

Provenance:

An important European private collection of rhinoceros horn carvings, and thence by descent

來源：

重要歐洲私人收藏犀角雕刻，並由後人保存迄今

Published and Illustrated:

J.Chapman, *The Art of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China*, London, 1999, pp.248 and 273, figs.393-394

出版及著錄：

J.Chapman著，《The Art of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China》，倫敦，1999年，頁248及273，圖393至394



(two views)

J.Chapman notes with regard to the present lot that 'Whilst most of the figure carving in this group of bowls is extremely crude the carving of the decoration of the bowl shown is of a much higher standard than usual.'; see *Ibid.*,p.272.

The crispness and clarity of the carving around the exterior enables us to identify the different incarnations of Vishnu in order to restore universal harmony, including: a fish, a tortoise, a boar, a man-lion, a dwarf, Rama with an axe, Rama the hero of the Ramayana, Krishna's brother Balarama, the Buddha and Kalkin, who appears in a horse-headed form.

Almost all the recorded rhinoceros horn vessels from Nepal are dedicated to Vishnu, since Nepalese kings were traditionally considered to be incarnations of Vishnu. According to the sacred Vaishnava text, *Vishnu Purana*, a rhinoceros horn libation vessel can consume all sin. The *yonis* form represents the female generative organ, believed to be the seat of *tejas*, spiritual power and ardour. It is also worshipped as a symbol of fertility. Thus, this rare bowl would have been highly venerated for its symbolic powers as a ritual vessel. Compare with a similar rhinoceros horn 'Vaishnava' bowl, Nepal, 17th/18th century, which was sold at Bonhams Hong Kong, 29 May 2018, lot 61.

杯尖唇，口沿下內側飾幾何紋兩層，杯壁一側雕毗濕奴像，四手各持發輪，有寶輪、法螺、仙杖及蓮莖，騎在神鳥迦樓羅上，肚臍生出一枝蓮花，穿杯壁內堂。杯外壁浮雕毗濕奴十大化身，分別是摩蹉（魚），俱利摩（龜），筏羅訶（野豬），那羅希摩（人獅），筏摩那（侏儒），持斧羅摩，羅摩，黑天，釋迦牟尼佛，迦爾吉（白馬）。J.Chapman認為《The Art of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China》所著錄的一組尼泊爾犀角雕毗濕奴像碗雕工頗粗，惟此件雕刻精緻。香港邦瀚斯售出一件尼泊爾十七/十八世紀犀角雕毗濕奴像碗可作參考，2018年5月29日，拍品61。

85^Y

A RARE AND LARGE HUANGHUALI 'MAGNOLIA' SCROLL POT

17th/18th century

The large naturalistic vessel deftly carved with tall curved walls carved as overlapping magnolia petals, the exterior superbly carved in relief with gnarled branches issuing buds and blossoming magnolia flowers, the material of warm dark-honey tone.
20cm (7 7/8in) high.

HK\$200,000 - 300,000

US\$26,000 - 38,000

十七/十八世紀 黃花梨雕玉蘭花葵口筆筒

Compare with a similar but smaller *zitan* brushpot, late Ming dynasty and with a signature of Wen Fu, illustrated in *The Complete Collection of Treasures of the Palace Museum: Bamboo, Wood, Ivory and Rhinoceros Horn Carvings*, Hong Kong, 2002, no.23. See a related brushpot, Qing dynasty, which was sold at Bonhams London, 16 May 2013, lot 378. Compare also with a related large *huanghuali* brushpot, 17th century, which was sold at Christie's Hong Kong, 3 June 2015, lot 2946.

北京故宮博物院藏一件明晚代紫檀木雕花卉圖筆筒可資比較，其造型較小但雕刻風格相似，刻「文父」款，見《故宮博物院藏文物珍品全集：竹木牙角雕刻》，香港，2002年，編號23。另參考倫敦邦瀚斯售出一例，2013年5月16日，拍品378；也見香港佳士得售出一件十七世紀黃花梨筆筒，2015年6月3日，拍品2946。



THE PROPERTY OF A LADY 女士藏品

87^Y

**AN EXCEPTIONALLY RARE AND VERY LARGE RHINOCEROS
HORN 'THREE-DRAGONS AND GRAPEVINE' WINE
RECEPTACLE**

17th/18th century

Boldly carved as a very large cup-shaped vine leaf emanating from thick twisting branches issuing further vines, tendrils and clusters of luscious juicy grapes skillfully carved in high relief, interspersed with three powerfully writhing dragons, each with incised manes, flaring nostrils and bulging eyes, the horn of dark-chocolate tone.

19cm (7 1/2in) long.

HK\$1,200,000 - 1,500,000

US\$150,000 - 190,000

十七/十八世紀 犀角雕三龍葡萄杯

Provenance:

An important European private collection of rhinoceros horn carvings, and thence by descent

Published and Illustrated:

J.Chapman, *The Art of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China*, London, 1999, pp.62 and 91, figs.32 and 72

來源：

重要歐洲私人收藏犀角雕刻，並由後人保存迄今

出版及著錄：

J.Chapman著，《The Art of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China》，倫敦，1999年，頁62及91，圖32及72



The present rhinoceros horn wine receptacle is exceptionally rare and is one of the largest of its type; in the words of Jan Chapman it is ‘... the largest bowl I have yet seen. It is almost certainly a wine container - the clue lying in the luscious grapes which decorate the exterior.’; see J.Chapman, *The Art of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China*, London, 1999, p.91. This remarkable vessel is noteworthy for the bold high-relief carving of the juicy grapes, large vine leaves and three ferocious dragons.

Grapes, introduced to China from Central Asia, became popular as a decorative motif in Chinese works of art during the Tang dynasty, as can be seen in bronze mirrors, due to trade and cultural outreach at the time. It re-appeared again in the Yuan dynasty, most likely for similar reasons and continued into the early Ming period, as can be attested by the decoration on blue and white porcelain. By the late Ming period, grapes had proliferated enough for even the poor scholar Xu Wei 徐渭 (1521-1593) to write and paint them on China's south-east coast. In his poem inscribed on a painting of grapes, Xu wrote: ‘*Pearls from my pen find no buyer*’ 筆低明珠無處賣, making it clear that grapes likened to treasured pearls, could be used as a metaphor for talent (appreciated or not). The second half of the 17th century saw greater proliferation of this motif, though shown with squirrels and not dragons, as can be seen in porcelain vessels.

The imagery between dragons and pearl-like grapes and the wine they produced was established earlier however, by the Tang poet Li He 李賀 (790-816) in his well known poem, ‘*Bring in the Wine!*’ (將進酒):

琉璃鐘，琥珀濃，小槽酒滴真珠紅。
烹龍炮鳳玉脂泣，羅幃繡幕圍香風。

*‘Glazed goblet filled with thick amber liquid, little drops of wine truly like red pearls.
Dragons brewing and phoenix boiling tears of lard-like jade, the fragrance encircling the embroidered silk gauze curtain’.*

The poem likens the act of heating red-grape wine as to dragons and phoenixes brewing a fragrant elixir. This imagery may have inspired the master carver of the present rhinoceros horn cup as well as those drinking from it.

Rhinoceros horn cups decorated with dragons and grapes are very rare; see, however, a related rhinoceros horn cup carved with grapes, illustrated by T.Fok, *Connoisseurship of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China*, Hong Kong, 1999, p.158, no.107.

杯身浮雕三龍盤互杯沿，身攀杯壁，足底鏤空，雕折枝葡萄紋。此杯體量巨大，所費不貲，刀法凌峻，打磨圓潤，身染玄黑，其色如墨。

此杯身形之鉅，《The Art of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China (中國犀角雕刻藝術)》作者Jan Chapman曾嘆之：「此杯為我經眼最大者，其身滿雕之碩大葡萄，故為酒器無疑。」見其書，倫敦，1999年，頁91。

葡萄傳自中亞，碩果累累，枝藤連綿之態寓意子孫興旺。唐代開始，工藝品常飾此紋樣，如銅鏡上流行之海獸葡萄紋。元代以來葡萄紋更加流行，青花大碟及漆器等工藝品多飾以纏枝或折枝葡萄紋。明代葡萄則有了更多寓意，如徐渭曾在他的葡萄畫作上題：「筆低明珠無處賣」，此處以葡萄比明珠，有懷才不遇之嘆。龍紋在酒杯上的裝飾自古多見，詩人亦多吟詠，如李賀《將進酒》有「琉璃鐘，琥珀濃，小槽酒滴真珠紅。烹龍炮鳳玉脂泣，羅幃繡幕圍香風」之句。而同時裝飾有龍紋和葡萄紋的犀角杯則十分罕見，惟有一件十七世紀的犀角雕葡萄多子杯且作參考，見霍滿棠著，《中國犀角雕刻珍賞》，香港，1999年，頁158，編號107。



88^Y

A MASSIVE RHINOCEROS HORN GOBLET

Probably German, 18th century

The imposing vessel of slightly tapering cylindrical form, finely turned with three 'bow-string' bands around the exterior, above a wide band, the lower section with a raised spreading foot, the horn of pale golden-honey tone.

18cm (7in) high.

HK\$800,000 - 1,200,000

US\$100,000 - 150,000

十八世紀 或為德國製 犀角素身弦紋杯

Provenance:

An important European private collection of rhinoceros horn carvings, and thence by descent

Published and Illustrated:

J.Chapman, *The Art of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China*, London, 1999, p.271, fig.392

來源：

重要歐洲私人犀角雕刻收藏，並由後人保存迄今

出版及著錄：

J.Chapman著，《The Art of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China》，倫敦，1999年，頁271，圖392

The present lot encapsulates the exchange of ideas and knowledge, particularly in medicine, between China and Europe. It was made in Europe, probably in Germany, to be used as a mortar for grinding of herbs and medicinal compounds. It was perhaps influenced by Chinese beliefs and practices concerning the rumored medicinal use of rhinoceros horn that was seen by European merchants trading in China who witnessed the use of rhinoceros horn powder as a treatment for fever. Indeed, a rhinoceros even forms part of the coat-of-arms of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries of London. From this, one can infer that rhinoceros horn was perceived in Europe as possessing special medicinal and anti-toxic properties. Further reinforcing the perceived link in Europe between medicine and rhinoceros horn, is a rhinoceros horn mortar made in Europe, carved with the name of the ancient physician Hippocrates in Greek letters and two snakes, illustrated by J.Chapman, *The Art of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China*, London, 1999, p.271, fig.391.

杯厚唇，腹緩收，足內束，平底實心。外壁刻弦紋五匝，足壁起弦紋兩道。體量厚重，用料大方，呈色天然。犀角的藥用價值自古傳乎其神，早至梁代陶弘景《名醫別錄》便記載：「（生犀角能）治傷寒、溫病、頭痛、高熱、驚厥抽筋。」中醫對犀角的運用或許通過商旅傳至歐洲，此件犀角杯有德國十八世紀的風格，或即當時德人受此影響所為，作為承藥容器。頗為有趣的是，倫敦藥劑師學會的徽章便有犀牛圖樣，亦是受此影響或未可知。一件犀角白或許更能說明犀角的藥用價值，此白身上鑄有古希臘名醫希波克拉底名字及代表醫學的雙蛇紋，見J.Chapman著，《The Art of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China》，倫敦，1999年，頁271，圖版391。



91 Y

**A RARE SMALL RHINOCEROS HORN 'ZHANG QIAN IN A RAFT'
POURING VESSEL**

17th/18th century

Naturalistically carved as a long hollowed log raft tapering at the prow into a spout, elaborately carved in high relief at the centre of the raft with the figure Zhang Qian seated amidst dense branches of flowers and lotus, the figure holding a fly-whisk in his left hand, all above undulating waves carved in low relief on the underside, the horn of an attractive dark honey tone.

13cm (5 1/8in) long.

HK\$300,000 - 500,000

US\$38,000 - 64,000

十七/十八世紀 犀角雕張騫乘槎水注

The present lot exhibits masterful craftsmanship in the all-round naturalistic execution of the gnarled raft, beautifully capturing the wizened figure of the Han dynasty Imperial envoy and official, Zhang Qian, and displaying whimsical creativity in the depiction of the lotus issuing from the branches. The tip is pierced into a spout, which suggests that the present lot would have been used as a water dropper. Together with the elaborate reticulated carvings of the branches, it would have required scrupulous attention to detail; for a discussion of these raft vessels, see J.Chapman, *The Art of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China*, London, 1999, pp.77-80.

The present lot depicts the story of the Han dynasty statesman, traveller and explorer Zhang Qian, floating up the River of Heaven in a log boat to explore the Western Regions (*Xiyu* 西域). The historical Zhang Qian did in fact play an integral role in establishing an east-west route opening China to the world of commercial trade and major trade routes such as the renowned Silk Road.

This 'Zhang Qian on a raft' pouring vessel belongs to a small group of rhinoceros horn carvings, which are similar in the general form of a hollowed log but with variations in the appearance of the raft and depictions of Zhang Qian who variously holds a book, a *ruyi* sceptre, a lotus and a fly-whisk. Examples of these Zhang Qian raft vessels are held in important museums and private collections including: one in

the National Palace Museum, Taipei, included in the exhibition *Jiangxin yu xiangong: Ming Qing diaoke zhan (Uncanny Ingenuity and Celestial Feats: The Carvings of Ming and Qing Dynasties)*, Taipei, 2011, no.30; three in the Qing Court Collection, illustrated in *The Complete Collection of Treasures of the Palace Museum: Bamboo, Wood, Ivory and Rhinoceros Horn Carvings*, Hong Kong, 2002, nos.118-120; four in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, with one illustrated by J.Chapman, *Ibid.*, pl.47; one in the Shanghai Museum and another in the collection of Harvard University Art Museum, illustrated by T.Fok in *Connoisseurship of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China*, Hong Kong, 1999, nos.70 and 71; and two others in private collections, illustrated by T.Fok, *Ibid.*, nos.73 and 74.

This very special group of rhinoceros horn carvings may have been inspired by the well-known silver example formerly in the collection of Lady David, inscribed with a poem and artist's seal Bishan denoting Zhu Bishan, a silversmith active during the 14th century, illustrated in *Chinese Art Under the Mongols: The Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368)*, Cleveland Museum of Art, 1968, no.37.

See a related larger rhinoceros horn log-raft with a carving of Zhang Qian, 17th/18th century, which was sold at Bonhams Hong Kong, 28 November 2017, lot 51.

此器以張騫為題材，手執拂塵，倚坐於木槎之上，配以朽木枯枝，精雕細琢，線條圓潤，頗為別緻。器身前端置孔，作水注之用，而有關於此類槎形犀角雕刻的討論，請參閱J.Chapman著，《中國犀角雕刻藝術》，倫敦，1999年，頁77-80。

據史書所載，張騫奉武帝之命，出使西域，遊說大宛、大月氏等西域小國聯合對付漠北匈奴的威脅。張騫出使西域，打通天山南北二路，後世商賈皆以此道交通聯絡，並加速東西經濟及文化交流，成就後世所知的「絲綢之路」，貢獻良多。民間以張騫的史蹟加以渲染，穿鑿附會，傳說張騫為尋訪河源，乘槎逆流上天河，遇見牛郎織女，並帶回支機石。

此類以張騫乘槎的器皿為數不多，而雕琢風格相似，內部皆掏空，但各執經卷、如意、蓮花或拂塵。相似例子可見於世界各大博物館收藏，其中一例由台北國立故宮博物院所藏，曾於「匠心與仙工：明清雕刻展」展出，並著錄於該展特展圖錄《象牙犀角篇》，台北，2011年，編號30。清宮舊藏亦有三例，載於《故宮博物院藏文物珍品全

集：竹木牙角雕刻》，香港，2002年，編號118-120。另外四例則藏於愛爾蘭都柏林查士特圖書館，其中一件著錄於J.Chapman著，《中國犀角雕刻藝術》，倫敦，1999年，圖47；上海博物館及美國哈佛大學藝術博物館各藏一例，詳見霍滿棠著，《中國犀角雕刻珍賞》，香港，1999年，編號70及71；以及匿名私人收藏二例，見前書，編號73及74。

此類人物乘槎的犀角器皿頗有可能受同類造型的銀器而啟發。其中一例為大維德爵士夫人舊藏，此器同樣作張騫乘槎之態，底部刻有詩文以及「碧山」款，應為十四世紀活躍於嘉興地區的銀匠朱碧山所作，載於《Chinese Art Under the Mongols: The Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368)》，克里夫蘭藝術博物館，1968年，編號37。

香港邦瀚斯曾於2017年11月28日拍賣相關一件十七/十八世紀犀角雕張騫乘槎水注，拍品51號。此器尺寸較大，但形制相似，可資比對。



92^Y

A RHINOCEROS HORN 'SCHOLAR AND PINE' LIBATION CUP

17th/18th century

Deftly carved around the exterior with a continuous landscape scene of a scholar and young attendant by a rocky bank beside a river with finely incised currents atop which drifts a boat with two oarsmen emerging from under a cliff formed as the handle, beside which another tall and gnarled pine tree carved in high relief rises and branches into the interior, beside further *wutong* trees and a pavilion, the horn of amber-honey tone.

15.1cm (5 8/9in) long.

HK\$300,000 - 500,000

US\$38,000 - 64,000

十七/十八世紀 犀角雕松舟人物杯

Provenance:

An English private collection

來源：

英國私人收藏

The exterior of the present lot carved with figures among ancient pines and streams winding around jagged rocks is painterly and imbued with a poetic elegance fully embodying the romantic temperament of the literati, invoking the idyllic nature retreat one would aspire to retire to. Indeed, the imagery of scholars leisurely walking in a mountainous landscape amidst pine and *wutong* forests parted by flowing streams was inspired by literati paintings. These, though seemingly depicting tranquil naturalistic scenery, were in fact at times a metaphor and a result of a reaction to a social and political present.

Images of the private retreat proliferated among the scholar-officials from the early Song dynasty, when visions of the natural hierarchy became metaphors for the well-regulated state. The scholars extolled the virtues of self-cultivation often in response to political setbacks and asserted their identity as literati through poetry, calligraphy, and painting. The images of old trees, bamboo, rocks, and retirement retreats created by these scholar-artists became emblems of their character and spirit. Pine trees, for example, remaining green even during the winter, came to represent the sturdy and morally upright scholar.

Under the (Mongol) Yuan dynasty, when many educated Chinese were barred from government service, the model of the Song literati retreat evolved into an alternative culture as this disenfranchised elite transformed their estates into sites for literary gatherings and other cultural pursuits. These gatherings were frequently commemorated in paintings that, rather than presenting a realistic depiction of an actual place, conveyed the shared cultural ideals of a reclusive world through a symbolic shorthand in which an abode might be represented by a humble thatched hut.

Similarly, during the transition between the Ming and Qing dynasties and afterwards under the rule of the Manchu, visions reflecting the idealised images of reclusion regained their political potency and symbolism, when many Ming loyalists lived in self-enforced retirement.

The ingenious design of the carver is exhibited by the stream flowing beneath the cliff formed as a handle creating a sense of meandering depth. Compare with a related rhinoceros horn cup with pine trees and stream, 17th century, illustrated by T.Fok, *Connoisseurship of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China*, Hong Kong, 1999, p.188, no.135; a rhinoceros horn with related motif, 17th century, is also illustrated in *Ibid.*, p.201, no.145. It is also interesting to note the unusual form depicting the flow of water, different from the more typical 'scale'-like diaper ground. For similar depiction of streams see *Ibid.*, nos.160 and 168.

杯敞口，圈足，雕山石一具、松一株，由杯口盤互至杯底成鑿。外壁雕山石碼頭，上立一文士及童子，其下淺刻水波紋，水波之上淺浮雕艄公二人擊水行舟。水紋另一側岸上雕茅亭、山石樹木，畫面舒朗，有元人筆意。此件犀角杯取材亞洲犀，質地細密，滿佈黑色魚子紋，色如蜜糖，沉靜溫潤，刀法快意流暢，細節不失嚴謹，佈局張弛有度，畫面動靜有致，乃明季以來山水杯佳作。

元代漢人文士上升渠道狹窄，很多人不得不委身匠籍，參與工藝創作，自此書畫等精英文化逐漸融合到市井用作，如瓷器、漆器的紋樣種類更加豐富，文人畫意濃厚。至明代中晚期，文人則直接和匠人合作，作品更見文氣。此風清代更熾，竹刻大家、犀雕名手皆以文人書畫為本。

參考一件十七世紀犀角雕松崖溪流杯，題材、佈局和本品頗似，見霍滿棠著，《中國犀角雕刻珍賞》，香港，1999年，頁188，編號135；另一件十七世紀犀角雕山水人物杯，山崖、水波、茅廬及扁舟可資比較，見前書，頁201，編號145。





THE PROPERTY OF A LADY 女士藏品

93^Y

**A RARE AND LARGE RHINOCEROS HORN ARCHAISTIC
'SIXTEEN-DRAGON' LIBATION CUP**

18th century

Expertly carved in high relief around the body formed as an archaic *gu* vase with fifteen writhing *chilong* of various sizes with curling bifurcated tails and arched backs, seven forming the handle, the adult with finely incised hair biting the rim and peering onto the high-relief and three-dimensional dragon carved in the well chasing a flaming pearl, the exterior with notched flanges dividing stiff plantain-leaf lappets enclosing further stylised dragons, the horn of dark chocolate-brown tone.
15cm (5 8/9in) high.

HK\$250,000 - 350,000
US\$32,000 - 45,000

十八世紀 犀角雕螭龍仿古蕉葉紋觚形杯

Provenance:

An important European private collection of rhinoceros horn carvings, and thence by descent

Published and Illustrated:

J.Chapman, *The Art of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China*, London, 1999, p.156, fig.191

來源：

重要歐洲犀角雕收藏，並由後人收藏迄今

出版及著錄：

J.Chapman著，《The Art of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China》，倫敦，1999年，頁156，圖191

The present cup is an imaginative tour-de-force, exhibiting masterful carving, with the sinuous *chilong* clambering atop the cup, carved in high relief in striking contrast to the archaic low relief carving on the exterior. This prized possession would have delighted the person admiring the cup with a further unexpected pleasure in the form of the remarkable high relief carved dragon writhing in the well of the cup, requiring masterful skill to accomplish this astonishing feat of carving.

The motif of adult and young *chi*-dragons seems to have been favoured by the Qianlong emperor and has been interpreted as conveying the message of the father teaching his son the way of life, and within the Imperial family, that of the emperor giving lessons to the prince. Such motifs can also be found on jade carvings and Imperial porcelain of the 18th century. The archaic form and design of the present lot, inspired by archaic *gu* vessels of the Shang dynasty, also relates to the Qianlong emperor's instruction to craftsmen to take inspiration from antiques in order to reinstate the intrinsic qualities of simplicity, sincerity and happy exuberance of the ancient cultures. See a related archaic 'dragons' libation cup, signed Hu Yunzhong, mid-Qing dynasty, illustrated in *The Complete Collection of Treasures of the Palace Museum: Bamboo, Wood, Ivory and Rhinoceros Horn Carvings*, Hong Kong, 2002, p.255, no.204. Compare also with a related rhinoceros horn cup, signed Hu Xingyue, 17th/18th century, which was sold at Bonhams Hong Kong, 3 December 2015, lot 11.

杯侈口，下收內束，至腰部凸起一層，圈足微撇，整體呈觚形。杯身滿雕十五隻螭龍，浮雕、圓雕、鏤空之法並用。最大一隻成年螭龍匍匐於杯口一側，鬃毛後散，絲絲如縷，刻畫尤精，其下纏鬥六隻幼螭恰作杯蓋，螭龍首尾顧盼，爭纏鬥繞，動態十足。杯身攀附八隻幼螭，各不相同。杯內浮雕一隻四爪昇龍，身形矯健，四足上攀。杯身上下飾仿古蕉葉紋，以雷紋填地，四面及四棱出齒棱。犀角深染，或仿古銅皮色。

成年螭龍和幼年螭龍的組合或源自「蒼龍教子」的題材，明代以來廣見，清代乾隆帝獨好之，同一時期的玉器作品亦常見類似題材。杯身仿自商周青銅器觚，紋飾饒有古意。參考一件北京故宮藏清中期胡允中款犀角雕螭紋觚形杯，見《故宮博物院藏文物珍品全集—竹木牙角雕刻》，香港，2002年，頁255，編號204。另可比較一件十七/十八世紀犀角雕胡星岳款仿古螭龍紋杯，售於香港邦瀚斯，2015年，拍品11。



(two views)



**PROPERTY FROM AN IMPORTANT EUROPEAN
PRIVATE COLLECTION**

重要歐洲私人收藏

94^Y

**AN EXCEPTIONALLY RARE AND LARGE RHINOCEROS HORN
ARCHAISTIC LIBATION CUP**

Signed Rui Zhi, 17th/18th century

Boldly carved in the form of an archaic *gong* vessel, decorated in low relief around the exterior with a central band of *taotie* masks reserved on a *leiwen* ground, in between narrower bands of stylised dragons, all divided by seven rows of flanges with diaper-patterns, five writhing *chilong* clambering up the broad S-shaped handle, confronting a further three dynamic *chilong* in the interior carved in high relief, the interior of the recessed foot carved with two square seals in *zhuan* script, the horn of a lustrous dark caramel-brown tone.

16.5cm (6 1/2in) long.

HK\$700,000 - 1,000,000

US\$89,000 - 130,000

十七/十八世紀 犀角雕螭龍仿古饗饗紋觥形杯
「永竹居」、「瑞止」款

Provenance:

A distinguished European private collection, on loan to the Oriental Museum, Durham, from the mid-1970s to circa 2011

Published and Illustrated:

J.Chapman, *The Art of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China*, London, 1999, pp.135 and 154, figs.147 and 187

來源：

顯貴歐洲私人收藏，於70年代中旬至大約2011年借展予英國道咸大學東方藝術館

出版及著錄：

J.Chapman著，《The Art of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China(中國的犀牛角雕刻藝術)》，倫敦，1999年，頁154，圖187





The present lot is extremely rare, being one of only three recorded rhinoceros horn carvings with the signature or seal of Rui Zhi (瑞止). The seal above is that of the carver with the Studio name 'Yong Zhu Ju' (永竹居) which may be translated as 'Residence of Perpetual Bamboo'. It is most likely that the scholar or gentleman who resided in this studio commissioned this rhinoceros horn libation cup from Rui Zhi.

The finely carved archaistic design of the present cup, as demonstrated by the *taotie* mask motif and *chilong*, as well as the literati studio seal mark, reflect the scholarly trend of the 'search for evidence' (*kaozheng* 考證) movement beginning in the early 17th century. Although this movement originated from a renewed scholarly interest in ancient texts and inscriptions on archaic bronzes, as literati sought a more empirical approach to understanding their ancient heritage, it led to a greater fascination for decorative designs adopted from ancient bronzes too. Responding to commissions from scholars, artisans like Rui Zhi reproduced the motifs and patterns of ancient bronzes on their rhinoceros horns libation cups. The motif of a larger adult dragon, and smaller younger ones, has been interpreted as conveying the message of the father teaching his son the way of life, and within the Imperial family, that of the emperor giving lessons to the princes.

The only other two rhinoceros horn carvings that have been recorded with the signature Rui Zhi, are both cyclically dated to the cyclical *Dingchou* (丁丑) year: the first, an archaistic rhinoceros horn libation cup with stylised animals, signed Rui Zhi, *Dinghai* year, from the H.G.Beasley Collection, is illustrated by P.Moss, *Emperor, Scholar, Artisan, Monk: The Creative Personality in Chinese Works of Art*, Sydney L. Moss Ltd., London, 1984, pp.182-183, no.58. Thomas Fok proposes that the date for this cup should be taken as AD 1697; see T.Fok, *Connoisseurship of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China*, Hong Kong, 1999, p.58, no.11. The second cup with the seal of Rui Zhi, decorated with chrysanthemums, dated *Dingchou* year, is in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, and illustrated by J.Chapman, *The Art of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China*, London, 1999, p.135, fig.146.

Compare also with a related rhinoceros horn libation cup decorated with archaistic *taotie* and dragons, signed You Yiliang, 17th century, illustrated by T.Fok, *Connoisseurship of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China*, Hong Kong, 1999, p.75, no.28.



杯圓唇略侈，流口上翹，沿下減地淺浮雕拐子螭龍紋，杯身上起一層，淺浮雕仿古饕餮紋，雷紋填地，四棱及四面正中出齒棱，棱面陰刻回紋，圈足束收，略微外撇，足身起地一層，上雕螭龍紋，如杯身出八棱，面飾回紋。杯底刻陽文「永竹居」、陰文「瑞止」印二方。杯身一側鏤空雕扁平鑿，其上淺浮雕穀紋，且雕四隻螭龍攀附其上，內壁一側亦雕三隻螭龍沿壁上攀。杯色如琥珀，比其深鬱。

此件犀角杯取形商周青銅觥，加以明末以來流行的螭龍紋樣，形制古穆，又添新意，時人以兇觥稱之。明代中晚期以來，市民階層興起，社會好古之風昌熾，工藝品器形常追三代，紋飾遠溯先秦。金玉銅鐵，竹牙犀象等材質皆有仿古佳作。匠人地位亦有所提高，器物上常留款識，然其名又不及留諸字紙，至今多湮沒無稽可攷矣。此杯作者「瑞止」不見於文獻，同款見於海外私藏者則有兩件：一件為瑞止丁丑款犀角杯，英國實業家H.G.Beasley舊藏，著錄於 P.Moss, 《Emperor, Scholar, Artisan, Monk: The Creative Personality in Chinese Works of Art》，倫敦，1984年，頁182至183，編號58；另一件為瑞止丁丑款菊花犀角杯，愛爾蘭都柏林切斯特·比替圖書館收藏，著錄於 J.Chapman, 《The Art of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China》，倫敦，1999年，頁135，圖146。霍滿棠認為丁丑年即是1697年，蓋因明清交替之際常不署年號，又正是工藝和文藝結合，雕刻藝術登峰造極的時期，見霍滿棠著，《中國犀角雕刻珍賞》，香港，1999年，頁58，編號11。另可參考一件十七世紀犀角雕古銅紋龍杯，款署尤以良，見前書，頁75，編號28。



CHRONOLOGY

NEOLITHIC CULTURES

Cishan-Peiligang	c. 6500-5000 BC
Central Yangshao	c. 5000-3000 BC
Gansu Yangshao	c. 3000-1500 BC
Hemadu	c. 5000-3000 BC
Daxi	c. 5000-3000 BC
Majiabang	c. 5000-3500 BC
Dawenkou	c. 4300-2400 BC
Songze	c. 4000-2500 BC
Hongshan	c. 3800-2700 BC
Liangzhu	c. 3300-2250 BC
Longshan	c. 3000-1700 BC
Qijia	c. 2250-1900 BC

EARLY DYNASTIES

Shang	c. 1500-1050 BC
Western Zhou	1050-771 BC
Eastern Zhou	
Spring & Autumn	770-475 BC
Warring States	475-221 BC

IMPERIAL CHINA

Qin	221-207 BC
Han	
Western Han	206 BC-AD 9
Xin	AD 9-25
Eastern Han	AD 25-220
Three Kingdoms	
Shu (Han)	221-263
Wei	220-265
Wu	222-280
Southern dynasties (Six Dynasties)	
Western Jin	265-316
Eastern Jin	317-420
Liu Song	420-479
Southern Qi	479-502
Liang	502-557
Chen	557-589
Northern dynasties	
Northern Wei	386-535
Eastern Wei	534-550
Western Wei	535-557
Northern Qi	550-577
Northern Zhou	557-581

Sui	589-618
Tang	618-906
Five Dynasties	907-960
Liao	907-1125
Song	
Northern Song	960-1126
Southern Song	1127-1279
Jin	1115-1234
Yuan	1279-1368
Ming	
Hongwu	1368-1398
Jianwen	1399-1402
Yongle	1403-1424
Hongxi	1425
Xuande	1426-1435
Zhengtong	1436-1449
Jingtai	1450-1456
Tianshun	1457-1464
Chenghua	1465-1487
Hongzhi	1488-1505
Zhengde	1506-1521
Jiajing	1522-1566
Longqing	1567-1572
Wanli	1573-1620
Taichang	1620
Tianqi	1621-1627
Chongzhen	1628-1644
Qing	
Shunzhi	1644-1661
Kangxi	1662-1722
Yongzheng	1723-1735
Qianlong	1736-1795
Jiaqing	1796-1820
Daoguang	1821-1850
Xianfeng	1851-1861
Tongzhi	1862-1874
Guangxu	1875-1908
Xuantong	1909-1911

REPUBLICAN CHINA

Republic	1912-1949
People's Republic	1949-