

MICHAEL DUNN ANTIQUES WORKS OF ART



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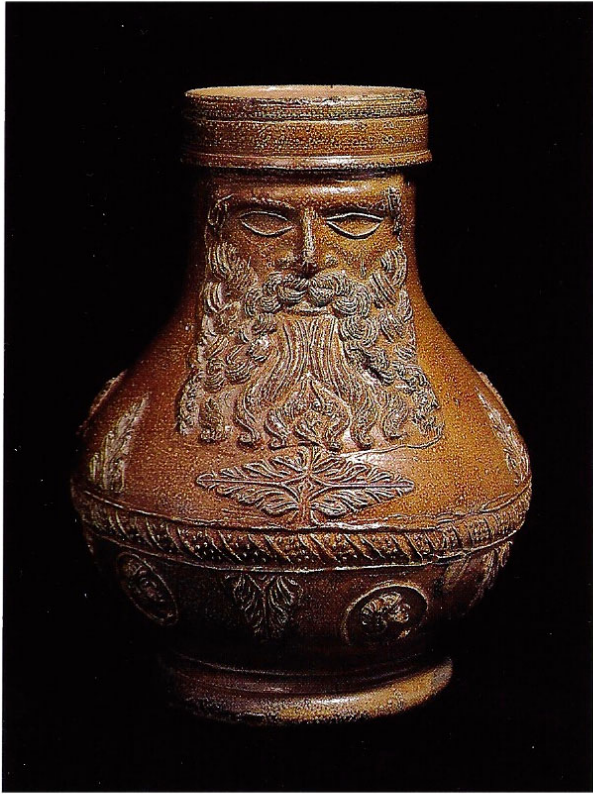
*This, our eighth catalogue,
once again celebrates
diversity in interpretation
as expressed by both
individuals and cultures.*

*George Innes paints a material
world, its mood, season, temperature,
it's light, while suggesting it's transience.*

*Andrew Wyeth presents us with a sight barely
caught from the corner of his eye, nearly missed
in his next stride. Skeletal remains, mixing death
and memory on the fringe of life, are almost
overlooked, almost unrecorded history.*

*Cultural interpretations too, of Dutch and
English antecedents, blossom in a bureau bookcase
rendered by an Asian eye and hand. Decoration in paints
and carved surfaces, religious notions of piety and respect,
works of utility and objects of frivolity – these reinforce
our personal, visual dictionaries. It is our hope that the
objects presented here, spurred by whatever motivations,
remind us of man's continually astonishing capacity
to create and of our own continuing pleasurable
surprise and appreciation.*

FALL 1997



BARTMANN JUG

An outstanding 16th Century Cologne Bellarmine with particularly crisp sprig-application and having a nose, which when viewed in profile, protrudes further than is commonly encountered. A curly beard, romayne heads, acanthus leaves and belted mid-section all compliment and add personality to this large necked squat survivor. Circa 1540. ¶ H. 6" (15.5 cm).

See:

Bearbeitet Von Gisela Reineking von Bock, *Steinzeug*, pp. 237-238.

ROMAYNE HEADS

An exceptional pair of late 16th Century English oak romayne heads. Beautifully wrought, the personages, in these two rondels appear more like portraits than the standard renderings of male and female profiles. They have survived in remarkably fine condition. ¶ D. 10½" (26.5 cm).





ENGLISH COFFER

Probably from, certainly influenced by, the Offery St. Mary, Devon, England work shop which was the training ground for Thomas Dennis of Ipswich, Essex County, Mass., around 1680. This English oak coffer dated 1671 and initialed P.L. has a beautifully patinated and richly carved surface. Its motifs relate to some of those found on early New England chests of this period. H. 28½" (61 cm) x W. 48½" (122 cm) x D. 20½" (51 cm).

See:

John T. Kirk, *American Furniture and the British Tradition to 1830*.



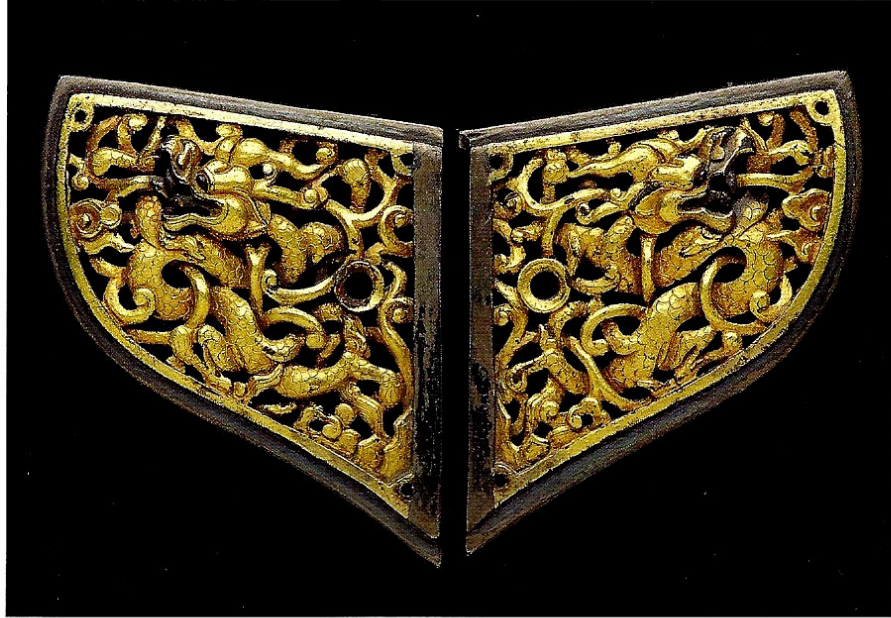
WAN LI CHARGER

A particularly large late 16th Century blue & white Chinese porcelain charger made during the reign of the Emperor Wan Li (1573-1619). The blue is very strong and pure and the white is very white and uncontaminated. These features combined with a springwater-like glaze and careful draftsmanship give us an example of the porcelain pieces we see in early Dutch still life paintings. The area inside the foot rim is unglazed and bears the red wax seal of a Dutch family from central Holland. Circa 1580. ¶ D. 20½" (51 cm).



TIBETAN BRONZE

A small but extremely expressive Tibetan bronze demon's head, powerful in its expression and full of ferocity. Turquoise inlaid eyes are set in silver as well as traces of silver on the teeth. The headdress is adorned with five tiny skulls. The facial composition seems almost to be wreathed by a vocabulary of motifs which begin at the collar and end in ornamental devices which surmount the ears. 16/17th Century. H. 4" (10 cm).



SADDLE MOUNTS

Gilded iron is a Tibetan specialty and few groups anywhere in the world execute it with the consummate skill of the Tibetan craftsmen. Secured to either side of the front of a saddle, below and flanking the horn, these mounts lend both decoration and importance to the everyday working gear. Here restless dragons cavort amid scrolling tendrils, caught in a state of ferocious frivolity. 18/19th Century. ¶ H. 3½" (9 cm).



ANDREW WYETH

Stone Island, a watercolor painted in 1966 by Andrew Wyeth on Stone Island near Teel's Island, Maine will be included in Betsy James Wyeth's forthcoming Andrew Wyeth Catalogue Raisonné. The sun-bleached, tide-tossed skeletal form of the crab, legs dislodged, harsh, but in concert with nature's palate is wedged amid shore rocks and grasses, like death and memory, separated life, scattered randomly along its fringe. This is classic 60's Wyeth – color, texture, and natural symbolism – the ordinary, almost overlooked, captured in a backward glance, almost history unrecorded. (Signature upper left). H. 18 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (47 cm) x W. 24" (60 cm).

Original bill of sale available to purchaser.

Provenance:

M. Knoedler & Co., New York, NY.



ADORATION

Few 15th Century religious wood carvings have retained so rich and undisturbed a surface as does this work. A patina reflecting centuries, as this does, is sometimes encountered on a piece of furniture but seldom on a European spiritual work. The king's faces and their postures imply awe, curiosity, and respect, while the Virgin's countenance is filled with a fresh maternal reverence for the child. Crisp abstract planes of drapery combine with a naive treatment of physiognomy. A slightly stiff presentation combines with the serious intent that is inherent in this work used both to teach as well as to worship. Circa 1450. ¶ H. 11¼" (29 cm) x W. 13" (32.5 cm).



SEATED FIGURE

Costa Rican sculpture may be the most plastic and inventive of the pre-Columbian Central American cultures. As seen above, even the use of negative space is masterfully handled. Carved of grey-green volcanic stone this pensive seated male figure with his knees drawn up was excavated in 1920-30's in the Linea Vieja (the Old Line) region during the construction of the railway that runs from Guapiles at the northern foot of the Irazu volcano, southeast to the port of Lemon. 12-13th Century, Period VI. ¶ H. 11½" (28.5 cm) x W. 8" (20.8 cm) x D. 9" (23 cm).

See:

Tresors Du Nouveau Monde, pp. 250-279, pl. 244.

BRONZE DRUM

Recently acquired from the Foght Collection, Copenhagen, this Chinese Ming bronze drum was collected in the early decades of our century by the Danish sea captain/explorer, Johansen. Cast in one piece using the *cire perdue* method, the drum is decorated with a series of repetitive motifs like those pictured in *The Kettle Drums of Southeast Asia*, plate 20.02, pg. 571 and described as a Heger IV type from South China, probably Yunnan Province. ¶ H. 10½" (27 cm) x W. 19¼" (48 cm).

See:

The Bronze Dong Son Drums, compiled by Ha' Thuc Can, Spectrum Press Pte. Ltd., Singapore.

The Kettle Drums Of Southeast Asia, A Bronze Age World and Its Aftermath, A. J. Bernet Kempers.





BABY MINDER

Ingenuity and utility combine in this child's chair cum playpen. Traditional strong family bonds are reflected in this multipurpose piece allowing a child to be among the family while protected from harm and harmless to an adult world. This food station with its sliding tray is also a place to play and be intrigued by the lattice work sides which entertain the eye. Foo-lion finials, a carved crest-rail and back splat mimic full scale provincial furniture. Sturdy yet delicate, this "tongchi" is an example of the attention lavished on a child. China, early 19th Century. ¶ H. 19" (48 cm) x W. 15" (38 cm) x L. 24" (60 cm).

See:

Nancy Berliner, Sarah Handler, *Friends of the House*, pp. 128 & 129.

NORWEGIAN CHEST

Among the most confident and fluid drawing to be found on a Scandinavian painted piece, this Norwegian chest is a true classic of its genre. A vertical iron strap in the middle of the front terminates in a tulip head which forms an escutcheon. To either side of the tulip head are initials MNDR and the date 1813. The interior is painted blue with a reeded till that hides a concealed compartment. There are iron carrying handles on the sides. The Cunard shipping label from Bergen, "For America", to New York retains the number 2930 and is probably identifiable and traceable and thus serves as an intriguing document in Norwegian-American history. ¶ H. 21¼" (53 cm) x W. 42" (105 cm) x D. 20½" (51 cm).





GEORGE INNESS

A recent discovery, this George Inness plein-air sketch was painted in the early 1870's during Inness' Italian period. Oil on academy board, the landscape is set amid a stand of trees on a slope bordered by orchards. A woman approaches the foreground while on the left hand horizon the upper story of building presses against the skyline.

This work has an unbroken provenance back to its purchase from George Inness. It will be published in a catalogue of the artist's complete works compiled by Michael Quick. ¶ H. 19¼" (48 cm) x W. 11½" (29 cm).

ANKLET

A 16/17th Century African bronze anklet whose simple tapered form and excavated surface embolden its strong graphic design. The piece's verticality is emphasized by a slithery serpent outlined by stacked ringlets, bordered by paired vertical lines. ¶ H. 7" (19 cm).



ENGRAVING PLATE

In 1687 a John Bate of Sheffield expressed his sentiment on two sides of an engraving plate. He depicted a young man in a hostile universe doing battle with monsters. On the reverse, his world, even when enflamed by cupid's missile, is never without an awareness of ever present elapsing Time and, his constant companion, Death. Below the courting couple holding hands is the verse:

Beware young man
Lest mirth *trapan
And pleasures thee deceive

At thy left hand
Pale Death doth stand
Who waits but for time's leave.

*trapan – an old English word meaning swindle. At the bottom of this side the engraver signed the plate: Jo(hn) Bate of Sheffield Sculp. He also dated his work in the year 1687. ¶ H. 3½" (8.8 cm) x W. 5" (13 cm).



(The above engraving plate is pictured in actual size).



NETSUKE

An 18th Century Japanese horn netsuke of unusually large size and mellow color, portraying a Dutchman holding a puppy. The composition is nicely rounded and subtly embellished with inlaid buttons and lightly incised border decoration on the subject's jacket. In all probability the carver of this toggle never saw a Dutchman but rendered his subject based on a verbal description.



SNUFF RASP

The Musee' de Besangon has in its collection an inferior example of this model which Tardy, in his two volume work on ivories, titles merely, "sujet ecclesiastique." This 17/18th Century example is crisply carved, of superior design and in excellent condition. A virtually identical example can be found in the Wallace Collection, London. ¶ H. 7⁷/₈" (20.5 cm) x W. 2³/₈" (6.5 cm).

See:

Tardy, *Les Ivories*, pg. 148.

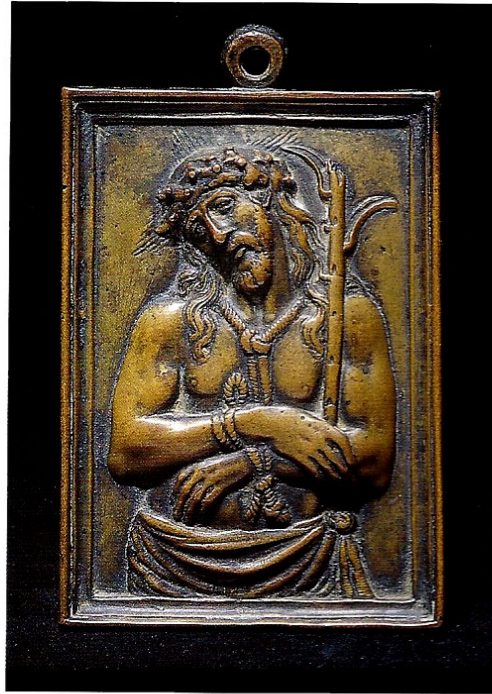
Wallace Collection, pl. 66 S.260.

PLAQUETTE

Circa 1600, this Spanish bronze plaquette of Christ as the Man of Sorrows has over its nearly 400 years, developed a warm mellow color enhancing both its detail and its compelling qualities of sympathy and antiquity.

See:

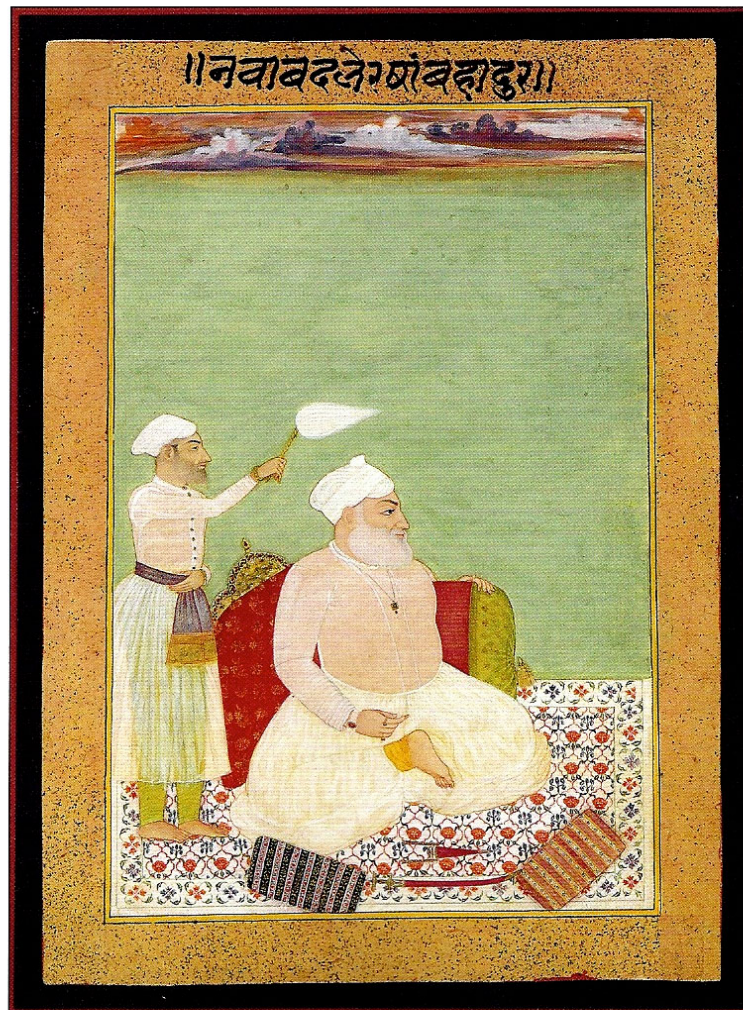
Medals and Plaquettes From the Molinari Collection at Bowdoin College, Andrea S. Norris & Ingrid Weber, pg. 124 and pl. 410.



GILT EMBLEM

Though we are uncertain both as to the country of origin of this piece as well as its intended use we have include it for its visual appeal, its quality, and to celebrate its long sought acquisition. An educated guess suggests its origin may be Indo-Portuguese or Spanish Colonial. Probably 17/18th Century. ¶ D. 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ " (6.8 cm).





INDIAN MINIATURE

An 18th Century Indian Miniature depicts a seated, reclining Marajah leaning against a large bolster while being attended by a servant waving a fly-wisk. The highly patterned carpet and smaller bolsters serve as a delightful foil for the gossamer white drapery of the bearded ruler whose sword lies beside him. Probably Rajhastan. ¶ H. 12⁷/₈" (32 cm) x W. 9¹/₂" (29 cm).

ASIAN EXPORT SECRETARY

Combining a Dutch influenced bombe' base with its companion ball and claw feet and exuberant apron, the upper case is surmounted by an English style bonnet top and accented by French influenced drawer pulls, (often favored in the Netherlands). All these elements of taste and style were transported to Ceylon and Indonesia, where they were reinterpreted. Carved floral accents at each drawer's upper corner, vine and leaf motifs on the outer-edge of the bombe compliment the desk's geometry. So too do the reticulated valences of the interior, while the columns that flank the paneled upper cabinet enhance its presence. Constructed of a teak-like eastern hardwood, circa 1780, this is almost certainly a commissioned piece created for a member of the VOC, Dutch East Indies Company.

See:

Het Netherlands Kolonial, J. Terwen-de Loos

Furniture from Indonesia, Sri Lanka and India, Jan Veenendall

Het Hollandsche Koloniale Barokmeubel, Dr. V.I. Van De Wall





TABLE

China's Shanxi Province is a bastion of conservative tradition and interpretative design. It is the Yorkshire of mid-18th Century England or the Dunlap New Hampshire expression of late 18th Century New England. Exuberant carving of gilded dragons with foliate vine-tails chasing a pearl surround all four sides of this piece. A corner brace superimposes itself across the profiled body of a chicken captured in mid-air. Beautifully molded legs and side stretchers support a richly patinated top of Juniper. 18th Century. ¶ L. 62¼" (156 cm) x H. 35" (88.5 cm) x D. 24½ (61 cm).

For related carving on Shanxi tables,

See:

Nancy Berliner, Sarah Handler, *Friends of the House*, pp. 96-103.



WARRING STATES BRONZE

This is the bronze foot of a wooden shaft that would have been equipped with a weapon at its top. What you see pictured at left has survived in a marvelous state of preservation. Sensitive wrought, with an exquisite, nearly animated bird below an area of incised swirling lines, it is a little sculptural gem. Circa 200 B.C. ¶ H. 5½" (14 cm) x W. 1⅝" (4.8 cm).



FOLDING STOOL

A late Ming, tieli (ironwood), folding stool in untouched condition. The well shaped, folding foot-support, iron hinge escutcheons and foliate carved front and back seat-rails are classic elements which grace even so utilitarian an object as a folding stool. 17th Century, China. ¶ H. 14¼" (35 cm) x W. 15¾" (40 cm).



KANG CABINET

The mellow richness of the burl top and front panels of this kang cabinet's geometry are punctuated by varying size round hinges and central escutcheon. The broad surface of the cabinet's face seems suspended above a pseudo-archaic relief-carved apron raised on crisply delineated feet. The kang cabinet was made for use atop the heated raised platform called a kang, a common feature among the houses of northern China. On this raised platform the family gathered, conducting all manner of business from eating to writing letters to playing games. 18th Century. ■ H. 18½" (46 cm) x D. 16" (40 cm) x L. 45" (113 cm).

See:

George Kates, *Chinese Household Furniture*, pl. 67.



CHINESE EXPORT PAKTONG CANDLESTICKS

A particularly delicate and well articulated pair of paktong shell base candlesticks. Slightly diminutive in size with careful attention paid to the sculpting of the shells, spurs, and fluted detail of the baluster as well as the six shells on the bases, this fine pair of English inspired candlesticks are constructed of four parts, (not counting the bobeches). The baluster shells have been cast as separate pieces. The socket neck was let into the separate baluster shell and then attached horizontally to the top of the baluster shaft. Thus, the stem consists of 3 pieces which when threaded into the base constitutes 4 parts. Size and the manner of construction suggest a Chinese craftsman filling a commission for an English patron, circa 1750. ¶ H. 8¼" (22 cm).

See:

W. D. Johns, K. Coombes, *Paktong*.



CHINESE EXPORT IVORY LETTER SHELF

This first half of the 19th Century Chinese Export Ivory letter shelf is an excellent example of the lavish use of traditional and export iconography employed to embellish a Victorian whimsy, a letter shelf. Hardly a necessity, but an indulgence the traveler to Canton would have allowed himself as a souvenir as well as curiosity of craftsmanship. The abundant flavors of Cathay seem released by the writhing dragons and landscape scenes which tantalize the eye. Mid 19th Century. ¶

See:

David S. Howard, *A Tale of Three Cities, Canton, Shanghai, & Hong Kong*, pg. 193, pl. 254.