



**Chinese late Ming bowl, Wanli (1573-1619)  
POA**

Chinese late Ming bowl, Wanli (1573-1619), with moulded gently undulating sides and a foliate rim, the exterior painted in a bright cobalt blue with upright sprigs of flowering branches and perching birds, the rim with a band of galloping horses amongst flames and waves, the interior with a central roundel containing a lakeside scene with pagoda and mountains, the sides with a band of flaming wheels interspersed by ruyi-heads, beneath a band to the rim containing a continuous design of boats on a rocky shoreline with pagodas, the base inscribed with a square seal reading fu gua jia qi ('Beautiful vessel for the rich and honourable').

Dimensions:

Diameter: 21.6cm. (8 ½ in.)

Condition:

Long hairline to the rim

Notes:

The Buddhist Wheel of Law, sometimes also referred to as the Wheel of Truth is thought to crush delusions and superstitions. The symbol refers to the episode at Sarnath, where the Siddhartha Gautama is believed to have given his first sermon after attaining enlightenment, and where he began the 'turning of the Dharma wheel'. This great wheel is said to have had eight spokes to represent the Noble Eightfold Path, a combination of practices to follow in the pursuit of a happy, peaceful life and ultimately enlightenment (release from the cycle of death and rebirth). Horses, too, were highly symbolic, representing strength and speed, as well as being the eighth animal of the zodiac (thus a fitting choice for a design which also incorporates the eight-spoked wheel of Buddhism). As far back as the Tang dynasty (618-906 AD) pottery models of horses were frequently included in high-ranking burials, a tradition which continued into the Ming dynasty (1368-1644). However, the type of horse depicted on ceramics gradually shifted as over time the imported thoroughbreds from central Asia popular in previous decades came to be replaced by smaller, hardier Manchurian ponies.

Provenance:

Guest and Gray from a great many years ago

<b>Material and Technique</b>	Porcelain with underglaze cobalt blue decoration
<b>Origin</b>	Chinese
<b>Period</b>	17th Century
<b>Condition</b>	Very good
<b>Diameter</b>	21.6cm. (8 ½ in.)

Antique ref: W872