



Chinese blue and white plate, Kangxi (1662-1722) POA

Chinese blue and white plate, Kangxi (1662-1722), decorated to the centre with a landscape scene of a scholar official in a garden setting standing beside a large crane, the bird standing on one leg and with its beak raised to the sky, with two small boys in attendance, one carrying a wrapped zither over his shoulder, the other carrying a package and with a foliate sprig raised in his right hand, outside a pavilion veranda amongst plantain and rockwork, all within double circles, the rim with six lobed cartouches each containing the 'shou' character, against a lattice diaper ground, the reverse rim painted with two rocky islets, the base with apocryphal Chenghua mark within double circle.

Dimensions:

Diameter: 20.3cm. (8in.)

Notes:

It is probable that the figure depicted on this plate is Lin Heijin (also known as Lin Bu, or Rinnasei in Japan), a Northern Song poet known for his reclusive nature and love of cranes. One of the famous literati eccentrics, he refused all civic posts offered by the government and instead removed to the West Lake near Hangzhou for much of his later life. There, away from the demands of the court and Confucian doctrine, he lived a peaceful life writing poetry, admiring plum blossom every early spring, tending to his garden, keeping pet cranes and pursuing scholarly activities such as playing the zither. One of his most famous poems 'Living as a Recluse on the Lake' takes as its theme his love for his garden, and also refers to the 'white bird', the cranes with which he is associated:

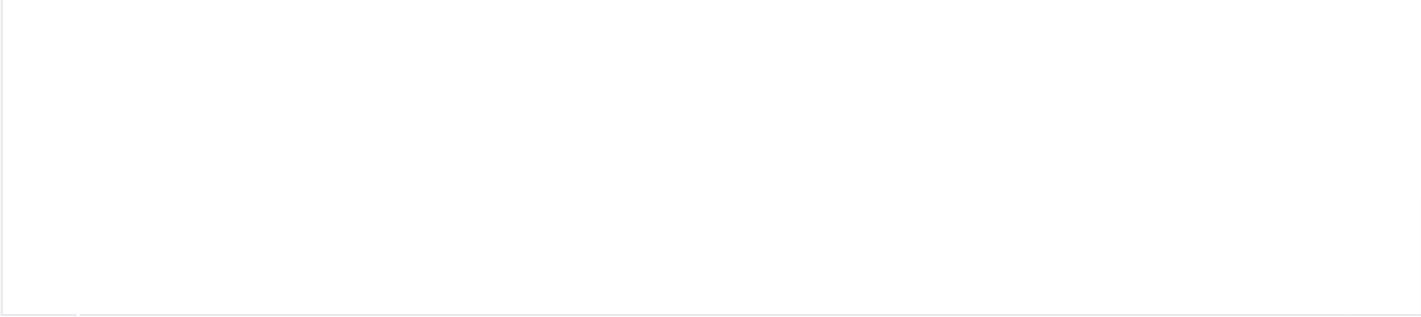
Lakewater/ Comes into the yard./ Mountains/ Wind round my hut/. A recluse/ Should avoid the world.

Normally shut,/ The unused door's turned blue with moss./ Guests arrive,/ Frightening white birds to flight./ Selling herbs,/ I almost hate to price them,/ Love watering the garden/ According to nature.

And how about/ India Road/ Through the woods,/ Still reaching deep autumn/ In a distant/ Blue dream?

(trans. Hansen, Paul (1993). Lin He-jing: recluse poet of Orphan Mountain. Brooding Heron Press. p.25)

Several extant paintings depict similar scenes of a scholar in a garden setting with a crane; one such relevant 16th century scroll painting depicting a scholar playing the zither for a crane in a remote garden setting can be found in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (1972.278.3)



**Material and
Technique**

Porcelain with underglaze cobalt blue decoration

Origin

Chinese

Diameter

20.3cm. (8in.)

Antique ref: W907