



An Imposing and Fine Chinese Ming Blue and White Dish POA

Of circular shallow form with out-turned rim decorated in shades of underglaze cobalt blue with a white hare/rabbit on a blue background bearing an alert expression sitting under a tree looking at the moon, the border with birds perched on branches and flowers, and on the back five roundels of galloping horses, the base with an illegible seal mark.

Period: Jiajing (1522?1566), ca 1550.

Provenance: An old West Swedish private collection. Exhibited Borås Konstmuseum, Borås, "Mittens Rike", 1985. See catalogue Ming Tz'u, Mittens Rike, 1985, cat. no 215, p. 84.

Footnote: For a similar dish see Krahl & Ayers, Chinese Ceramics in the Topkapi Saray Museum, Istanbul, vol. II, p. 607. the border on this dish with birds is very similar and the design on the back of galloping horses is almost identical.

A small Dish (14 cms) with a related rabbit design but no horses on the back bearing a four-character mark on its base, 'made in the guichou year'(guichou nian zao), corresponding to 1553 was recovered from the shipwreck Espadarte (1558) now in the Maritime Museum on the Island of Mozambique

The White rabbit is a symbol of hope, perseverance and the pursuit of immortality in Chinese mythology. Its legend has influenced Chinese art and literature for centuries.

The rabbit is often portrayed as a companion of the Moon goddess Chang'e, it is believed that they lived in a crystal palace on the moon and at night the rabbit helped the goddess to pound the sacred herbs of immortality, the elixir of life.

The tale of Chang'e is an ancient one and can be found in the Western Han book of myths Shan-hijing (The book of Mountains and Seas). It stirred the imagination and was a favourite subject for painters and poets.

Han dynasty poets call the hare on the Moon the "Jade Hare" or the "Gold Hare" , and these phrases were used often in place of the word for the moon.

The famed Tang poet Li Bai in his poem, "The Old Dust" relates how, "The rabbit in the moon pounds the medicine in vain."

Origin	Chinese
Period	16th Century
Diameter	30.5 cm



Antique ref: BH92