



Chinese famille verte biscuit figure of Guandi, the God of War, Kangxi (1662-1722)

POA

Chinese famille verte biscuit figure of Guandi, the God of War, Kangxi (1662-1722), seated upon a chair decorated with central lotus panel, a prunus and cracked ice ground and a landscape in the style of an ink painting, wearing elaborate armour and a green outer robe decorated with dragons chasing the flaming pearl, the face and hand left undecorated.

Dimensions:

Height: 28.5cm. (11 1/4in.)

Condition: Neatly restored break to neck, some fingers and portion of beard and hair neatly remodelled.

Notes:

Guandi is the deification of Guan Yu, who was a general during the Eastern Han dynasty (25-220CE) famed for his military prowess and moral qualities. Tales of his deeds and conduct were popular after his death, most notably the 'Romance of the Three Kingdoms', a 14th-century historical novel revered as one of the greatest works of classical Chinese literature. Guan Yu was deified during the Sui period (581-618), around three centuries after his death. He has been worshipped ever since, as a bodhisattva in the Buddhist faith, as 'Emperor Guan' (??; Guandi) in Chinese folk religions and as 'Holy Emperor Lord Guan' (????; Guan Sheng Di Jun) in Daoist belief. Dedicated shrines to the God of War were prayed to in hope of military success but Guandi also came to represent protection against threats (both spiritual and earthly) and longevity. Such small household shrines were extremely popular in the Qing dynasty, and often incorporated porcelain figures of Guandi. It is highly likely that this figure was used in such a setting, and the hole to the back of the figure not only reduced the risk of breakage during firing but also could be used to hold incense during prayer.

Material and Technique

Porcelain with enamel decoration on the biscuit

Origin

Chinese

Dimensions

Height: 28.5cm. (11 1/4in.)

