



## THE ORIENTAL CERAMIC SOCIETY OF HONG KONG LIMITED

Dear Members

31 May 2006

### OCS Newsletter – Summer 2006

This is the sixth in our new series of Newsletters. The aim is to keep you in touch with the Society and provide a handy diary of OCS events and other news at home and overseas. I hope you will find it of interest. Comments and suggestions are welcomed for future issues.

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The *OCS Library* is now available in the Art Section of the Central Library, Causeway Bay and book donations are invited (*see Section 11 of the Newsletter*).

The *OCS Website* has been totally re-vamped (*see Section 12 of the Newsletter*). Why not browse on [www.orientalceramics.org.hk](http://www.orientalceramics.org.hk) and send us your feedback?

Preparations continue for our exhibition “*Art and Imitation in China*” at the HKU Museum & Art Gallery from 13 October to 17 December 2006 (*see Highlights in Section 8 of the Newsletter*). There is still time to offer more pieces for vetting and the ***extended deadline*** for submissions is ***15 June 2006***. It is intended that the vetting will be completed and final selections made by end-June; and that selected exhibits will be delivered for photography and storage to a central collection point at the beginning of August (details to be advised).

Here is a senryu (seventeen syllable poem) by Mrs. Maisie Wong, OCS Life Member, reflecting on our recent study tour:

Scaling monuments, searching grottoes,  
Shrines, stone carvings, sculptures -  
Enchant.

How about submitting a senryu for the Autumn Newsletter, perhaps relating to the exhibition?

Sincerely yours

Malcolm Barnett  
President

## OCS NEWSLETTER – SUMMER 2006

### 1. Executive Committee

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### 2. Membership

We rely on membership subscriptions and healthy attendance at OCS events. If you have not already done so, please send a cheque for your **2006 renewal** payable to “The Oriental Ceramic Society of Hong Kong Limited” to the OCS, GPO Box 6202, Central, Hong Kong. If you have any friends who share our interests and are not already members, we would encourage you to **bring them along** to our next event.

Postal communications are being phased out. For ease, cost-efficiency and expedition of communication, **please supply an e-address**.

### 3. Recent Events

**February 11:** “Threads of Meaning”. Talk by Don Cohn jointly presented with the Textile Society.

**February 25:** “The Silk Road: Treasures from Xinjiang”. Gallery tour at the Hong Kong Heritage Museum, Shatin.

**March 18:** “Qing Imperial Monochromes: The Zande Lou Collection”. A gallery tour of the exhibition at The Art Museum, Institute of Chinese Studies, The Chinese University of Hong Kong led by the Director, Professor Peter Y.K. Lam.

**March 22:** “Understanding Chinese Sculpture”. A lecture by Dr. Simon Kwan at the Hong Kong Club (*see Highlights in Section 8 below*).

**April 4:** "Sultans, Lamas and the Yongle Emperor". The Dr. K.S. Lo Memorial Lecture 2006 by Mr. James C. Y. Watt at the Hong Kong Club (*see Highlights in Section 8 below*).

**April 8:** Sotheby's Spring auction preview and handling session with Mr. Nicolas Chow.

**April 11:** Pre-Shandong Tour lecture by Professor P. P. Ho at the Hong Kong Club.

**April 29:** "Ancient Bronze Weapons". A gallery tour of the exhibition at the Coastal Defence Museum, led by Mr. Stephen Selby (*see Highlights in Section 8 below*).

**May 8:** "Chinese Glass in the Qing Dynasty". A lecture by Mr. Andrew Lee and Mr. Humphrey Hui jointly presented with the Friends of the HKMA at the Lecture Room, HKMA, Salisbury Road, Tsim Sha Tsui (*see Highlights in Section 8 below*).

**May 10-17:** "Land of the Immortals, Sages and Heroes: Art and Architecture of Shandong Province". A tour of Shandong Province led by Professor P. P. Ho (*see Highlights in Section 8 below*).

**May 24:** "The Maritime Trade and Chinese Ceramics Pre-1700". A lecture by Mr. Brian S. McElney at the Hong Kong Club (*see Highlights in Section 8 below*).

**May 27:** Christie's 20th Anniversary auction preview and handling session with Ms. Rosemary Scott.

4. **Diary for June 06**

**June 27:** "Pre-Angkorian Art in Cambodia". The Dr. Veronica Lam Memorial Lecture by Smitthi Siribhadra at the Hong Kong Club at 6.30 pm (*see Highlights in Section 8 below and the article in Section 13*).

5. **Diary for July 06**

There will be no lectures or other events for Members in July so that OCS resources can be focused on preparations for the Exhibition (*see Highlights in Section 8 below*).

6. **Diary for August 06**

The OCS will be closed for the Summer holidays.

7. **Forthcoming Events**

**September 26:** "The Dating of Kangxi Imperial Porcelain". The Dr. Ip Yee Memorial Lecture 2006 by Professor Peter Y.K. Lam, Director of The Art Museum, Institute of Chinese Studies, The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

**October** (date to be announced): Sotheby's Autumn auction preview and handling session.

**October 13 - December 17:** "Art and Imitation in China". The OCS Exhibition 2006 at the Hong Kong University Museum & Art Gallery (*see Highlights in section 8 below*).

**October 14:** Symposium on “Art and Imitation in China” at the Hong Kong University Museum & Art Gallery. This symposium will include lectures by the scholars contributing to the catalogue (details to be advised).

**November 5-16:** Egypt Tour: “Ancient Egypt & Treasures of the Nile” (*see Highlights in Section 8 below*).

**November** (date to be announced): Christie’s Autumn auction preview and handling session.

**December 5:** OCS Annual General Meeting at the Hong Kong Club, followed by a lecture by Mr. Richard Engelhardt on "New Research at World Heritage Sites in Asia".

## 8. **Highlights**

**22 March 06: “Understanding Chinese Sculpture”.** A lecture given by Dr. Simon Kwan at the Hong Kong Club.

Traditionally Chinese people had regarded sculpture as a craft rather than an art-form, but in recent years this missing piece of Chinese art history was being looked at seriously by scholars both at home and abroad. Using images of some 40 pieces from his collection, Dr. Kwan outlined the development of Chinese sculpture through the ages; although briefly influenced by foreign models brought into China by the Buddhists, immigrants and traders during the Six Dynasties and early Tang period, this development had been achieved organically and almost independently of the outside world; passing through objects of “witch-craft” to religious tools and eventually deterioration into decorative objects or “toys”.

Dr. Kwan is an award-winning architect, designer and Chinese Art historian. He is also the author of several books including “Rhythm of Space”, “Brush and Clay”, “Chinese Gold Ornaments”, “Early Chinese Glass”, “Chinese Portraits”, “Ming and Qing Bamboo”, “Chinese Neolithic Pottery”, and “Imperial Porcelain of the Late Qing from the Kwan Collection”.

**4 April 06: The Dr. K. S. Lo Memorial Lecture 2006: "Sultans, Lamas and the Yongle Emperor”.** A lecture given by Mr. James C. Y. Watt at the Hong Kong Club.

The Yongle Emperor (r. 1403-24) is one of the most written-about figures in Chinese history; and decorative arts, particularly porcelain, produced during his reign have long been favorites among connoisseurs and collectors. To a rapt audience James Watt gave an enthralling overview of artworks of the period, focusing on influences from and cultural interactions with Tibet and the Timurids in Central Asia and Iran. The lecture was illustrated with slides of paintings, religious objects and decorative arts.

Mr. Watt is the Brooke Russell Astor Chairman of the Department of Asian Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He was previously Curator of the Department of Asiatic Art at the Institute of Fine Arts, Boston (1981-1985), and is well-known to members in his curatorial roles at the Hong Kong City Hall Museum and Art Gallery (1964-1971) and the Art Gallery, Institute of Chinese Studies, Chinese University of Hong Kong (1971-1981).

The lecture was attended by 97 Members, guests and invited academics. Our thanks to the Dr. K.S. Lo Foundation for funding this event.

**29 April 06: “Ancient Bronze Weapons”.** A gallery tour led by Mr. Stephen Selby at the Coastal Defence Museum.

Twenty Members of the Society enjoyed a visit to the Coastal Defence Museum's First Floor Gallery in Shaukeiwan to view an exhibition of bronze age weapons. Mr. Stephen Selby, a noted collector of these weapons, and an OCS Member, guided us through and explained the uses of these fascinating and, in some cases, extremely beautiful artefacts. Dagger axes were much in evidence, together with a stunning helmet and swords. We were also able to spend time in the longer-term archery exhibition on the Ground Floor of the Museum, which we highly recommend to those Members who have not ventured to this little-known district of Hong Kong. The architecture of the Museum is impressive and the building very child-friendly.

**8 May 06: “Chinese Glass in the Qing Dynasty”.** A lecture given by Mr. Andrew Lee and Mr. Humphrey Hui jointly presented by the OCS with the Friends of the HKMA at the HKMA Lecture Room, Tsimshatsui.

Mr. Lee and Mr. Hui took Members traced the development of Qing glassware through images and descriptions of objects in their collections which included vases, scholars' desk items, snuff bottles and ornamental pieces of the period, examined from the perspective of light and colour.

Mr. Andrew K.F. Lee is a practising architect and past President of the Hong Kong Institute of Architects. He is also a collector of Chinese arts, with an emphasis on Qing glass as displayed at the exhibition “Elegance and radiance” at the Chinese University Art Museum and subsequently at the HK University Museum & Art Gallery. He is also an Honorary fellow of HK University and adjunct Professor of Architecture in the School of Professional Continuing Education.

Mr. Humphrey K.F. Hui is a collector of Chinese snuff bottles with a wide-ranging interest in Chinese art. His collection has been exhibited in Australia, the US and Hong Kong including in the recent past “Heavenly Creations” at the HK University Museum & Art Gallery, “Elegance in Relief” at the Chinese University Art Museum. He is also co-author of various catalogues including “Elegance and Radiance” and a board member of the International Chinese Snuff Bottle Society headquartered in Baltimore, USA.

**10-17 May 06: “Land of the Immortals, Sages and Heroes: Art and Architecture of Shandong Province”.** A cultural tour led by Professor Puay-peng Ho.

Twenty enthusiastic members joined Professor Ho on a fascinating journey through dynastic changes and religious, philosophical and cultural relics in Shandong Province. The region played a pivotal role in early Chinese history and has reflected the mythical, religious and moral powers that sustained and developed Chinese civilization. Straddling Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism, the tour encompassed a host of temples, tombs, museums, monasteries and other buildings, each presenting a valuable insight into religion, art, sculpture and architecture.

Highlights of the trip included the spectacular Tai Shan mountain and majestic Daoist Dai temple at its base, the nostalgic shrine of Confucius at Qufu, the tranquil temple of Mencius at Zoucheng, the Han funerary shrines at Jiexiang and Xiaotangshan, the bamboo slips including “The Art of War” and a silk painting from Han tombs at Yingqueshan, the 40 clay luohan statues of Lingyan temple and exquisitely carved dragon and tiger pagoda of Shentong temple at Jinan, the skeletons of some of the 600 horses buried in the Duke of

Jing's tomb near Zibo, the Tuoshan Buddhist grottoes, and the impressive Qingdao Museum.

For some, the adrenalin pumped fastest at Qingzhou Museum where we watched the unveiling of some of the finest of the mainly sixth century Buddhist limestone sculptures unearthed at Longxing temple in 1996, which had just returned from an overseas exhibition. They had previously appeared in the ground-breaking HK Museum of Art exhibition 2001 and it was a joy to get re-acquainted!

Professor Ho is University Dean of Students, Professor of Architecture and Honorary Professor of Fine Arts at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Our unbounded thanks for his erudite and inspirational leadership on the tour.

**24 May 06: "The Maritime Trade and Chinese Ceramics Pre-1700"**. A lecture given by Mr. Brian S. McElney at the Hong Kong Club.

Mr. McElney gave an intriguing survey of the background to maritime trade and Chinese ceramic exports prior to 1700 and discussed the restrictions applied in the Ming dynasty and the steps taken to circumvent them; he also touched on the Arab, Chinese/Fukienese, Ryukyuan/Japanese and Portuguese/Spanish, and Dutch involvement and the relevance of all these factors in the dating of export ceramics.

The lecture served as a curtain-raiser for the exhibition on the same subject which will open at the Museum of East Asian Art in Bath on 22 August 2006 and at the HK University Museum & Art Gallery in June 2007.

Mr. McElney is a founder and past-President of the OCS and the recipient of the Dr. Ip Yee gold medal for contributions to the greater understanding of Chinese art. He is also the founder and Honorary Keeper of the Museum of East Asian Art in Bath to which he donated most of his extensive collection of oriental art.

**27 June 06: The Dr. Veronica Lam Memorial Lecture: "Pre-Angkorian Art in Cambodia"**. This lecture is in memory of Dr. Veronica Lam (*see article in Section 13 below*). It will be given by Smitthi Siribhadra at the Hong Kong Club at 6.30 p.m.

The lecture will focus on the architecture and sculpture of the Pre-Angkorian sites in Cambodia, including Champasak, Angkorborei and Samborpreikuk, discuss the developments that occurred over this period and compare the styles of metropolitan Cambodia and the provinces.

Smitthi Siribhadra is a world-acknowledged expert in Khmer art and archaeology. He has a BA from Silapakorn University, an MA in Art and Archaeology from the Sorbonne and has been a lecturer at Silapakorn University in South East Asian and Indian Art since 1977. Since 1987 he has participated in a Thai-French research project on Thai archaeological sites and artefacts. Currently excavations are continuing at the ancient site of Nakorn Champasri in Thailand. He has also taught as a guest lecturer at the Sorbonne in Paris. As well as writing numerous articles, his previously published books include 'Lintles (a comparison between Khmer lintles in Cambodia and Thailand)'.

**13 Oct – 17 Dec 06: OCS 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Exhibition: "Art and Imitation in China"**.

To celebrate somewhat belatedly the Society's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, an exhibition will be held at the Hong Kong University Museum and Art Gallery from 13 October to 17 December 2006. The exhibition will be sponsored by HSBC and curated by Mr. Antony Lin. An eminent

group of scholars will contribute to the catalogue. This provides a special opportunity for Members to display their treasures to the public and participate in a valuable educative project designed to increase awareness and appreciation of China's rich cultural heritage.

The exhibition will explore *imitation* in its many forms, including transcultural influence, archaism, intra-media exchange, trompe l'oeil etc, as described in the Outline previously circulated.

***There is still time to offer more pieces for vetting.*** So if you have any objects that are appropriate for the exhibition, please send digital photos and a note of dimensions and descriptions to [exhibition@orientalceramics.com.hk](mailto:exhibition@orientalceramics.com.hk) or phone the OCS on 25270696 or write to the OCS at GPO Box 6202, Central, Hong Kong.

The ***extended deadline*** for submissions is ***15 June 2006***. It is intended that the vetting will be completed and final selections made by end-June; and that selected exhibits will be delivered for photography and storage to a central collection point at the beginning of August (details to be advised).

### **5-16 Nov 06: Egypt Tour: "Ancient Egypt & Treasures of the Nile".**

Discovery Channel has rated Cairo and the Giza Plateau the number one destination in the world to visit for antiquities....and the next overseas OCS tour will take us there from November 5 to 16.

This is an odyssey to the land of the Pharaohs.

We will visit the Giza Plateau, its great pyramids, and the Sphinx at dawn, without the presence of other tourists, and with only the chant of the Muezzins calling to prayer in the distance, a magical moment. Then, with special permission from the Egyptian Government, we will explore with the famous archeologist Mark Lehner the newly discovered excavations of "The Village of the Workers".

We are planning an idyllic cruise down the Nile in the newly refurbished cruise ship "Sonesta Sun Goddess", whence we visit the various temples and tombs of the ancient Pharaohs, whilst enjoying the peaceful Egyptian country side and the magnificent sunsets. There will be excursions to Hatshepsut's majestic funerary temple, Luxor at sunset, and Philae at dawn.

Dr. Zahi Hawass, Chairman of the Antiquities Department, will lecture us on the recent discoveries in Egypt, and famous author, astronomer and Egyptologist Robert Bauval will give us his controversial views on the "raison d'être" of the pyramids and the ancient Egyptian beliefs, while guiding us into the step pyramid at Saqqara, where we will be amongst the very few who will have ever viewed the most ancient ceramic tiles, dating back about 5000 years.

The tour is full. Any enquiries for the waiting list to our Tour Director, Jacqui Muller on 26139815 or by e-mail at [infinitesl@netvigator.com](mailto:infinitesl@netvigator.com)

9. **News from Other Societies**

**The University of Hong Kong Museum Society**

Guided Tour of *Brush with Irony: Paintings by Wan Qingli*.

Date: Saturday, 10 June 2006

Time: 3:00 pm

Place: Fung Ping Shan Gallery, UMAG

Cost: \$120 members, \$180 non-members, free for students with valid IDs.

This exhibition features 28 of Professor Wan Qingli's recent works in brush and ink, including a large scale 15-panel painting from 2003 entitled *In the Middle of the Song No One is in Sight*. Professor Wan will personally conduct the tour. Enquiries to Linda Chan on email [linchan2@netvigator.com](mailto:linchan2@netvigator.com); fax 2537 8669; or mobile 9011-1032.

**The Friends of the Art Museum, Chinese University of Hong Kong**

Ceramics Handling Session with Professor Peter Y.K. Lam

Date: Wednesday June 21

Time: Bus leaving Queen's Pier at 9.30 am

Place: CU Art Museum

Cost: HK\$130 (including bus)

This is a fun event at which members bring along their own pieces for expert evaluation. It is intended for members only. However as the summer holiday season is approaching, a few vacancies are possible. So guests may be put on a waiting list. Enquiries to Sarah Parnell on email [sarahp@netvigator.com](mailto:sarahp@netvigator.com) or telephone 28138588.

10. **News from Overseas**

8-18 June: The Summer Fair at Olympia, London.

Textiles and Tribal Art: The Hali Fair at Olympia, London.

9-15 June: 2nd Brussels Oriental Art Fair at Rue Mignot Delstanche 17, Brussels.

15-21 June: The Grosvenor House Art & Antiques Fair at the Grosvenor House Hotel, Park Lane, London

Until September: "Taj Mahal". An exhibition at the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts.

11. **Library**

The **OCS Library**, comprising the Society's collection of over 400 books, catalogues, journals and papers on oriental art and culture is now available to members at the Art Section on the tenth floor of the Central Library in Causeway Bay.

The **OCS Library** is a growing collection and we will be very happy to accept additions. If you have any books on any branch of oriental art and culture that you would like to donate, please send us a note of the titles by e-mail to [ocs@orientalceramics.org.hk](mailto:ocs@orientalceramics.org.hk). We will check whether they are already included in our collection or the Central Library's own collection, and advise you accordingly.

Material from the **OCS Library** is available for lending to OCS Members on presentation of their OCS Membership card and library card and to other Central Library members for browsing only.

12. **Website**

The *OCS Website* has been totally re-vamped and the *new version is now up and running*. Do have a browse on [www.orientalceramics.org.hk](http://www.orientalceramics.org.hk) and give us your feedback.

13. **Dr. Veronica Lam**

The June 27 Dr. Veronica Lam Memorial lecture by Smitthi Siribhadra on “Pre-Angkorian Art in Cambodia” is being presented in memory of Dr. Veronica Lam, who was tragically lost with her daughter Cynthia in Phuket in the tsunami on 26 December 2004.

Veronica was born in Sandakan, North Borneo, Malaysia and came from a traditional Chinese family which had lived there for generations and had a successful business in forestry, plantation and transportation. After primary school in Sandakan and secondary school in the UK, she studied at University College, London where she obtained a Ph.D. in Biochemistry. She then moved to Hong Kong and pursued an academic career in lecturing and research at the medical school of The University of Hong Kong.

Keenly involved in public works, Veronica attended to the assessment of scholarship recipients for the alumni’s UCL Scholarship Hong Kong Foundation and served as a governor. Building on her early interest as a girl guide, she gave enthusiastic support to The Hong Kong Girl Guides Association on their community health promotion programmes and science-related projects.

Reflecting her love of oriental culture and heritage, Veronica joined the OCS in the late 1970’s and became an active member, regularly attending lectures and participating in study tours including those to Hangzhou and Jingdezhen in 1980, Suzhou and Nanjing in 1984, Myanmar in 1999, Shanghai in 1999 and Dun Huang and Xining in 2004.

Veronica is survived by her husband Peter S.C. Lam and son Cyril. She is greatly missed by her many friends at the OCS. Our thanks to Peter Lam for funding this event.

14. **Enquiries**

**The Oriental Ceramic Society of Hong Kong Limited**, GPO Box 6202, Hong Kong; telephone 25270696 and e-mail [ocs@orientalceramics.org.hk](mailto:ocs@orientalceramics.org.hk)