



THE ORIENTAL CERAMIC SOCIETY OF HONG KONG LIMITED 香港東方陶瓷學會

Summer Newsletter, June 2007

OCS events in April, May and early June were well attended.

Two auction previews, one at Sotheby's on April 6 and the other at Christie's on May 26, were very popular.

Valerie Doran's lecture on *Scholar's Rocks and Objects in the Rosenblum Collection*, a shared event with the Friends of the Hong Kong Museum of Art, attracted an enthusiastic audience on April 24.

Raymond Tang's guided tour of *A Pioneer of Modern Chinese Painting—The Art of Lin Fengmian* on April 28 provided fresh insights into the artist and his work.

On June 4, Professor Martin Powers spoke to over 30 members on *Antiquarianism, Imitation and Reference in China's Pictorial Tradition*.

Professor Chen Kelun will be coming from Shanghai to discuss the *Dating of Juntai Ware and Northern Song Imperial Jun Ware* on June 27.

In mid-June the exhibition *Chinese Ceramics and the Maritime Trade Pre-1700*, opens at the University Museum and Art Gallery, HKU in conjunction with the Museums of East Asian Art, Bath.

Museum founder and OCS member Brian McElney will be in Hong Kong for the

opening on Friday, June 15 and the symposium on Saturday, June 16.

Cynthia O. Valdes will give a presentation on *Chinese Tradeware Ceramics found in the Philippines*, followed by a guided tour of the *Maritime Trade* exhibition on July 28.

Looking beyond the summer, Rosemary Scott will give two lectures followed by a handling session on December 1, 2007.

The OCS Executive Committee wishes you a relaxing summer.

Catherine Maudsley
Newsletter Editor



Wucui glazed kendi
Museum of East Asian Art, Bath

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Chen Kelun Lecture: *Dating of Juntai Ware and Northern Song Imperial Jun Ware*, June 27

Since the 16th century, a number of handed-down pieces such as *zun* vases with flanges and flower pots have been considered Northern Song Jun ware, but there is no written proof of this in Song or Yuan sources.

The excavation of the Juntai Kiln site in the 1970s

seemed to provide the missing link, but this is now in doubt. In 2005, the Shanghai Museum scientifically tested samples from different Jun ware sites and found that the so-called Northern Song Jun ware was actually produced in the late 14th century.

Professor Chen Kelun, dep-

uty director and research fellow of the Shanghai Museum, will make the case that these wares should be dated from the late Yuan dynasty to the early Ming.

The lecture will be presented in *putonghua* and a simultaneous English translation will be provided.

Cynthia O. Valdes Lecture: *Chinese Trade Ware Ceramics found in the Philippines*, July 28

Storage jars are not usually included when specialists speak of "Trade Ware Ceramics". They were utilised primarily as storage vessels in their port of origin, but these Chinese ceramics were treasured and converted into ritual vessels by ethnic peoples in the hinterland.

They were typically used in burial or as containers of rice wine for celebratory rituals. A type of crudely-fashioned dishes made for overseas Chinese were also utilised as containers for the "sticky rice" used in Philippine rituals marking rites of passage such as birth, courtship, marriage and death.

Cynthia O. Valdes is a former president of the Oriental Ceramic Society of the Philippines, who has curated exhibitions for the OCS, the National Museum, the Ayala Museum and the Metropolitan Museum of Manila.

**Past events
April—May, 2007**



Seven jade archer's rings
Sotheby's



Kangxi soapstone seal
Christie's

Auction previews: Sotheby's April 6 and Christie's May 26

On April 6, Nicolas Chow, Sotheby's Hong Kong Director and Head of Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art Department, introduced OCS members to a group of Chinese porcelains from a private collection assembled in France from 1970—1996. The pieces were acquired from often unclassified sales in the Paris auction houses and elsewhere in France. Qing Imperial wares form the greater part of the porcelain, including a masterpiece of the Qianlong period (1736—1795) in the *doucai* style. Members were intrigued by a large *meiping* decorated with eight different fruiting branches and examined two altar vases, one bearing the seal mark of Yongzheng (1723—1735) and the other made to the personal order of Tang Ying,

the greatest of the directors of the Imperial porcelain factory at Jingdezhen. Members also took advantage of the opportunity to see and handle a set of seven jade imperial archer's rings (seen opposite).

Christie's Hong Kong Imperial Sale in May focused on works of art from the Ming dynasty's Xuande reign (1423—1435), considered a 'Golden Age'. OCS members were treated to a preview by Rosemary Scott, International Academic Director, Asian Art Departments, Christie's, and Pola Antebi, Department Head, Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art, Christie's Hong Kong. Xuande was not only an able ruler but he was also an artist in his own right. His enthusiastic patronage led to an estimated 58 kilns at Jingdezhen working for

the court. Participants looked at pieces including an important globular bowl, formerly from the Sir Percival and Lady David collection; a stemcup; two large heavily potted bowls and some lacquer ware. Also featured were Palace furnishings such as an important Kangxi period lacquered 'dragon' throne formerly from the Arthur M. Sackler collection, and two Imperial personal seals, one from the Kangxi period (shown opposite) and the other from the Qianlong period.

Valerie Doran Lecture: *Scholar's Rocks in the Rosenblum Collection*, April 24



Scholar's rock
Rosenblum collection

In the Chinese artistic tradition, the scholar's rock holds an intriguing position as a formal embodiment of both the aesthetics and the cosmological world view of the Chinese literati (*wenren*). For a period of 20 years, the American sculptor and collector Richard Rosenblum (1940—2000)—originally a neophyte in the world of Chinese art—

followed a unique path in seeking out, studying and mastering this esoteric subject. He created one of the world's most important collections of scholar's rocks and related objects to reach an understanding of how the rocks embodied nature but also transcended it to constitute art. Valerie Doran, who worked very closely with Richard

Rosenblum on the publication of his catalogue, gave a engrossing talk, rich in personal insights about Richard Rosenblum, the sculptor and Richard Rosenblum, the collector. To broaden the scope of the lecture, she also introduced the work of contemporary artists who are fascinated by scholar's rocks.

Raymond Tang Man-leung Hong Kong Museum of Art Guided Tour: *A Pioneer of Modern Chinese Painting - The Art of Lin Fengmian*, April 28



Lin Fengmian, *Lady*
Shanghai Art Museum

Lin Fengmian (1900—1991), who studied art in France, founded China's National Academy of Art at the young age of 28. Through art education in the school, he was responsible for a new generation of modern Chinese artists. Today, in the Academy's Hangzhou campus, there is a bronze statue of Lin and Cai Yuanpei (1868—1940), a leading intellectual and advocate of educational reform.

his ability to integrate the traits of Western art and Chinese art in both his ink and oil paintings. Guiding the tour, Raymond Tang Man-leung expertly introduced members to the ways in which Lin Fengmian achieved greatness.

Lin's artistic career was full of bitter struggles as most of his artworks were destroyed and he was imprisoned during the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s. In 1978 he settled in Hong Kong where he

was free to express his innermost emotions and thoughts in his art.

The exhibition, which was organised into four thematic groups: figures & Chinese opera; ladies; flowers, birds & still-lives; and landscapes, was made possible through the assistance of the Shanghai Art Museum, Ms. Feng Yeh and other private collectors.

Lin Fengmian's genius lay in

Professor Martin Power Lecture: *Antiquarianism, Imitation and Reference in China's Pictorial Tradition*, June 4

In both China and Europe, the past played an increasingly important role in the arts over time. On both ends of Eurasia, moreover, the practice of antiquarian collecting both fed upon and stimulated the development of a canon.

The result was that all artists were faced with the problem of how to relate to art history's past. In Europe,

the key term mediating that relationship was mimesis; in China, the key terms were *fa* and *fang*. While addressing many of the same issues, these concepts differed fundamentally in interesting ways. Professor Martin Powers's talk examined those differences and probed their significance in his highly engaging manner.

Professor Martin Powers is Sally Michelson Davidson Professor of Chinese Arts and Cultures at the University of Michigan, and former Director of the Centre for Chinese Studies. In 1991 his *Art and Political Expression in Early China* received the Levenson Prize for the best book in pre-twentieth century Chinese Studies.

The Pride of China and Splendour and Mystery of Ancient Shu HKSAR 10th anniversary exhibitions

The summer will be enriched by two major exhibitions staged at the Hong Kong Heritage Museum and the Hong Kong Museum of Art, respectively, as part of HKSAR's 10th anniversary celebrations. *Splendour and Mystery of Ancient Shu—Cultural Relics from Shanxingdui and Jinsha* is on view at the Hong Kong Heritage Museum, Shatin from June 6—September 9 and *The Pride of China: Masterpieces of Chinese Painting and*

Calligraphy of the Jin, Tang, Song and Yuan Dynasties from the Palace Museum will be presented at the Hong Kong Museum of Art from June 29—August 11, 2007.

Work is now underway at the Hong Kong Museum of Art preparing the exhibition galleries for the 32 paintings and calligraphy, which will be sent to Hong Kong in two batches, the first from June 29—July 22

and the second from July 23—August 11.

Each viewing session of Zhang Zeduan's 12th century masterpiece *Along the River during the Qingming Festival*, which is included in the first batch of paintings, will be limited to one hour. No time restrictions apply to other paintings.

Chinese Ceramics & Maritime Trade pre-1700 exhibition and seminar

This exhibition, which is on view from June 16—October 7 at the University Museum and Art Gallery, HKU, features over 100 Tang to Qing dynasties ceramics from the Museum of East Asian Art in Bath, UK. Maritime trade routes, which were vital in linking the East and West, were instrumental

in the growth of Chinese export ceramics.

An afternoon symposium on June 16, which will be held in conjunction with the exhibition, is open to the public. Leading scholars will address such topics as the Portuguese involvement in maritime trade; Kraak

ware; Jingdezhen blue-and-white porcelain; and marine archaeological discoveries in China.

For further information, see www.hku.hk/hkumag or call 852-2241-5500

OCS Membership

We rely on membership subscriptions and healthy attendance at OCS events.

If you have any friends who share our interests and are not already members,

please **bring them along** to our next event.

Postal communications are being phased out. For ease, cost-efficiency and expedition of communica-

tion, **please supply an e-mail address**, if you have not already done so.

Past events June, 2007

Save the dates

June 27, 2007
Chen Kelun
*Dating of Juntai Ware
and Northern Song
Imperial Jun Ware*

July 28, 2007
Cynthia O. Valdes
*Chinese Trade Ware
Ceramics found in the
Philippines*

December 1, 2007
Rosemary Scott
*Yuan dynasty Porcelain
- Impact of the
Mongols
&
17th century Chinese
Porcelain in Japanese
Taste*



Kraak ware blue-and-white bowl
Museum of East Asian Art, Bath

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The Oriental Ceramic Society of Hong Kong Limited (OCS) is devoted to the study and appreciation of all forms of oriental art and culture.

It is the OCS mission to gather together members whose interest in oriental art and culture is their main enthusiasm, to provide a forum for the lively exchange of ideas and information, to issue educational publications, to present stimulating lectures from distinguished speakers, to organise study sessions and travel programmes, and to encourage collector members to open up their treasures to other members

Executive Committee

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OCS Library

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

We are in the process of compiling subject area lists of the books and catalogues in the OCS Library, to be posted on the website.

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. We will check whether they are already included in our collection or the Central Library's own collection, and advise you accordingly.

The **OCS Library** gratefully acknowledges the donation of the following publication:

- *Idemitsu Museum of Arts Catalogue*, Vol 12, 2006

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.