



## THE ORIENTAL CERAMIC SOCIETY OF HONG KONG LIMITED

Dear Members

28 February 2006

### OCS Newsletter – Spring 2006

This is the fifth 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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Membership *renewals* for 2006 are being processed and the response is good. If you have overlooked the renewal and wish to continue receiving Newsletters and details of forthcoming lectures, tours and other activities, do please process the payment (*see Section 2 of the Newsletter*).

The *OCS Library* is about to be re-opened in the Art Section of the Central Library, Causeway Bay and book donations are invited (*see Section 11 of the Newsletter*).

Work is beginning to crescendo on preparations for our exhibition “*Art and Imitation in China*” at the HKU Museum & Art Gallery (13 October – 17 December 2006). Members have been invited to send in digital photos of potential exhibits from their collections. An exciting array has been received and more are welcome (*see Highlights in Section 10 of the Newsletter*).

Below is a senryu (seventeen-syllable poem) which I penned for the Chinese Year of the Dog:

Free board and fêted  
one year in twelve – a dog’s life  
even in Hong Kong!

We might try including a senryu in future Newsletters if Members are interested and anyone would like to contribute. Please let me know.

Sincerely yours

Malcolm Barnett

President

## OCS NEWSLETTER – SPRING 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**, or in the absence of a computer a fax number.

### 3. Recent Events

**December 3:** “Chinese Paintings from the C P Lin Collection”. Gallery tour at the HKMA led by Raymond Tang (*see Highlights in Section 10 below*).

**December 5:** OCS Annual General Meeting and Dinner at the Hong Kong Club with a lecture by Kai-Yin Lo on “House, Home, Family: The Chinese Way of Living and Being” (*see Highlights in Section 10 below*).

**December 13:** “Song and other Ceramics - Show and Tell” and dinner at the Hong Kong Club. A ceramics appreciation evening with Henry Howard-Sneyd and K Y Ng (*see Highlights in Section 10 below*).

**February 11:** “Threads of Meaning”. Talk by Don Cohn jointly presented with the Textile Society (*see Highlights in Section 10 below*).

**February 25:** “The Silk Road: Treasures from Xinjiang”. Gallery tour at the Hong Kong Heritage Museum, Shatin (*see Highlights in Section 10 below*).

**Feb 18-March 3:** The proposed Indian Tour of Delhi, Bhubaneshwar, Kolkata, Benares and Khajuraho was cancelled in the absence of sufficient participants and may be re-scheduled at a subsequent date.

4. **Diary for March 06**

**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 at 10.00am (details will be sent to members).

**March 22:** "Understanding Chinese Sculpture". A lecture by Dr. Simon Kwan at the Hong Kong Club at 6.30 pm (*see Highlights in Section 10 below*).

5. **Diary for April 06**

**April 4:** "The Yongle Emperor and the Arts of His Era". The Dr. K. S. Lo Memorial Lecture 2006 by Mr. James C. Y. Watt at the Hong Kong Club at 6.30 pm (*see Highlights in Section 10 below*).

**April 8:** Preview and Handling Session of Sotheby’s Auction with Mr. Nicolas Chow.

**April 11:** Pre-Shandong Tour lecture by Prof. P. P. Ho at the HK Club at 6.30 pm.

**April 29:** “Horseback Archery”. A gallery tour of the exhibition at the Coastal Defence Museum, led by Mr. Stephen Selby at 10 am.

6. **Diary for May 06**

**(May):** “Chinese Glass”. 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 at 6.30 pm.

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

**May 24:** "The Maritime Trade and Chinese Ceramics Pre-1700". A lecture by Mr. Brian S. McElney at the Hong Kong Club at 6.30 pm (*see Highlights in Section 10 below*).

**May 27:** Preview of Christie’s 20th Anniversary Auction with Rosemary Scott and Pola Antebi.

7. **Forthcoming Events**

**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 10 below*).

**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, Chinese University of Hong Kong.

**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 10 below*).

**November 5-16:** Egypt Tour: "Ancient Egypt & Treasures of the Nile" (*see Highlights in Section 10 below*).

## 8. News from Other Societies

### **The University of Hong Kong Museum Society**

#### Half Day Symposium: Cultural Kaleidoscope of the Islamic World

Date: Saturday, 25 March 2006

Time: 2-6 pm

Place: The Ritz Carlton Hotel, Chater Room 1

Cost: \$680 members, \$730 non-members (refreshments included)

The Symposium will explore the intriguing facets of Muslim culture through its many manifestations in language, art and architecture.

Speakers: Prof. Hsin-kang Chang; Dr. Norman Bird; Prof. Puay-peng Ho

Booking and Enquiries: Bonnie Huo on 91936565 or [infomail@netfront.net](mailto:infomail@netfront.net)

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

#### Elizabeth Lui: Photographing China's Vernacular Architecture

#### Ho Puay Peng: Effect of Political Boundaries on Architecture and Culture

Date: Monday 20 March 2006

Time: 6.45 pm Registration/Cash bar; 7.15 pm Lecture

Place: The Helena May, 35 Garden Road, Conference Room

Cost: \$80 members; \$100 non-members

Booking and Enquiries: Sarah Parnell, 11 Tytam Village, Stanley, Hong Kong, tel. 2813 8588 or [sarahp@netvigator.com](mailto:sarahp@netvigator.com)

#### James C.Y. Watt: Connoisseurship at the Metropolitan Museum of Art

Date: Monday, 3 April 2006

Time: 10:30 am registration, 10:45 am lecture

Place: The Helena May, 35 Garden Road, Conference Room

Cost: \$80 members; \$100 non-members

Booking and Enquiries: Sarah Parnell, 11 Tytam Village, Stanley, Hong Kong, tel. 2813 8588 or [sarahp@netvigator.com](mailto:sarahp@netvigator.com)

## 9. News from Overseas

10-19 March: TEFAF International Art & Antique Fair, Maastricht, Netherlands.

28-30 March:	Auctions at Christie's, Sotheby's and Bonham's, New York
30 March -7 April:	Exhibition of Porcelain, Works of Art and Lacquer at Bonham's, New York.
30 March -2 April:	New York Arts of Pacific Asia Show, Gramercy Park Armory, New York.
31 March -5 April:	The International Art Fair, New York.
5 April:	Asian Works of Art Auction at Doyle, New York.
Until 17 April:	"China: The Three Emperors 1662-1795". An exhibition from the Palace Museum Beijing at the Royal Academy of Arts, London.
8-18 June:	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.

## 10. Highlights

**December 3:** "Chinese Paintings from the C P Lin Collection". Gallery tour at the HKMA led by curator, Raymond Tang. An enthusiastic group spent some two hours touring selected paintings in the exhibition under the expert guidance of Raymond Tang who provided stimulating insights and background to contemporary Chinese painting history and techniques.

**5 December 05:** "House, Home, Family: The Chinese Way of Living and Being". A lecture by Kai-Yin Lo, following the Annual General Meeting.

To a packed audience at the Hong Kong Club, Ms. Lo gave an insightful glimpse into the functional, social and symbolic attributes of Chinese dwellings as they reflect architectural aesthetics, *feng shui* principles, and the impact of the family structure. Gender, lineage and ritual determined the division of domestic and private space. Traditions die hard and nowhere more so than in China due mainly, perhaps, to Confucian tenets and a belief in an ancient cosmic order.

Kai-Yin Lo is a designer and independent scholar. She holds numerous advisory positions in the field of international arts and cultural institutions and is a Visiting Professor at the Academy of Arts and Design at Tsinghua University in Beijing. She is the co-editor, with Ronald G. Knapp, of "House, Home, Family – Living and Being Chinese" and has edited three other books on Chinese culture.

**13 December 05:** "Show and Tell" evening on Song and other ceramics. Against a backdrop of riots in the area surrounding the WTO Conference a mile or so away at the Convention Centre, a group of 13 members gathered at the Hong Kong Club. The experts, Henry Howard-Sneyd, Managing Director of Sotheby's Asia and KY Ng of KY Fine Art examined and vetted pieces brought in by members for identification and also showed some very rare and interesting pieces and shards from their own private collections.

Shards handled included examples from the finest types of Song dynasty porcelains: Jun Yao, Ju Yao, Temmoku Yao, the very rare persimmon Ting Yao and oil-spotted ware. Also examined were fascinating examples of just how adept those who are intent upon deception can be, including a reproduction bowl superimposed on an authentic foot rim and base, which successfully fooled the thermo-luminescence test.

To those members who were unable to attend, do try not to miss the next such gathering. The opportunity to have expert commentary is rare and we all gain so much from it. That is what the OCS is all about – the gaining and sharing of knowledge and appreciation of oriental culture.

**11 February 06:** “Threads of Meaning”. Talk by Don Cohn jointly presented with the Textile Society. Amidst the exhibition of ‘treasures’ from his extensive collection, Don Cohn spoke of the trials and tribulations of his experience of collecting in China. A China scholar, Don recounted early days as China opened to the outside and the absence of souvenirs save for embroidery and textiles. His continuing interest in folk culture and the vernacular was reflected in the assortment of textiles and silver on display. Subsequently, Don has collected and catalogued over 75,000 early and rare children’s books, magazines, posters and games for a private library at Princeton.

**25 February 06:** “The Silk Road: Treasures from Xinjiang”. Gallery tour at the Hong Kong Heritage Museum, Shatin, led by docent, Hilda Lau.

The exhibition showcased 115 sets of treasures on loan from the Xinjiang Cultural Heritage Bureau. These included rarely seen gold ornaments, bronze wares, wooden slips with Kharosthi script, textiles, and well-preserved mummies and wooden corpses that uncover the mystery of the region’s ancient burial practices. The presence of Chris Hall added to the elucidation of ancient textile weaving techniques and colours.

**22 March 06:** “Understanding Chinese Sculpture”. A lecture by Dr. Simon Kwan at the Hong Kong Club at 6.30 pm. Traditionally, Chinese people regarded sculptures as a craft rather than an art-form. Although influenced by foreign models, Chinese sculpture has undergone its own development, almost independently of the outside world. Examples to be used by Dr Kwan will include some 40 pieces from his private collection.

**4 April 06:** “The Yongle Emperor and the Arts of His Era”. The Dr. K. S. Lo Memorial Lecture 2006 by Mr. James C. Y. Watt at the Hong Kong Club at 6.30 pm.

The Yongle Emperor (r. 1403-24) is one of the most written-about figures in Chinese history; and works of decorative arts, particularly porcelain, produced during his reign have long been favorites among connoisseurs and collectors. In this talk, James Watt will discuss the works of art in relation to the Yongle Emperor’s personal beliefs and the events in his time that most affected artistic production, particularly in the imperial workshops.

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).

**10-17 May 06:** “Land of the Immortals, Sages and Heroes: Art and Architecture of Shandong Province”. The Shandong Tour led by Prof. P. P. Ho.

If the region of Xian can be described as the cradle of Chinese civilization, Shandong Province can be said to be the land of mythical, religious and moral powers that sustained and developed that civilization. The region played a pivotal role in early Chinese history and has been a centre for Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism. The tour will encompass a

host of fascinating temples, tombs, museums, monasteries and other buildings and include fascinating insights into religion, art, sculpture and architecture.

Prof. P.P. Ho is Dean of Students and Professor of Architecture at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. His pre-tour lecture on April 11 will be open to all who are interested (see details in Section 5 above) .

The tour group of 20 is already full and any cancellations will be filled from Members on the waiting list. Enquiries to May Lau on 28651005 or by e-mail to [maysplau@yahoo.com.hk](mailto:maysplau@yahoo.com.hk)

**24 May 06:** "The Maritime Trade and Chinese Ceramics Pre-1700". A lecture by Mr. Brian S. McElney at the Hong Kong Club at 6.30 pm.

The lecture will give the background to the maritime trade and Chinese ceramic exports involved prior to 1700 (which are the subject of an exhibition at the Museum of East Asian Art due to open in Bath on 22 August 2006); discuss the restrictions applied in the Ming dynasty and the steps taken to circumvent them; and touch on the Arab, Chinese/Fukienese, Ryukyuan/Japanese and Portuguese/Spanish, and Dutch involvement and the relevance of all the above in the dating of export ceramics.

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:** "Pre-Angkorian Art in Cambodia". The Dr. Veronica Lam Memorial Lecture will be given by Smitthi Siribhadra.

The lecture will cover the Pre-Angkorian sites at Champasak, Angkorborei and Samborpreikuk (their architecture and sculpture), then other sites of the same period in Cambodia and Thailand, in order to see how this period expanded and also to 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 Silpaakorn 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 joint Thai-French research project on Thai archaeological sites and artifacts.

**13 Oct – 17 Dec 06:** "Art and Imitation in China". The OCS Exhibition 2006.

The exhibition will be held at the Hong Kong University Museum and Art Gallery from 13 October to 17 December 2006, sponsored by HSBC and curated by Mr. Antony Lin. An eminent group of scholars have agreed to 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 knowledge of China's rich cultural heritage.

By letter dated January 25 the President circulated a summary of the themes of the exhibition and invited all Members wishing to exhibit to send digital photos and descriptions of their relevant pieces to the OCS at [exhibition@orientalceramics.com.hk](mailto:exhibition@orientalceramics.com.hk) . Although the February 28 deadline has just passed, any Members who have not yet

responded and would like to do so may still send in their proposals as above for consideration by the OCS Vetting Committee.

### **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 4 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.

Final details and costings will be announced. In the meantime, any enquiries to our new Committee Member and Tour Director, Jacqui Muller on 26139815 or by e-mail at [infinitesl@netvigator.com](mailto:infinitesl@netvigator.com)

### 11. **OCS Library**

The *OCS Library*, now comprising the Society’s collection of over 400 books, catalogues, journals and papers on oriental art and culture, will, from April, be available to members at the Art Section on the tenth floor of the Central Library in Causeway Bay. At a recent ceremony, the President, Hon. Secretary and other Executive Committee members representing the Society presented the Chief Librarian with new books and catalogues.

The *OCS Library* is a growing collection and we will be very happy to accept additions. If you have any books on any topic falling within the classification 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 the book is already included in our collection or the Central Library’s own collection, and advise you accordingly.

Material from the *OCS Library* will be 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.

Our thanks to the following for donating publications which together with other books received by the Society, were added to the collection to mark the re-opening:

Anthony J. Allen: “Allen’s Authentication of Ancient Chinese Ceramics”, 2005.

Malcolm Barnett: “Robert D. Jacobsen: Imperial Silks - Ch’ing Dynasty Textiles in the Minneapolis Institute of Arts”, dedicated in memory of Mrs. Billie Hall.

Nicol Guerin & Dick van Oenen: “Thai Ceramic Art, The Three Religions”, Sun Tree Publishing Ltd. 2005.

Chris Hall: “Power Dressing, Textiles for Rulers and Priests”, Asian Civilizations Museum, Singapore, 2006.

Idemitsu Museum of Arts: Bulletin #133.

Kai-Yin Lo: “Bright as Silver, White as Snow: Chinese White Ceramics from Late Tang to Yuan Dynasty/Examples from the Kai-yin Lo Collection”, Yong Ming Tang, Hong Kong, 1998.

Julia M. White: “Masterpieces of Chinese Lacquer from the Mike Healy Collection”, Honolulu Academy of Art, 2005.

12. **Dr. Hu Shih-chang**

Dr. Hu Shih-chang passed away peacefully on Monday 20 February 2006, aged 82. A memorial service will be held in St. John’s Cathedral at 3 pm on Saturday April 1.

Dr. Hu was well-known and respected for his knowledge and collection of oriental art, particularly lacquer ware, and will be greatly missed by all his friends. Dr Hu and his wife, Dorcas, have been long-standing members of the Society and Dr Hu served on the Committee from 1989 to 1992. His article (with Lee King-tsi), “Inscription of Ming Lacquer” appeared in the Society’s Bulletin No 10 and he subsequently published (with Jane Wilkinson) a book, “Chinese Lacquer”.

Although he suffered serious illness in the past few years, Dr Hu continued to lecture and pursue his scholarly research. Our sincere condolences to his widow Dorcas, his son and daughter-in-law Dr. Wayne and Emma Hu (OCS Joint Life Members), and all the family.

13. **Enquiries**

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