



THE ORIENTAL CERAMIC SOCIETY OF HONG KONG LIMITED

香港東方陶瓷學會

Save the dates:

March 14

Rose Kerr full day
symposium

March 31

Prof. Peter YK Lam
Lecture

April 4

Sotheby's Preview

May 20

Prof. Chen Huasha
Beijing Palace Museum

May 23

Christie's Preview

June 23

May Huang
Jingdezhen Ceramics
Institute

Winter / Spring Newsletter, March 2009

This newsletter comes to you later than usual, and as a combined winter/spring edition, as we make the transition to a new newsletter editor.

This past autumn was exceptionally rich in lectures and events for the OCS as is described in further detail in our President's AGM address, below. Activities continued in 2009 with Peter Lam's talk on Prince Hongli and Prof. Robert E. Harrist, Jr.'s lecture on Cal-

ligraphy and Imperial Power on Mt. Tai.

OCS members were also treated to guided previews of Sotheby's and Christie's auctions and, at the end of last November, a small group travelled to Guangzhou for an exciting weekend of visits to the provincial museum and the Nanyue kingdom remains.

An equally active agenda stretches before us and it's my pleasure to appraise you of

some of these events now.

One further event to note is the recent completion of our Bulletin 14, which is now available to all OCS members; if any member has not yet received Bulletin 14 in the mail they should very shortly.

With best wishes,
Chris Frape,
Publications and Newsletters

President's Report at the Annual General Meeting December 3, 2008

The year 2008 has been another active year for the Society, with a total of seventeen events, in addition to the Society's Annual General Meeting. Ten scholarly lectures were held during the year:

"From Sitting on Mats to Sitting on Furniture: The Evolution of Chinese Furnishing from the Han-T'ang to Five Dynasties Period" by Ms. Lina Lin, curator, Department of Painting and Calligraphy of the National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan;

"In Search of Northern Song Jades: Archaeological and Other Evidence" by Professor Jenny F. So, Professor of Fine Arts and Director the Institute of Chinese Studies, the Chinese University of Hong Kong;

"New Studies on Yongzheng (1723-1735) Imperial Porcelain" by Professor Peter Y.K. Lam, Director of the Art Gallery, Chinese University of Hong Kong;

"Working for an Ideal Society: The Song Dynasty Pictures of Tilling and Weaving" by Dr. Roslyn Lee Hammers, Assistant Professor, Department of Fine Arts, The University of Hong Kong;

"Auspicious Words on Sixteenth Century Official Porcelain and Lacquer Wares" by Dr. Maggie C.K. Wan, Department of Fine Arts, Chinese University of Hong Kong;

"Han Pictorial Art", by Dr. Marianne Wong Pui Yin of the Chinese Civilization Centre, City University of Hong Kong;

"Later Decorated Chinese Porcelain" by Julian Thompson;

"Mysterious Creatures, Towering Trees and Lofty Figures in Sacrifice: the Lost Civilization at Sanxingdui, China", the Dr. K.S. Lo Lecture 2008, by Dr. Jay Xu, Director of the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco;

"A New Look at Old Chinese Baskets", the Dr. Ip Yee Memorial Lecture 2008, by Dr. Simon S. M. Kwan;

"The 5th and 6th Century Silk Road and Buddhist Arts in Gansu: A Discussion Centered on the Bingling Temple and Maijishan Grottoes" by Dr. Wei Wenbin, Director of the Maijishan Institute, Gansu, China.

One appreciation evening was held, on Chinese Ceramic Pillows, led by Mr. Mark Lam, OCS member, and Mr. Ho Kam Chuen, curator, Hong Kong Museum of Art.

Four auction previews were held, two at Sotheby's, led by Ms. Hajni Elias and Ms. Edie Hu, and two at Christie's, led by Rosemary Scott and Pola Antebi.

Two study tours were held, one led by Professor Jenny So of the Chinese University of Hong Kong to Wuhan and Wudang to visit the new Hubei

Provincial Museum and the Daoist Wudang Mountain; the other led by Ms. Tina Pang of the University of Hong Kong to visit museums and temples in neighboring Guangzhou.

In addition to the above mentioned events, our electronic Newsletter continued to appear at quarterly intervals; our website was enhanced and updated; and our Bulletin Number Fourteen, while admittedly behind schedule, has nevertheless made it into the final stages of completion and will appear shortly.

As always, I am grateful to all who helped make these various events and activities happen so smoothly and successfully. In addition to thanking our speakers, I would like to thank the leaders of our appreciation evening, auction previews and study tours, and the members of the OCS Executive Committee for all their efforts, help and support.

Last but certainly not least, I would like to thank the OCS members themselves for their continued subscriptions, support and participation in our events and activities.

Dr. Michael Martin,
President



**Upcoming Events,
March, April, 2009
Ongoing and Re-
cent Past Events**



Rose Kerr (above); Song dynasty ceramics (below)



Upcoming Event – Rose Kerr – Full day symposium on Chinese Ceramics – March 14 – The Hong Kong Club

This full day symposium will focus on Chinese ceramics from the Neolithic to Han in the morning and continue in the afternoon with Chinese ceramics from Tang to Song.

Rose Kerr, already well known to many of our members, is a world authority on East Asian art and design. She is former Keeper of the Far Eastern Department at the Victoria & Albert

Museum in London, and acted as President of the Oriental Ceramic Society. She has also worked at the Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art in London, and at the University of Sussex, and is currently an Honorary Associate of the Needham Research Institute in Cambridge and Honorary Fellow at the University of Glasgow. Author of and contributor to many books, her latest contribution, published just this past Febru-

ary, is entitled 今之脉昔: 宋代耀州窯及青白瓷 *Song Through 21st Century Eyes: Yaozhou and Qingbai Ceramics*.

Rose studied Chinese at university and spent a year in China as a student during the Cultural Revolution. A fluent Mandarin speaker, she visits Asia frequently on research and buying trips, and has undertaken sabbaticals at the National Palace Museum, Taipei and the Shanghai Museum.

Upcoming Event – Prof. Peter YK Lam – Percival David & the British Tradition of Scholarship in Chinese Ceramics – Mar 31

The Percival David Collection of Chinese ceramics is arguably the finest in the Western world. The OCS, together with the Friends of the HK Museum of Art will jointly host Prof. Peter YK Lam, Director of the Art Museum of the Chinese University of HK and former student of the Percival David Foundation (the 'PDF'), to speak to us on Sir Percival David and the British tradition of scholarship in Chinese ceramics. Sir Percival David (1892 -

1964) was one of the foremost collectors of Chinese ceramics of the 20th century. The David Collection consists of over 1,750 pieces of Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing porcelain spanning the 10th to the 18th centuries. These were presented to the University of London in 1950 and housed in the PDF. Over the next 55 years the Foundation became a training ground for generations of scholars and experts in Chinese art history. Last year the collec-

tion was transferred on long term loan to the British Museum, where it will be housed in a dedicated space and new gallery opening in April of this year.

Within a 20th century and HK perspective, Prof. Lam will discuss the life and career of Sir Percival, his time, taste, collection and scholarship as well as some of his notable British contemporaries associated with the PDF.

Current Event – Inauguration of the new, permanent Gallery of Ceramics at the Gugong Bowuguan, Beijing

Through China's ancient civilization and long history, ceramics have been both a material and spiritual symbol. In the early Neolithic era about 10,000 years ago, ceramics were invented on the continent, making China one of the first places to produce and use pottery. Since that beginning, China can lay claim to many other such 'firsts' in the field—primitive porcelain first made in the

Shang period, over 3,000 years ago and true porcelain in the Eastern Han, as just a couple. Since the Tang period, Chinese ceramics were exported and sold all over the known world. Chinese ceramic techniques and artistic achievements effected a profound impact on production in many other countries and drove the development of the world's ceramic culture, fully supporting China's title as the

'Kingdom of Ceramics'.

As the largest repository of ancient art works in China, the Gugong has about 350,000 ceramic relics in its collection. Most of these originated from the Qing court, so they are systematically catalogued and their origins traceable.

The current, completely revamped, Gallery of Ceramics contains 400 examples from these vast holdings, carefully chosen and presented in chronological order.

Current Event – National Palace Museum Exhibition – *Green: Longquan Celadon of the Ming Dynasty* – Ongoing to Oct. 15

Not to be missed is a major new retrospective on the celadons of the Ming Dynasty produced at the kilns at Longquan, ongoing at the National Palace Museum, Taipei, until October 15th, 2009.

Connoisseurs have long admired the elegant thin body and ethereal, bluish-green glaze of the Song Dynasty Longquan wares as well as the heavier and vigorous products

of these kilns during the Yuan period. The present exhibition focuses on the Ming Dynasty Longquan wares: their use in court, appreciation by the literati and unique role in tributary and trade relations between the Empire and other nations. Among the Ming Longquan wares, those with glossy, rich, green glaze in yellowish or milky tones garnered the most attention.

Typically fully carved with intricate patterns, they

resembled the wares of Jingdezhen official kilns, clear signs of meticulous and superior workmanship.

Even today, Ming Longquan wares often appear in archaeological sites and court collections in Asia, Africa, and Europe. They also inspired the establishment of various ceramics industries outside China. We can therefore conclude that Longquan celadons possess a beauty that is universally recognized.

Upcoming Events – The Opening of the Sir Joseph Hotung Centre for Ceramic Studies – British Museum, London – April 2009

In addition to our lecture described above on the Percival David Collection, another, very significant, milestone is upcoming, regarding this collection which will be of interest to all members.

The outstanding Percival David Collection of Chinese Art will move from its present premises, where it has been resident for the past fifty years, and go on permanent public display in a specially

designed new gallery developed thanks to the generosity of Sir Joseph Hotung.

Containing 1,752 items of Chinese ceramics from the Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties (the 10th to the early 20th century), the Percival David Foundation collection is unparalleled in quality outside of China.

The display at the Museum of this extraordinarily rich material will allow six million visitors a year

access to the finest collection of Chinese ceramics outside Beijing, Shanghai or Taipei, Taiwan.

The public gallery will be part of the Sir Joseph Hotung Centre for Ceramic Studies, which will include facilities to use the collection for teaching.

Recent Event – Dr. Robert Harrist, Jr. – Lecture on *Calligraphy and Imperial Power on Mt. Tai* – Feb. 17

OCSHK members and guests were recently treated to an enlightening lecture by Professor Robert Harrist, Jr., Chairman of the Department of Art History, Columbia University, New York.

Dr. Harrist's focus was on the calligraphy carved directly into the granite surface of the Daoist sacred peak of Mt. Tai, a pilgrimage site since ancient times. The inscriptions literally stretch from

the base to the peak of the mountain and among these stone inscriptions are traces of calligraphy by rulers of China.

The earliest is an inscription 13 meters high in the calligraphy of Emperor Xuanzong of the Tang Dynasty. Much later examples, by the Qianlong emperor and by political leaders of modern times also appear on Mt. Tai.

The lecture explored the ways through which China's

rulers used carved calligraphy to mark the sacred topography of the mountain with indelible signs of their power and their cultural achievements.

Dinner with Professor Harrist followed the enthusiastically attended lecture. We would like to extend our thanks again to Professor Harrist and all who participated in this valuable event.

Below : four Ming celadon treasures from the upcoming Palace Museum, Taipei, exhibition



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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 educative 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

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

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.

A new catalogue listing of the holdings is now under preparation and will be available shortly to all members who have interest in retaining this list for reference or library use. Please contact the Newsletter editor for further details.

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.