

Press Release

THE ODYSSEY OF THE DRAGON

The Art of Dragons, and Other Auspicious Beasts in Ancient Chinese Jade

Up Until April 27th, 2024

Opening Reception
Friday, March 15th, 2024
5 - 8 pm

Throckmorton Fine Art is pleased to present an expansive exhibit of jade carvings of the dragon, the mythological animal long prominent in Chinese civilization. The dragon in Chinese mythology traverses dimensions, controls the rain and clouds, and bestows many blessings upon the people. Legend has it that it can morph into many forms, ascend to the sky at the spring equinox and dive to the abyss at the autumnal equinox. It is the leader of all mystical reptiles, and of the four spirits (dragon, phoenix, qilin, turtle), and later became a symbol of imperial power, where Emperors of all dynasties claimed to be dragons.

This year, 2024 is the year of the dragon, one of the twelve traditional Chinese zodiac animals. It symbolizes luck, virtue, peace, and longevity. In honor of the new year, we are exhibiting over seventy jade carvings. Many of the examples are of dragons, but also included are carvings of the mythological feline bixie and beasts, each one with its own morphology and cultural significance.

The exhibit offers an overview of jade carvings spanning throughout the long history of Chinese civilization. Some carvings on view will be examples from the Late Neolithic Period of the Hongshan Culture (4700 to 2900 BCE), and the early Dynastic Era of the Shang Period (1600 to 1100 BCE), the Zhou (Western and Eastern) (1066-221 BCE).

These early jade objects are intricately carved in the most beautiful of jades. Also presented are a few carvings from later Chinese eras, including the Ming Dynasty (1368 to 1644 CE), and the Qing Dynasty (1644 to 1912 CE).

These masterful carvings in jade were worn as pendants and used in the daily rituals and ceremonies of the time. The jade objects exhibited were collected by Spencer Throckmorton over a twenty-seven-year period, and each carving has been thoroughly studied and vetted by both Gu Fang and Frank Aon.

The exhibition features striking, and exceedingly rare examples of museum quality works of art. It offers a fascinating window into both the role of jade and the symbolism of the dragon, Chihu Felines, and other auspicious beasts in Chinese culture.



Images

- Left:** C-Shaped Dragon, Late Neolithic Period, Hongshan Culture, 4700-2500 BCE, H: 5 ½ in. W: 5 ¼ in.
Top Right: Dragon Pendant, Warring States Period, 475-221 BCE, H: 1 ½ in. W: 3 ¾ in.
Bottom Right: Beast, Qing Dynasty, 1644-1912 CE, H: 2 ¾ in. x W: 2 ½ in. x L: 4 ¼ in.

THROCKMORTON FINE ART

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