

Oi Ling 6月號
Size : 215mm(width)x270mm(Height)

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Antique – Beauty of Stone

Although no surviving textual or historical records tell of when the Chinese started using stone as a material for artistic creation—except the little information revealed by Qu Yuan in his poem “Heavenly Questions,” in which he mentioned some scenes depicted in temple murals—archaeological digs provide ample evidence that stone was used as a medium for artistic expression.

In the Han dynasty, an important stone piece was commissioned by Han Wudi to remember his beloved General Huo Qu Bing, who had won many important wars for the Han Empire. The emperor was very sad to learn the death of this outstanding young warrior and ordered a large stone piece of a horse with one of its legs stepping on an enemy warrior to signify Huo's glorious victory over the Kong Nu, a nomadic tribe who regularly invaded the outskirts of the Han Empire.

Traditionally, ancient Chinese seem to prefer a type of shallow carving called Xian Diao. This style of carving was very fine, and done on a flat surface. At the end of the Han dynasty, with the introduction of Buddhism, a new style of carving started to appear in China. As seen in many of the survived religious steles from the Han, the Northern and Southern Dynasties, the stone art from this period saw a fusion of east meets west—a mixing of the traditional Chinese style of shallow carving with high relief style carving, which is believed to be brought into China along with Buddhism. By the time of the Tang dynasty, high relief became the prevalent style. Stone carvings were widely used for all kinds of decorations.

Chinese mythology also suggests that stone is formed by absorbing the essence of energy. Folk culture took the belief that this universe contained great positive energy and found many different outward manifestations of this idea. Stone is used not only as small accessories as seen in different types of jewelry, but also as architectural decorations and features as well as daily functional item such as furniture.

Today we have a large number of beautiful furniture pieces made both for the outdoors and indoors left for us from the Ming and Qing dynasties.

Recommendation

- 1) A white marble stone low table, Ming Dynasty (1368-1644AD)
Dimensions: Width 62.5cm Depth 62.5cm Height 57.5cm
- 2) A Buddhist Stele, Eastern Wei (534-550AD)
Dimensions: Height 131cm Width 43cm Depth 10cm

店主推介

1. 明汉白石矮几，公元1368-1644
尺寸：宽度62.5厘米，深度62.5厘米，高度57.5厘米
2. 东魏造像碑，公元534-550
尺寸：高131厘米，宽43厘米，深10厘米



明汉白石矮几
A white marble stone low table, Ming dynasty
(1368-1644AD)

文物品鉴 - 石之美

我国传统“金石学”，金所指为三代青铜，而石则包括历代石雕造像、碑刻、墓志等等。

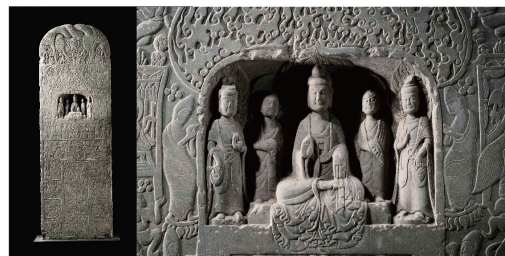
两汉时期，随着对外交通的开拓，商旅往返，佛教亦传入东土。与此同时，西方的石像雕塑的技巧亦随之而传播。两汉时期出现大型的石刻，其中有代表性的如“马踏匈奴”，又如东汉盛行的“墓前立兽”，“石辟邪”、“石天禄”等等。两汉时期亦已流行石刻碑文，例如“孔谦碑”、“熹平石经”。

及至南北朝，社会动荡，避世思想盛行，玄学与佛教因而得到较大发展。南北朝均大量兴建佛寺及造像，其中世界文化遗产的河南“龙门石窟”和山西“云岗石窟”即凿于此时。除了大量的佛教造像外，还有其他重要的石刻精品，例如墓志铭和碑刻，为文人雅士及帝王收藏者所钟爱。

隋唐时期更是我国古代历史上辉煌时期。如此前所述，河南“龙门石窟”在唐朝更是盛况空前，此窟不少巨大造像均凿于唐代。为唐代的艺术宝库。除了佛教造像外，墓前神道两旁的石兽造像更是唐代大国气象的代表，例如高宗干陵的石像生，外型雄伟，体现出唐代国力强盛的气派。唐代另一石刻代表就是石碑，现存西安碑林博物馆就收藏大量唐代的碑刻，自始各朝均有名士慕名而至，进行掇拓，部份精美的宋拓本至今更被视为国家珍贵文物。

自唐以后，石刻雕塑进入另一个发展时期，唐代那种巨大的石像生不再出现，两宋的墓前石像造型矮小，失去雄浑的气势，例如河南巩义北宋王陵。至于佛教造像亦大不如前，较为有代表性的是重庆“大足石窟”，但其气势与唐代相去甚远。两宋盛行观赏石，徽宗更因“花石纲”而令时局出现动荡。与此同时，出现了专门探讨赏石的专著，如“云林石谱”等等。

明清时期的石雕艺术，佛教等石造像已经急剧衰落。较为有代表性的是宫廷建筑中门前的石狮、庭园中的石雕摆设如花盆和水缸等等。



东魏造像碑
An Buddhist Stele, Eastern Wei (534 - 550AD)

Oi Ling Fine Chinese Antiques

Address : 58 Hollywood Road, Central, Hong Kong
Tel : (+852) 2815 9422
Website : www.oilingantiques.com

燕誉堂

地址 : 香港中环荷李活道58号
电话 : (+852) 2815 9422
网址 : www.oilingantiques.com



店主蒋美玲