



**TWO-DAY AUCTION - Fine Chinese Art / 中國藝術集珍 / Buddhism & Hinduism (CA0321)**

Sat, 6th Mar 2021

**Lot 538**

**Starting price:** €5000

**Estimate:** €10000

**AN OPENWORK AND RETICULATED ZITAN BRUSHPOT, BITONG, QING DYNASTY 清代紫檀木雕筆筒**

China, 1644-1912. Of cylindrical form, the exterior exquisitely carved in high relief with a continuous scene of flowers, pine and willow trees, and animals, including monkeys, goats, rats, birds, and phoenixes, finely detailed with close as well as distant mountains. **Signed Gu Jue** in traditional Chinese characters, and carved either by the master himself or a close follower.

**Provenance:** Zhou Shengli (1951-2018). Acquired ca. 1990. Thence by descent within the same family to the present owner. Zhou Shengli was born in Shanghai, graduated from Shanghai Institute of Mechanical Engineering in 1977, and studied painting under Lu Yanshao (1909-1993) from 1978. In the early 1990s, Zhou established the 'Baosteel Painting and Calligraphy Society'. In the next 10 years, he and his colleagues participated in various national calligraphy and painting competitions and won over twenty of the highest prizes and awards. A painting by Zhou was auctioned once in 1995 by Gallery Duo YunXuan in Shanghai for a price of RMB 52,000, breaking the record for works by living artists at that time. His paintings are now exhibited in the prestigious Beijing Gallery, along with many of China's most important artists.

**Condition:** Old wear, several natural age cracks and minor losses with small old fills, few minuscule nicks, occasional light scratches. Overall fine condition, commensurate with age. Superb patina which over the centuries has naturally grown into a dark-brown color with a distinct deep-purple luster of the wood.

Weight: 842.4 g

Dimensions: Height 15 cm

The wood of a fine grain and color, the carver masterfully utilizing the variegating tones for accentuations in the composition, appearing much like sunlight falling onto the respective areas.

**The brush pot is signed by the carver, Gu Jue (1662-1722),** and carved either by the master himself or a close follower, whose designation was known as Zong Yu. The third character in the signature reads zhi ('carved by'). A native of Jiading, Jiangsu province, Gu was one of the most famous bamboo carvers active during the reign of the Kangxi Emperor and whose surviving works are extremely rare. Gu especially excelled in very fine and detailed carvings of figures and landscape within highly complex compositions, often combining high relief with shallow carving. The quality of the present brush pot is simply breathtaking, therefore it is

possible that it was indeed carved by the master himself.

Literature comparison: A related brush pot signed by Gu Jue is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, accession number 1994.382. See a similar bamboo brush pot carved with a landscape design and signed by Gu Jue, from the Eugene Fuller Memorial Collection in the Seattle Art Museum, illustrated in Ip Yee and Laurence C.S. Tam, *Chinese Bamboo Carving, Part I*, Hong Kong, 1978, pl. 50. Compare also the brush pot dated to the early Qing period, signed Jiyou zhongxia Gu Zongyu zhi ('Made by Gu Zongyu in the Summer of Jiyou year') in the Palace Museum Collection, illustrated in *The Palace Museum Collection of Elite Carvings*, Forbidden City Publishing House, 2002, p. 55, no. 26. Compare also one illustrated in 'Chinese Decorative Arts', *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, New York, Summer 1997, p. 50.

Auction result comparison: Compare with a related brush pot at Christie's Hong Kong in *Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art* on 30 May 2005, lot 1293, **sold for HKD 10,760,000**, and another at Sotheby's Hong Kong in *Scholarly Works of Art from the Mary and George Bloch Collection* on 23 October 2015, lot 5, **sold for HKD 5,160,000**. A brushpot attributed to Gu Jue was offered at Sotheby's Hong Kong in *The Robert H. Blumenfield Collection of Chinese Bamboo Carvings* on 7 April 2015, lot 3008, bought-in at an **estimate of HKD 2,500,000-3,500,000**, and one described as 'School of Gu Jue' was sold by Christie's Hong Kong in *The Feng Wen Tang Collection Of Bamboo Carvings and Furniture* on 3 June 2015, lot 2828, **for HKD 1,360,000**.

#### 清代紫檀木雕筆筒

中國，1644-1912年。本品直筒形，直口，直腹，平底，精美浮雕茂密森林裏猴子戲耍的情景。不同的樹木，鳥類以及山羊等不同動物，此件器物雕飾巧致，疏透玲瓏並，細節生動逼真。顧珏款，可能為大師本人，或是其同期匠人或學生。

來源：周生力(1951-2018)收藏。大約購於1990年代。直至現任藏家前一直保存在同一家族中。周生力出生於上海，師從陸儼少(1909-1993)學畫。1990年代他和他的同事們參加了許多書法和繪畫比賽，並贏得了二十多個獎項，從而建立了“寶鋼書畫學會”。他的一幅畫曾在1995年上海朵雲軒參加拍賣以52,000元的價格拍出，打破了當時在世藝術家的作品紀錄。現在，他的畫作與許多中國最重要的畫家一起在著名的北京畫廊展出

圖片：周生力與陸儼少，約1970至1980年間。

品相：舊磨損，一些自然年齡裂縫和少量舊填充物，很少的微小划痕，偶爾的輕微划痕。總體狀況良好，與年齡相稱。幾個世紀以來，極好自然生長成深棕色的古銅色包漿，並具有明顯的深紫色光澤。

重量：842.4 克

尺寸：高15厘米

木材質地細密，色澤鮮豔，雕刻師熟練地運用不同色調來強調構圖，看起來很像陽光直射到各個區域。

筆筒上刻清代雕刻大師顧珏(1662-1722)款，可能為大師本人，或是其同期匠人或學生。顧珏字宗玉，江蘇嘉定人，是康熙皇帝時期最活躍的竹雕刻家之一，其倖存作品極為罕見。顧珏特別擅長在高度複雜的構圖中精巧細緻地雕刻人物和風景，通常將淺浮雕與淺雕結合在一起。因為筆筒雕刻工藝令人嘆為觀止，所以它很可能是由顧珏親自雕刻的。

文獻比較：顧珏筆筒可見於Metropolitan Museum of Art，編號1994.382。另一顧珏署名的竹雕山水筆筒來自Seattle Art Museum中的Eugene Fuller Memorial Collection，見Ip Yee 與

Laurence C.S. Tam編輯的 Chinese Bamboo Carving, Part I, 香港1978, 圖 50。故宮博物院中“己酉仲夏顧宗玉制”的筆筒, Palace Museum Collection of Elite Carvings, Forbidden City Publishing House, 2002, 圖55, no. 26. 以及紐約 Metropolitan Museum of Art 的 ‘Chinese Decorative Arts’, Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin, New York, Summer 1997, 圖50。

拍賣結果比較: 香港佳士得 Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art 拍場2005年5月30日, lot 1293, 售價 **HKD 10,760,000**; 香港蘇富比 Scholarly Works of Art from the Mary and George Bloch Collection 拍場2015年10月23日 lot 5, 售價 **HKD 5,160,000**。香港蘇富比 The Robert H. Blumenfield Collection of Chinese Bamboo Carvings 拍場2015年4月7日, lot 3008, 估價 **HKD 2,500,000-3,500,000**; 香港佳士得 The Feng Wen Tang Collection Of Bamboo Carvings and Furniture 拍場2015年6月3日, lot 2828, **HKD 1,360,000**。