



Large Shiwan Pottery Figure Of A Scholar With Fan In Oxblood Glaze, Chinese, C. 1950s



700 EUR

Signature : Shiwan

Period : 20th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Sandstone

Width : 11,5 cm

Height : 35 cm

Depth : 13,5 cm

Description

Large mid-20th century Shiwan stoneware figure of a scholar with fan - oxblood glaze - Shiwan Pottery Factory (?????) This large and expressive stoneware figure depicts a Chinese scholar in traditional garb, likely representing a learned official or cultural figure. He is shown standing upright, one hand raised as if mid-discourse, while the other holds a ruyi sceptre or whisked fan behind his back--a traditional symbol of wisdom and authority. The figure is crisply modelled, with fine facial detailing and lifelike robes, executed in rich hand-applied glazes. Crafted in the famous Shiwan kilns of Foshan, Guangdong, the piece bears the classic characteristics of mid-20th century Shiwan figural sculpture. It is finished in a striking oxblood red glaze for the robe, accented by a

Dealer

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deep glossy black vest and naturalistic details to the flesh and facial hair. The yellow oxide highlights along the folds further emphasise the depth and motion of the sculptural form. The hair, beard, and fan are carefully carved in relief, giving the figure a strong sense of presence. The figure is marked on the base with a square impressed factory seal, typical of collective-era production by the Shiwan Pottery Factory (石湾陶瓷厂). It dates from the 1950s-1970s period, when state-supervised Shiwan workshops produced high-quality figural art under the influence of master sculptors such as Pan Yushu and Liu Zeiman. While unsigned by an individual artist, the quality of the modelling suggests it was created from a mould originally based on a master's work. Larger Shiwan figures such as this are especially sought after by collectors.

Measuring 35 cm tall and weighing nearly 2 kg, this is a substantial example. Larger works were technically challenging to produce due to the risks of warping or cracking during firing. Their dramatic scale and increased presence make them more desirable as decorative or scholarly objects.

Historical Background

The Shiwan kilns in Guangdong have been producing ceramics since at least the Tang dynasty, with the region becoming especially renowned for sculptural ware by the late Qing period. In the 20th century, after the formation of the People's Republic of China, Shiwan workshops were gradually collectivised, and state-run enterprises such as the Shiwan Pottery Factory (石湾陶瓷厂) maintained the traditional modelling skills while introducing organised production lines. These works, while made using standardised moulds, continued to display significant artistry and were often hand-finished by trained artisans. Mid-century Shiwan figures are now widely appreciated for their craftsmanship, character, and vivid glazing techniques.

Measurements

Height: 35 cm / 13.78"
Width: 11.5 cm / 4.53"
Depth: 13.5 cm / 5.31"
Weight: 1995 g

Condition

Overall very good condition for age and size. Glaze is

well-preserved with rich colour and sheen. There is a small loss to one finger on the raised hand and another small loss to a finger on the fan-holding hand at back. There is also a shallow chip to the tip of the beard. All other details--including facial modelling, glaze, and structure--are intact. Base is clean and clearly marked. The piece displays beautifully despite minor flaws, which are common in hand-finished stoneware of this scale.

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