



China - Funerary Lintel With Taotie And Dragons - Han Dynasty - Tl

6 000 EUR



Period : Before 16th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Terracotta

Length : 55 cm

Width : 11 cm

Height : 28 cm

Description

Rare funerary lintel carved in grey terracotta, under the prestigious Han dynasty (206 BC - 220 AD), The decoration, struck with masterly precision, unfolds in horizontal registers like a poem engraved in clay: At the center, sits a taotie, a mythical bird, perhaps the Fenghuang phoenix, spreading its wings with hieratic majesty. It is the messenger between the world of men and that of the spirits. On either side, the bi disks (symbols of Heaven) are adorned with grain motifs, evoking fertility and perpetual rebirth. The friezes of intertwined dragons framing the scene are no mere ornaments; these undulating creatures embody Qi, the vital energy that protects the deceased and guides his soul to the heights of immortality. The technical peculiarity of this piece lies in its emptiness. This brick is hollow, a feat

Dealer

Galerie Raoul Dutillieul

Arts Asiatiques et Porcelaines de Tournai

Mobile : +32 474 472 168

24, Rue des Chapeliers

Tournai 7500

of Han engineering. This inner void was not only a trick to lighten the structure or facilitate crack-free firing; it also symbolized passage, the receptacle of invisible energies. These large-format bricks were assembled to form the walls of the aristocracy's burial chambers. They created a protective environment, a sacred enclosure where time seemed suspended, guaranteeing the deceased comfort and dignity identical to that of his courtly life. Origin: China
Era: Han Dynasty (206 BC - 220) - TL
Dimensions: Height: 28 cm; Length: 55 cm; Width: 11 cm. Conditions: The object has a nice excavation patina with traces of earthy sediment. The stamping is deep and well preserved. Wear from use and small chips at the corners consistent with the age of the piece. No apparent major restoration. Provenance: Private Belgian collection. Science at the Service of Art: What is a Thermoluminescence Test (TL)? In the world of high antiquity, the expert eye is paramount, but science brings absolute certainty. For this Han dynasty funerary brick, the expertise was carried out by the Oxford Authentication laboratory. The scientific principle: Thermoluminescence is a physical dating method that measures the energy stored in crystalline minerals (such as quartz or feldspar) contained in clay since its initial firing. The geological clock: When the brick was fired 2,000 years ago, the heat "reset" the clay's energy counter. The accumulation: Since that day, the object has absorbed a small amount of natural radioactivity from the soil. The revelation: In the laboratory, a micro-sample is heated to high temperature. The light then emitted (thermoluminescence) is proportional to the time elapsed since the last firing.