



China - Large Hu Vase With Cover. - Han Dynasty - T1



6 000 EUR

Period : Before 16th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Terracotta

Diameter : 32 cm

Height : 53 cm

Description

A monumental 53-centimeter vase that doesn't just occupy space; it imposes the stature of a Han aristocracy at the height of its power. An iconic form of ancient China, this covered Hu is a metamorphosis: it transposes into grey clay the luxury of ritual bronzes reserved for elite banquets. Its globular silhouette, with its sovereign stability, rises from a sturdy pedestal to a flared neck that is closed by its original lid. On the vase's shoulders, two Taotie masks emerge from the material with archaic strength. These mythical creatures, their features sculpted in vigorous relief, stare into the invisible to protect the vessel's sacred contents. Between these tutelary figures, the painter has left wisps of ochre and orange, stylized clouds of Yunwen that still seem to vibrate with Qi, the breath of life that the

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deceased carries with him. The persistence of these pigments, two millennia after their application, offers a rare testimony to the polychromy that once colored the silence of princely tombs. The object bears the noble scars of its subterranean history. Its surface is a landscape where the grey of the terracotta dialogues with whitish limestone concretions and ochre sediments, veritable seals of time affixed by the centuries. The exceptional preservation of the lid, a piece often sacrificed by the ages, makes this vase an exceptional witness. This vase is an exceptional piece of prestige, originally designed as a mingqi for a burial site of the high aristocracy. Its monumental size and the preservation of its protective masks make it a masterly replica of the ritual bronzes of the period, symbolizing the deceased's high social status in the afterlife. Origin :China Era :Han Dynasty (206 BC - 220 AD) Dimensions :Height: 53 cm (with lid) - Diameter: 32 cm. Conditions :The object displays remarkable structural integrity for a piece of this size. The original lid is exceptionally well preserved, with a precise fit to the neck. The surface is sound, with no major cracks or visible structural restorations. The ochre and orange pigments, though partially eroded by time, retain a rare vivacity. The whole is enhanced by an archaeological excavation patina, strewn with mineral and earthy concretions inseparable from the support, guaranteeing the vase's authenticity and historic character.

Provenance :Belgian private collection. Science serving Art: What is a Thermoluminescence Test (TL)? In the world of high antiquity, the expert's eye is paramount, but science provides absolute certainty. For this funerary brick from the Han dynasty, the expertise was provided by the QED 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 object was fired, 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.