PUBLISHED IN Hong Kong, Chinese art takes a major place in Arts of Asia, as also its influence on ever wider areas of the world. The present March–April 2007 special issue is timed to support the exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, March 27th to July 8th, 2007. Entitled “Venice and the Islamic World, 828–1797”, it was pre-shown first at the Institute du Monde Arabe, Paris, 2006–2007, and is co-organised by the two great institutions.

The presenter of our March–April cover article, and the exhibition’s main curator, is Dr Stefano Carboni, an outstanding Italian-American author and academic, who earned his doctorate in Islamic Art and Archaeology in 1992, at the School of Oriental Studies, London. He has held positions in the Islamic Art Department of the Met since that year. Today he is the department’s Curator and Administrator and is currently Adjunct Professor of Islamic Art at Hunter College, City University of New York. Through his article “Islamic Glass, East and West”, the readers of Arts of Asia can travel with Dr Carboni on “A Journey Along the Silk Route from China to Venice”. He explains that while appreciation of glass originated in Roman Europe and Syria, by the first centuries AD there was already a solid pattern of transmission West to East, a result of myriad new shapes in blown glass in the Roman Empire.

In Islamic custom, the dead are buried without objects for the afterlife. The largest group of intact luxury glass objects comes from the crypt of the Famen Temple in Shaanxi province, Northeast China, 9th century of the Tang dynasty. Other sites of medieval glass have been revealed in Mongolia, from the Liao dynasty 11th century. As also, late antiquity Roman, Sassanian Iran, and early Islamic glass has been found in the Korean peninsula. The 13th and 14th centuries marked a constant flow of enamelled and gilded glass vessels from the Islamic worlds towards China and Eastern Asia, to the Mongol courts, and the Golden Horde of Russia. Venice emerged as the glassmaking centre in Europe.

In the 13th century, enamelled and gilded glass from Syria and Egypt was well known. Venice created hundreds of enamelled beakers resembling original Islamic works. Sultans and Emirs ordered lamps for their mosques, religious schools and hospices. The lamp with wide mouth, our beautiful example on the cover, establishes the March–April 2007 magazine as one of the most important in our thirty-eight year history. Courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, it comes from Cairo, Egypt, dates from circa 1356–1363 and is 40.6 cm tall.

I should draw for our readers’ early attention the Asia International Arts and Antiques (AIAA) 2007 Fair. It will take place from May 25th to 28th, 2007 at AsiaWorld-Expo, adjacent to Hong Kong International Airport. Especially notable will be Poly Art Museum’s first exhibition of unique ancient Chinese bronzes in Hong Kong. They will display at the fair ten major pieces from their valuable collection, of which two are illustrated above: Gang Bo yu, late Shang dynasty to early Western Zhou period (11th century BC), height 42.6 cm, weight 9.2 kg, inscribed with fourteen graphs in two columns; and Wang Zuo Zuoshou ding, Western Zhou period (11th century to 771 BC), height 41.5 cm, weight 20.1 kg, inscribed with six graphs in two columns. There will also be an exhibition of the Liang Yi Collection of antique Chinese furniture belonging to Hong Kong collector Peter Fung. His 1500 square metres display will include Ming and Qing huanghuali and zitan furniture, as well as an interesting variety of hardwood scholars’ objects.

The organisers of the AIAA 2007 Fair announce that to ensure the quality of exhibits, a honourable vetting committee has been organised with experienced antique experts. Amongst the major exhibitors is Bonhams Hong Kong Asian Art Department who opened its Hong Kong offices on January 13th, 2007 located at Suite 1508, Two Pacific Place. Established in 1793, says Colin Sheaf and Dessa Goddard of Bonhams, “The move marks Bonhams ongoing plans for global growth in the world’s major centres for auctioning art and reinforces its position as one of the world’s leading auctioneers.” Bonhams first Hong Kong Asian Art Department auction will be held on Saturday May 26th at the AIAA 2007 Fair. Their sales will include Asian Contemporary Art (1 pm), Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art (3 pm) and Green Willow Hall Collection of Jade Carvings (5 pm).
Nancy and Robin exchange their marriage vows. Nancy grew up in Seattle, received her BA from University of Washington and did graduate studies at Sophia University. She worked in America, Tokyo and Hong Kong for IBM, Silicon Graphics and The Hongkong Shanghai Banking Corporation. Nancy Tanaka is currently the Head of Institutional FX E-commerce, Asia Pacific at HSBC.

Sunset at The Conrad Bali Resort & Spa where Robin and Nancy Markbreiter held their wedding celebrations on December 22nd-24th, 2006.

It was in July 2006 that Robin, our youngest son, Director and Executive Editor of Arts of Asia, announced his engagement with a diamond ring. Robin and Nancy had known each other since June 2005 on the original introduction by good friend Ming Hsueh. After settling on Bali as the destination for their wedding Nancy and Robin visited the island twice to select the hotel as well as other locations and vendors for various events. It was very time-consuming and challenging to prepare all the detailed arrangements such as the Balinese welcome dinner, religious and legal wedding ceremonies, champagne cocktail reception, elegant wedding dinner, balloon party, musicians and dancers performances, beautiful flowers, and farewell lunch off the beach.

The venue for the wedding was The Conrad Bali Resort & Spa which conveniently is only fifteen minutes drive from Denpasar International Airport. In some ways it was an adventure because many of our friends were at first discouraged from attending due to the political situation and bird flu. I am happy to say that their fears in the bird flu are unfounded and the biggest disaster that they could have met on the wedding day was rain. This Robin avoided on the hotel’s recommendation by paying a rain-stopper shaman US$250 (with no refund). Although it was rainy season the shaman’s magic prevented any downpour throughout the afternoon wedding on December 23rd, 2006. Nancy and Robin’s wedding was very enjoyable and I think readers will find our selection of pictures taken by professional photographer William Furos from Hong Kong as excellent as I do, and that our captions are explanatory. However amongst the ninety-two family and friends whose presence I can acknowledge through only a small selection of the over four thousand pictures that were taken I would like to mention the following for their special support and presence. For the Frank and Shinue Tanaka family: Steven and Lai Tanaka; Rick Tanaka; Keiko Kernagis (matron of honor) and her son Alexander (ring bearer); Imagine Baker and Ming Hsueh (bridesmaids); Catherine and Jack Fu for coming to the wedding from Taiwan and Tokyo.

For the Stephen and Tayet Nguyen Markbreiter family: Peter and Kay Markbreiter; Michael Markbreiter (groomsman) and wife Shari; Mark Schlaseberger (master of ceremonies); and wife Tran; Hai Tran (best man); his wife Christine and their daughters as pretty flower girls; Son Tran (groomsman) and wife Tran; Friet Tran and wife Helene (my sister); Thomas Nguyen and his wife Marie Huyah (my niece); Amongst some of Robin’s closest friends who came to support him in Bali should be mentioned are Simon Castley, Tommy Yuen, Haresh and Bhavna Ramchandani from Hong Kong; Sudhir Gupta and his son Varun from Mumbai.

Nancy and Robin greet guests at the welcome dinner at Pasar Malam Balinese Market Restaurant featuring Barong performances, drummers and Legong dances.

The three joyful flower girls, Sophie, Zoe and Emily Tran, help their mother Christine, family and friends to toast the couple.

The bridal party: Son Tran, Michael Markbreiter, Hai Tran, Robin, Nancy, Keiko Kernagis, Imagine Baker, Ming Hsueh, Sophie, Emily, Zoe and Alexander

Nancy and Robin greet guests at the welcome dinner at Pasar Malam Balinese Market Restaurant featuring Barong performances, drummers and Legong dances.

Nancy and Robin exchange their marriage vows. Nancy grew up in Seattle, received her BA from University of Washington and did graduate studies at Sophia University. She worked in America, Tokyo and Hong Kong for IBM, Silicon Graphics and The Hongkong Shanghai Banking Corporation. Nancy Tanaka is currently the Head of Institutional FX E-commerce, Asia Pacific at HSBC.

The “heart” of the wedding. Some of the ninety-two family and friends of the newly married couple photographed on the beach at The Conrad Bali Resort & Spa.

The happy married couple hand in hand leave the formal wedding reception held at Suku, the hotel’s main restaurant, where family and friends enjoyed a delicious dinner.

The happy married couple hand in hand arrive at their honeymoon suite at The Conrad Bali Resort & Spa.
“Dear Friends”, writes Barbara Harding, “here we are in Burma. It is a wonderful country. We have some beautiful photographs of Julian applying gold leaf on the Buddha ‘for the happiness of Robin and Nancy’. I think that your readers would very much like to see a Burmese issue.”

In Robin’s next photograph I am seen with Mehmet Hassan who I am always happy to welcome to my new office for his intimate specialised knowledge. On February 1st, 2007, Mem opened his first Asian art gallery in Bangkok. He briefed me to run the gallery with his wife and their daughter. Its Bangkok location (O.P. Place, Suite 236, 30/1 Soi Chaoen Krung 38, Charoen Krung Road, Tel: 02 266 5452) is close to the river where most foreigners stay.

Mehmet Hassan has lived in Thailand and been married to Nuan, his Thai wife for twenty years. Born in England of Turkish Cypriot parents, he was brought up in Northeast London; for his secondary education studying at the local comprehensive school. He went on to a technical college, qualifying as a building services engineer and ran a very successful building services company for many years.

He started travelling to Asia in 1981 and on his first trip he went to Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Burma. At the time, single and self-employed, he had more freedom to travel. Most interested in Southeast Asian art, in 1987 he started buying the antiques that came into Thailand from Burma, and from 1990 he regularly visited Tibet. An expert in textiles, Himalayan art, Chinese art, ancient gold and silver, Mem is known for high-quality pieces ranging from US$2000 to US$100,000, such as Nepalese and Tibetan book covers, rugs, thanks, bronzes and stone; and Chinese art such as gold, silver, textiles, bronzes and stone.

Mem promises he will have beautiful and good quality genuine pieces in his gallery. There are too many fakes on the market and in Bangkok galleries, and he advises collectors to buy from reputable dealers. “Obviously collectors have to study hard and should put their trust in a good dealer. In most cases they should not be let down.” Mem carries out Carbon 14 testing for textiles and carpets and TL tests for pottery. He finds they are very useful. Core tests can be done for bronzes, however most of all it is down to experience in handling the pieces, especially for Himalayan art. He buys from the heart, pieces that speak to him. His advice for new collectors is to start collecting smaller pieces to build up knowledge. Experience is the key.

We mentioned in my January–February 2007 Editorial that The European Fine Art Fair (TEFAF) will be held in the Dutch City of Maastricht from March 9th to 18th, 2007. Asian art at TEFAF is a growing force with seventeen prestigious Asian art dealers. Arts of Asia readers should also visit the inaugural Sculpture Highlights Maastricht (www.sculpturehighlights.com). This fair to be held in the unique setting of the oldest theatre in the Netherlands, “La Bonbonnière” in Maastricht from March 8th to 14th. The official opening by invitation only is from 7 pm on March 7th. As the name indicates this is an exclusive international sculpture event with the objective to present a selection of sculptures by a group of twenty renowned dealers from all over the world. They will bring their best antique sculptures covering Asian, African, Egyptian and European art.

Italica from Madrid is one of the important participants at Sculpture Highlights Maastricht. The gallery, founded in 1970, is owned and managed by María de los Ángeles de Rato y Figaredo. Italica originally specialised in Art Nouveau and Art-Deco until 1990, when Mrs Rato exhibited Italica in Tokyo fair and decided to focus exclusively on Asian art thereafter. She spent several years studying this new and fascinating area of expertise and became a pioneer in bringing Asian art to the Spanish market. Fully dedicated to the antique market, María also held several important positions in the Madrid Antique Dealer’s Association and in the Spanish Antique Dealer’s Federation. The gallery is a member of both organisations.

Mrs Rato incorporated her daughter, Angela de la Rosa de Rato, into her professional team in 2002. Angela specialised in Asian art at the British Museum in London, focusing in India, China and Southeast Asia, and she has published several articles in Spanish art magazines. She says, “Italica participates in several art fairs in Spain—Madrid, Barcelona, Asturias, Bilbao—as well as at several international fairs—Rome, Venice and Turino. Italica is today the most representative Asian art dealer in Spain.” At Sculptures Highlights Maastricht she will exhibit the gallery’s sandstone Uma from Cambodia, 11th century, Baphuon style, Angkor period, height 47 cm.

It is clear that Asian art fairs are in fashion and well attended by art lovers, especially Arts of Asia readers. Georgia Chrischilles, the founder of Brussels Oriental Art Fair (www.boaFair.be), has written to us to announce her third fair will take place from June 6th to 10th in the Sablon neighbourhood in the very city centre. She says, “Brussels, a cultural centre at the heart of Europe, proved to be the perfect location for the Fair. One can stroll in the streets of this
historic area, stop for lunch or dinner, meet colleagues and friends, and visit the exhibitors in their galleries—all of them within easy and enjoyable reach. A shuttle service is at the disposition of our visitors as well. A highly specialised group of twenty-four dealers from Australia, Belgium, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, Switzerland, Thailand, The Netherlands, Turkey and USA will offer a wide range of objects from various Oriental cultures for serious and knowledgeable collectors.

Every year our international subscribers eagerly read my Editorial to find out the important events taking place during Asia Week in New York. Coinciding with the publication of this magazine are important shows and fairs. The 16th presentation of Arts of Pacific Asia, New York (Wednesday March 21st preview, 6 pm to 9 pm) will be running from March 22nd to 25th at The 69th Regiment Armory at Lexington Avenue and 26th Street. Major textiles as well as comprehensive array of objects and fine art from Asia, the Middle East, the Pacific Islands, and the Indian subcontinent will be offered by the show’s eighty-seven participants (for more information please visit www.caskeylees.com).

The 12th International Asian Art Fair (March 23rd to 28th) will be held at The Seventh Regiment Armory, Park Avenue at 67th Street with Gala Benefit for Asia Society on Thursday March 22nd. Organisers Anna and Brian Haughton acknowledge “there have been changes to the fair that have come with the seismic shift in the landscape of the Asian Art market and the phenomenal rise of interest in and demand for contemporary works to the very forefront of it. In 2006 the fair introduced the arts of Africa, Oceania and the Americas into the complex mix of categories on offer. In 2007 there are once again a select group of dealers specialising in these areas. This new material has extended the range of the fair beyond the items traditionally associated with it, while complementing it and illustrating the natural compatibility of many of these art works.” In 2007 The International Asian Art Fair (see www.haughton.com) will include around fifty dealers in total.

During Asia Week in New York major auction houses will again play a strategic role, encouraging domestic and international visitors to participate at important sales. From March 20th to 22nd Christie’s at 20 Rockefeller Plaza will offer Japanese Art; Indian and Southeast Asian Art; Modern and Contemporary Indian Paintings; Fine Chinese Ceramics & Works of Art; and Important Chinese Snuff Bottles from The J&J Collection, Part IV. From March 20th to 23rd Sotheby’s (1334 York Avenue at 72nd Street) will offer Fine Chinese Ceramics & Works of Art, Including Property of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York; Chinese Contemporary Art; and Indian & Southeast Asian Works of Art, Including Miniatures and Modern Paintings.

In addition there will be numerous gallery exhibitions and several have asked me to supply information for our readers which I do briefly in alphabetical order.

Berwald Oriental Art are pleased to be exhibiting from March 20th at their New York gallery (5 East 57th Street) roughly thirty items ranging from painted pottery from the Western Han dynasty to Imperial porcelain from the Jiajing period. Among the highlights is a fine pair of large Kangxi period famille-verte quadrilobed baluster jars and covers suitable for either the domestic or export markets. A fully illustrated catalogue “Recent Acquisitions 2007” is available upon request (for further information please contact Cynthia Volk, Tel: 212-319-1519, email: cvolk@berwald-oriental.com).

Carlton Rochell Asian Art will hold its March 20th–30th exhibition entitled “Sacred and Sublime: Art from India and
Southeast Asia” in the Fuller Building, 41 East 57th Street. During these two weeks, the gallery will display and offer for sale some thirty-five masterworks from India, the Himalayas and Southeast Asia, many of which hail from important private collections in the US and Europe. Gandharan sculpture is well-represented in the exhibition and there are also several noteworthy Tibetan thankas, including a 14th century Drigungpa school portrait of a lama.

“Four Decades: 40th Anniversary Retrospective” is the one hundredth exhibition and sale from March 22nd through April 28th celebrating forty years of presenting Asian art at E&J Frankel Ltd (1040 Madison Avenue at 79th Street), one of New York’s oldest and most respected Asian art galleries. Their exhibition and sale is accompanied by a catalogue containing articles and colour plates of all the eighty-five pieces in the show—Chinese porcelains, jade carvings and textiles, Japanese 18th century netsuke and album paper photographs by Felix Beato and Baron von Stuﬄied, contemporary paintings by C.C. Wang, Wang Fangyu and Wang Qigil, and Ming and Kangxi period wood furniture as well as sculpture.

Since relocating his Asian art gallery from Germany to New York City last fall, Erik Thomsen Asian Art (224 East 83rd Street) has found a growing following for Japanese screens, scrolls, gold lacquer, tea ceramics and signed bamboo art that the gallery specialises in. One of the highlights of their March 19th to April 11th exhibition is “a magnificent 16th century Shigaraki jar that was exhibited at the 1999 Miho Museum”. Erik and Cornelia, his charming wife, say they look forward to seeing old clients and meeting new ones.

An exhibition of fine Chinese ceramics from the Song dynasty will be staged by Eskenazi Ltd, one of the world’s leading dealers in Chinese art, at PaceWildenstein, 32 East 57th Street, New York, from March 19th to 31st. Song wares are noted for their perfection of form and the variety of their glazes, often in muted, subtle tones, achieved through unceasing experimentation. In the photograph provided by Eskenazi Ltd are shown a Jin period tripod censer from the Jun kilns in Henan province; a sturdy Southern Song to Yuan period meiping from the kilns at Yonghe, Jiangxi province; and a Northern Song period celadon-glazed almost spherical jar from the Yaozhou kilns in Shanxii province.

Flying Cranes Antiques, Ltd, Gallery #58 at The Manhattan Art & Antiques Center, 1050 Second Avenue, will present “The Japanese Ikebana Basket: Consummate Artistry in Bamboo” from March 19th to May 31st. This exhibition and sale will showcase approximately one hundred Japanese ikebana baskets; some from the early 1800s predating the Meiji period, as well as others by masters from the mid 19th to mid 20th century. This will be the fourth Japanese ikebana basket exhibition for Flying Cranes since 1998.

Chinese ceramics of the Song dynasty are also the dominant theme of the special March 19th to 31st exhibition and sale at J.J. Lally & Co. in the Fuller Building. The collection was formed by an American connoisseur who began to collect Chinese art more than thirty years ago. Each piece was carefully chosen over the years from New York and London dealers and auctions. From the rare and beautiful AD 400–1400 Chinese ceramics, I illustrate a large Cizhou pottery pillow painted with crane and lotus decoration, 11th–12th century, width 34.3 cm.

Avid readers may recall that Tim Mertel, the owner of L’Asie Exotique, wrote the excellent article “Gosho-Ningyo: Palace Dolls from the Ayervais Collection” in the Arts of Asia July–August 1996 edition. Tim explains that the Japanese court aristocracy and the imitative wealthy merchant class actively collected these dolls and thus there remain extraordi

![L’Asie Exotique: Japanese Gosho Ningyo of seated child, circa 1820](image1)

![Orientations Gallery & Robyn Turner: Meiping form cloisonné enamel vase by Imperial court artist Yasuyuki of Kyoto and rock crystal brush rest in the form of a Chinese ruyi sceptre](image2)

![Publisher & Editor](image3)