



# W. SHANSHAN



**2022 Spring Exhibition**  
**"Four Ancient Beauties"**

May 12 – June 30, 2022

by appointment only

敬請隨時預約觀展

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*Sichuan Earthenware Dancing Lady, Han Dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE)*



No. 1

## Sichuan Dancing Lady

### 漢代川蜀舞女俑

Han Dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE),

60cm high

**Description:** This is a dancing terracotta lady figure from Sichuan region in Han dynasty. Although the colours have all faded, the shape and the moulded detail on the surface provide it with an everlasting life. The lady is dressed in a traditional robe dropping to the floor with long and wide sleeves and a band tightening the waist. She lifts the right arm and holds the left arm at the belly, with slightly bending right leg that moves forward. The folded and wavy sleeve from the right arm indicates the robust movement. The gentle facial detail, even just a few lines, expresses her joy and inner peace, highlighted by the mysterious smile. The most exquisite part is the elaborate flower hair ornaments, the three chrysanthemums. These flowers imply prosperity in Eastern Asian culture and are well blossoming just like the dancing lady full of life. Usually the dancing figure is accompanied by a group of sitting musicians playing various music instruments as well as a few more dancers, both males and females. The whole body is clearly made from two moulded parts – front and back that were connected together. The head and flower ornaments were casted separately as well. Although both this dancing figure and the other standing stick lady are from Han dynasty, the styles are completely different. This indicates that the Sichuan area has its own culture and lifestyle distinguished from the central plain around the capital. The reason being might be the impact from early Daoist masters living there.

**Provenance:** A British Collection

**Reference:** For a similar figure, see Lot 588, *Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art*, Sotheby's New York, 20 March 2007





**Painted nude female courtier (stick lady)**

**漢代女裸俑**

Han Dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE),

55cm high

**Description:** The so-called stick lady was from the imperial tomb in Han dynasty (206 BCE- 220 CE). In fact, it was made as one of the courtiers to accompany the emperors or empress in their afterlife, alongside with terracotta soldiers. Among all figures, it is rarer to find any female ones than the males. To reduce the cost, Han dynasty terracotta soldiers are much smaller compared to those from Qin dynasty that are in full human size, but only finer details complement the production. Originally the lady was well dressed, presumably in silk and had two moveable wooden arms, attached through the holes on each side of the shoulder. Over time, the organic materials became rotten and finally disappeared leaving its naked and slender body. In this way, one can appreciate its delicate details, such as the slightly raised collar bone, evident cleavage between the small breasts, not to mention the gentle belly button and the female genitalia. The whole fired figure was cold painted with multiple colours to make it vibrant and look like a real human, in particular the brown pinkish hue of the skin. The head was well moulded with colours of the hairs, eyebrows, eyes and lips still remaining, clearly showing the facial detail and hair style. The gentle smile with red lips and the classic Eastern Asian eyes attracts great attention.

**Provenance:** A British Collection

**Reference:** For a similar figure, see an example from the Metropolitan Museum of Art

<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/700605>



No. 3

### Fat Lady Dressed in Blue with a Bird

#### 唐藍釉賞雀仕女俑 “小胖妞”

Tang dynasty (618-907 CE)

35 cm high

**Description:** This Tang dynasty court figure known as the fat lady stands with natural body curve. One hand is holding a bird painted in brown, while the other hand is also lifted trying to catch the bird's attention. She has a fully rounded face surrounded with an elaborate coiffure having a large top knot. She clearly shows an idle expression and is giving the bird a sideways look. The pigments of her eyes, eye brows and lips remain lively. The long and high-waisted robe hangs down to the floor, but her toes are uncovered. The robe with deep folds is applied with cobalt blue glaze in layers. Similar pottery figures from Tang dynasty are common but those with blue glaze are very rare. The cobalt blue was imported from Central Asia and highly valued. Therefore, the similar figures with blue glaze tend to be in much smaller size compared to those painted only with colour pigments or with sancai glaze.

**Provenance:** An American collection

**Reference:** For a similar object of this type, see *Chinese Glazes, Their Origins, Chemistry, and Recreation*, Nigel Wood, 2011, P237



**Female Head Gogotte**

**古哥特女人頭像**

Oligocene (ca. 30 million years ago), Fontainebleau, France

29 cm high



**Description:** Gogotte is a natural stone that is formed during early Oligocene Period 30 millions years ago. It is composed of quartz crystal and to some extent limestone (calcium carbonate). Gogottes are uniquely discovered in Fontainebleau to the southeast of Paris, France. They are considered as natural sculptures, appearing in a broad variety of forms and shapes involving typically whirlpool, holes and multiple-folds. Each single piece is unique, driving our imaginations. They have been highly appreciated and used as garden decorations in France for the last few centuries, and have inspired sculptors, including Henry Moore (1898-1986). This white intact gogotte sculpture resembles a lady's head with a hair bun on the top back. Perhaps she is fairly shy, hiding away from a crown but rather elegantly. The style bares a similarity to the Chinese Tang dynasty court lady (sometimes referred as fat lady).

**Provenance:** Eskenazi