

SMALL YUEYAO COVERED BOX

Five Dynasties period, 10th century
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Renowned for their jade-like appearance, Yue wares from the kilns of Zhejiang province reached their peak during the tenth century. Floral motifs are a prevalent motif; the top of this box features overlapping petals, like those of an inverted blossom.

YUEYAO CUP STAND

Early Northern Song Dynasty, 10th century
Yue kilns, Shanglinhu region, Zhejiang province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

With the increased popularity of tea-drinking during the Tang dynasty, new utensils, such as cup stands, were devised. Functioning much as elaborate saucers, cup stands supported the cup while drinking. By the tenth century, cup stands were created in a variety of media, including silver, other metal, lacquer and ceramic wares.

LARGE YUEYAO BOX

Early Northern Song Dynasty, 10th century
Yue kilns, Shanglinhu region (possibly Huangshan shan kiln), Yuyaoxian, Zhejiang province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Probably intended for cosmetics, this large, circular, covered box features a design of two Mandarin ducks, their necks entwined, beaks touching and wings raised. Mandarin ducks symbolized marital fidelity in traditional China; the inclusion of a lotus seed pod at either side amplifies this symbolism, conveying the wish for many children.

YUE GLOBULAR POT WITH DESIGN OF OVERLAPPING PETALS

Five Dynasties – Northern Song Dynasty, 10th century
Yue kilns, probably Shanglinhu region, Zhejiang province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

This globular jar is decorated with overlapping petals. Derived from metal prototypes, jars of this type were produced at both the Yue and Ding kilns.

SMALL DING BOWL

Northern Song Dynasty, 10th – early 11th century
Ding kilns, Quyang county, Hebei province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

LARGE DING JAR

Northern Song Dynasty
Ding kilns, Quyang county, Hebei province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

The Ding kilns were active from the ninth through fourteenth centuries. One of the “five famous wares of the Song,” the Ding kilns produced substantial quantities of ware used at the Northern Song imperial court. The unglazed mouth rim of this jar indicates that it originally featured a cover, which was fired in place.

LARGE DING NOTCHED BOWL

Northern Song Dynasty, 11th century
Ding kilns, Quyang county, Hebei province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

The six notches at the mouth rim of this bowl are intended to recall the shape a flower. This frequently encountered decorative motif is also seen in earlier and contemporaneous lacquer and metal wares.

YAOZHOU LOBED BOWL

Northern Song Dynasty, 11th century
Yaozhou kilns, Huangpu, Tongchuan, Shaanxi province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Celadon vessels made at the Yaozhou kilns during the tenth century and first part of the eleventh often eschew surface ornamentation in favor of naturalistic shapes. The cusped rim and scored walls of this vessel, for example, recall the form of an open blossom.

MELON-SHAPED YAOZHOU JAR

Northern Song Dynasty, 11th – 12th century
Yaozhou kilns: Huangpu, Tongchuan, Shaanxi province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Song potters’ use of natural forms as sources of inspiration is apparent in this vessel. Divided into twelve lobes by means of vertical indentations, the body of the jar resembles a ripe melon.

YAOZHOU ZHADOU WITH FOLIATE RIM AND CARVED FLORAL DECORATION

Northern Song Dynasty, 11th – early 12th century
Yaozhou kilns, Tongchuan, Shaanxi province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

During the eleventh century, the Yaozhou kilns began producing wares of great diversity and sophistication. This *zhadou*, with foliate rim, is embellished with vibrant floral patterns. The *zhadou* shape, while most closely associated with Yaozhou celadons, is also known in black-glazed Northern Song wares, as evidenced by another vessel in this exhibition.

CARVED YAOZHOU BOWL WITH PEONY DESIGN

Northern Song Dynasty, 11th century
Yaozhou kilns, Tongchuan, Shaanxi province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Ornamented Yaozhou wares of the eleventh and twelfth centuries often exhibit elaborate and exuberantly carved floral decoration. The interior of this bowl features a blossoming tree peony, while the overlapping “pleats” on its exterior recall a chrysanthemum blossom. The bowl’s rim is also delicately notched, suggesting an open blossom.

YAOZHOU BOWL WITH CARVED DECORATION OF TWO LOTUS AND WAVES

Northern Song Dynasty
Yaozhou kilns, Tongchuan, Shaanxi province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

The lotus is one of the most important and frequently encountered decorative motifs during the Song period, occurring in almost all media. Here, two lotus blossoms, each accompanied by a leaf, float on rolling waves. The outlines of the design elements are deeply carved with broad, beveled strokes; because glaze pools in the resulting hollows, the wide outlines appear dark, causing the design elements to appear lighter and to rise in slight relief.

SMALL MOLDED YAOZHOU BOWL

Northern Song – Jin Dynasties
Yaozhou kilns, Tongchuan, Shaanxi province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Molds were frequently employed by Song potters. The effect achieved by molding was similar to that of carving and combing. The glaze accumulated in the recessed areas, deepening the color and emphasizing the pattern. Molding was also an efficient means of shaping and decorating pottery, since the damp clay received both its shape and design when pressed against the matrix.

CARVED YAOZHOU BOWL WITH SINGLE LOTUS BLOSSOM AND LEAF DECORATION

Jin Dynasty, 12th – early 13th century
Yaozhou kilns, Tongchuan, Shaanxi province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Like most other centers of ceramic production in north China, the Yaozhou kilns continued to operate after the Jin conquest in 1127. While there was much stylistic continuity, distinctive motifs, such as the freely carved lotus blossom and leaf seen here, Jin wares also arose.

SMALL CARVED YAOZHOU BOWL WITH BLOSSOM AND WAVE DESIGN

Jin Dynasty, 12th century
Yaozhou kilns, Tongchuan, Shaanxi province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

The small lotus blossom surrounded by a combed ware design in this bowl typify the Jin taste for less elaborate decorative schemes featuring larger design elements.

JUNYAO DISH WITH FLAT EVERTED RIM

Northern Song Dynasty, late 11th – early 12th century

Jun kilns, Henan province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

This elegantly proportioned dish with a flat rim features a fully glazed foot ring with five small spur marks—typical of early twelfth-century Jun wares. This attention to detail typifies the aesthetic concerns of this period.

JUNYAO DEEP BOWL

Late Northern Song Dynasty, first half of the 12th century
Jun kilns, Henan province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

JUNYAO WATER POT

Jin Dynasty, late 12th – 13th century
Jun kilns, Henan province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Jun ware lacks the incised, carved, or molded decoration characteristic of most Song wares, because its thick glaze obscured any such embellishment. Early in the twelfth century, however, Jun potters discovered that the addition of copper filings to the glaze would cause bright, purple suffusions to form in the fired piece, such as the horizontal band in this water pot.

CIZHOU PILLOW WITH “FISH-ROE” GROUND

Northern Song Dynasty, early to mid-11th century
Cizhou kilns, Dengfeng xian or Mixian kilns, Henan province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Monochrome, low-fired lead glazes used over boldly conceived painted, incised or sgraffito decoration characterize many Cizhou wares. Sgraffito designs, wherein a design is created by cutting through a layer of thick white slip to reveal the underlying body, are often seen on Cizhou pillows.

CIZHOU VASE WITH FLARED NECK AND ROLLED LIP

Northern Song Dynasty, 11th – 12th century
Cizhou kilns
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

SMALL CIZHOU BOWL WITH DOTTED FLORAL DECORATION

Late Northern Song Dynasty, 11th – early 12th century
Cizhou kilns, Guantai, Cixian, Hebei province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

From the latter half of the tenth to mid-twelfth centuries, dotted motifs are among the most common forms of decoration at major Cizhou kiln sites.

LARGE CIZHOU BOWL WITH SKETCHY FLORAL DESIGN

Late Northern Song Dynasty
Cizhou kilns, possibly Haobiji, Henan province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

The interior of this bowl is decorated with a freely executed design of a peony blossom. The peony, with its numerous petals, was an auspicious symbol conveying the wish for abundant wealth. The decoration on this bowl is a much looser rendering of the peony design seen in Yaozhou and *qingbai* ware bowls also in this exhibition.

SMALL CIZHOU BOWL WITH COMBED DECORATION

Jin Dynasty, mid-twelfth to early 13th century
Cizhou kilns at Guantai, Cixian, Hebei province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Potters at the various Cizhou kilns were exceptionally innovative, inventing many new decorative motifs. Here, the combed waves, or clouds, were combed through an application of slip, exposing the light gray stoneware body.

CIZHOU BOTTLE OF MEIPING SHAPE

Yuan Dynasty, early 14th century
Cizhou kilns
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Bottles of this distinctive shape, with small mouths, wide shoulders and constricted waists, are commonly called *meiping*, or plum vases, connoting a decorative, rather than utilitarian purpose for the vessel. During the Song and Yuan, however, *meiping* most often served as storage containers for liquids such as wine.

BLACK-GLAZED RIBBED ZHADOU WITH FOLIATE RIM

Northern Song Dynasty, 11th century
Cizhou kilns
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

The Song appreciation of dark-glazed ceramics parallels the esteem for dark lacquerwares of the period. Like lacquers, dark-glazed vessels are usually simple and elegant in form. The ribbing seen here further accentuates the form of the vessel, creating movement both horizontally and vertically.

CONICAL BOWL WITH RUSSET GLAZE

Northern Song – Jin Dynasty
Cizhou kilns
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Conical bowls were intended primarily for the drinking of tea. During the Song and Jin, dark-glazed tea bowls became increasingly popular as the red tea consumed during the Tang was supplanted by a white tea that looked more appealing in dark vessels

SMALL RUSSET-GLAZED GLOBULAR WATER POT

Northern Song – Jin Dynasty

Cizhou kilns

Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Used as containers to hold fresh water on a scholar's desk, water pots were utilitarian as well as aesthetic objects. The mirror-like russet glaze on this vessel not only recalls the colors of the natural world, but is ever-changing as it reflects the light around it.

RUSSET-GLAZED RIBBED JAR WITH LOOP HANDLES

Northern Song – Jin Dynasty

Cizhou kilns, Henan or Hebei province

Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Russet glazes are, in fact, a dark-brown glaze covered by a paper-thin layer, or "skin." The russet-colored skin appears when the glaze is saturated with more iron than it can absorb, and during the firing the excess iron segregates itself from the primary glaze.

RIBBED BLACK-GLAZED GLOBULAR JAR

Northern Song – Jin Dynasty

Cizhou kilns, Henan or Hebei province

Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Applied in imitation of the relief ribs on lacquer and silver, white ribs were first used on ceramics during the Tang dynasty. They were used sparingly on the exteriors of vessels in the tenth and eleventh centuries, but by the twelfth they had emerged as an important category of decoration. Virtually always used with dark glazes, such ribs both enliven and emphasize the forms of the pieces they ornament.

LARGE WIDE-MOUTHED JAR WITH VERTICAL RIBS AND TWO HANDLES

Northern Song to Jin Dynasty, 12th century

Cizhou-type kilns, Henan or Hebei province

Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Similar dark-glazed, white-ribbed, wide-mouthed jars have been found both in tombs and at a number of kiln sites in northern China. The striking similarities in potting, technique of glazing and cut of the foot of this jar and the black-glazed globular jar with rope-twist handles also in this exhibition leave little doubt that the two were created at the same kiln site.

LARGE BLACK-GLAZED GLOBULAR JAR WITH RUSSET DECORATION AND ROPE-TWIST HANDLES

Northern Song – Jin Dynasty, 12th century

Cizhou kilns, Henan or Hebei province

Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

The in-glaze method of decorating dark-glazed wares with russet splashes appeared at northern Cizhou-type kilns in the eleventh century. The russet rosettes that decorate this jar were touched onto the surface of the dark glaze with iron oxide.

JAR WITH RUSSET-SPLASHED BLACK GLAZE AND LOOP HANDLES

Northern Song – Jin Dynasty
Cizhou kilns, probably Guantai, Cixian, Hebei province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Potters at the Cizhou kilns began to decorate their black-glazed wares with russet flecks or splashes by the eleventh century. By the early twelfth century, when this jar was made, vessels display the balanced, but asymmetrical, arrangement seen here.

SMALL LOBED BOWL WITH RUSSET-STREAKED BLACK GLAZE

Northern Song – Jin Dynasty
Cizhou kilns
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

As with foliated lip rims, the segmentation of jars into lobes traces its origins to Tang silver prototypes, where the divisions subtly suggest an open flower or a ripe melon.

SMALL BLACK-GLAZED CONICAL BOWL WITH RUSSET MOTTLES

Northern Song – Jin Dynasty
Cizhou kilns, probably Hebei province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

SMALL BLACK-GLAZED CONICAL BOWL DAPPLED IN RUSSET

Northern Song – Jin Dynasty
Cizhou kilns, probably Hebei province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

These two bowls, both decorated with russet, are virtually identical in size, shape, potting and body type, suggesting they come from the same kiln site.

LOTUS-BUD WATER POT WITH TEA-DUST GLAZE

Northern Song – Jin Dynasty
Cizhou kilns
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

The semi-lustrous olive-brown glaze seen on this vessel is most commonly referred to as “tea-dust.” First appearing in the seventh century, these glazes became particularly popular during the Song, Jin and Yuan periods. Created through the slight underfiring of the wares, tea-dust glazes are a variant of a dark-brown glaze.

SMALL BLACK-GLAZED JAR WITH FIVE LARGE RUSSET SPOTS

Northern Song – Jin Dynasty, mid to late 12th century

Cizhou kilns

Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

The regularized pattern evident in the decoration of this bowl is characteristic of twelfth and thirteenth-century blackwares from the Cizhou kilns. The large size and even spacing of the russet spots reflects a taste for structured design often seen in Jin wares.

BOWL WITH WHITE RIM AND FIVE RUSSET SPLASHES

Jin Dynasty, 12th century

Cizhou-type kilns

Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

The white rim edging this blue-black bowl had both visual impact and aesthetic resonance. The white rim provides a striking contrast to the variegated blue-black glaze splashed with russet, and alludes to the silver bands affixed to Ding and other aristocratic wares during the Song.

BOWL WITH INCURVED RIM AND “HARE’S FUR” GLAZE, WITH THREE RUSSET SPLASHES

Jin Dynasty, 12th – early 13th century

Cizhou kilns, Henan or Hebei province

Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Beloved by tea connoisseurs for their dark color against the white whipped tea popular during the Song, “hare’s fur” glazed bowls were first made at the Jian kilns in Fujian province. With the Jin conquest in 1127, trade with the south was curtailed, and potters at the northern Cizhou kilns began to make their own version of “hare’s fur” bowls.

SMALL-MOUTHED TEA-DUST GLAZED GLOBULAR BOTTLE DECORATED WITH BIRDS IN FLIGHT

Jin Dynasty, late 12th – early 13th century

Cizhou kilns

Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

The painted decoration on dark-glazed vessels employs some of the most elegantly calligraphic brushwork to be found in Chinese ceramics. Here, abstractly rendered birds encircle the upper portion of the bottle.

SMALL-MOUTHED GLOBULAR BOTTLE WITH BLACK GLAZE AND RUSSET FLORAL DECORATION

Jin – Yuan Dynasty, 13th century

Cizhou kilns

Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

This bottle is glazed in thick bluish-black and is painted on either side in vigorous brushstrokes of russet slip in a design of stylized chrysanthemum and leaves. Chrysanthemums

symbolize both the season of autumn and literary pursuits, as it was the favorite flower of the celebrated poet Tao Qian (Tao Yuanming, 365–427).

DEEP BOWL WITH BLACK GLAZE AND RUSSET STRIPES

Yuan Dynasty, 14th century
Cizhou kilns, probably Guantai, Cixian, Hebei province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

The decoration on this bowl testifies not only to the continued popularity of russet-embellished black-glazed wares into the Yuan period, but also to the simplified nature of that decoration.

SMALL QINGBAI WATER POT

Northern Song Dynasty, second half of the 11th century
Probably from Fanchang county, Anhui province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

This small water receptacle is an elegant and utilitarian accessory for the scholar's desk. Water is needed for both grinding ink and washing the brush. The water pot's simple form and sublimely translucent glaze are compatible with the prolonged contemplation given to these elegant scholar's objects.

LARGE QINGBAI BOTTLE OF MEIPING SHAPE

Northern Song Dynasty, 11th century
Jingdezhen kilns, Jiangxi province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

The restrained decoration of this vessel testifies to the aesthetic of understated elegance so pervasive during the Northern Song. Often called *meiping*, or “plum vases,” bottles of this shape functioned as storage containers for wine or other liquids during the Song, Jin and Yuan periods.

DEEP QINGBAI NOTCHED BOWL WITH INCISED FLORAL DECORATION

Northern Song Dynasty, early 12th century
Jingdezhen kilns, Jiangxi province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Potters at the Jingdezhen kilns used a variety of floral motifs to decorate their *qingbai* bowls, notching rims and embellishing the interiors with incised and carved floral decoration.

NOTCHED QINGBAI BOWL WITH CARVED PEONY DESIGN

Northern Song Dynasty
Jingdezhen kilns, Jiangxi province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

This design, incised and with combed details, is among the most beautiful found on *qingbai* wares. The pattern covers the whole interior of the bowl and is comprised of two thin, elegant leaf sprays with a big open peony in the middle.

SMALL QINGBAI VASE WITH FLARED NECK

Northern Song Dynasty, early 12th century
Jingdezhen kilns, Jiangxi province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

The decorative techniques of stippling and fluting can be seen on a number of Northern Song *qingbai* wares.

PAIR OF QINGBAI SAUCERS

Northern Song Dynasty
Jingdezhen kilns, Jiangxi province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

The elegant shape and delicate nature of these dishes epitomize the Song taste for understatement. The use of raised slip lines to articulate their form, a technique seen on other ceramic wares and lacquers, demonstrates the close affinity between various media during the Song period.

SMALL LONGQUAN COVERED JAR WITH INCISED PETAL DESIGN

Northern Song Dynasty, 11th century
Longquan kilns, Zhejiang province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

The small jar and the tall covered jar also in this case feature the simple incised designs of overlapping petals typical of Northern Song Longquan ware.

COVERED LONGQUAN JAR WITH INCISED PETAL DESIGN

Northern Song Dynasty, 11th century
Longquan kilns, Zhejiang province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

PLAIN LONGQUAN DISH WITH FLATTENED RIM

Southern Song Dynasty
Longquan kilns, Zhejiang province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Longquan celadons reached their fullest articulation during the Southern Song period. The finest wares feature a thick blue-green glaze applied in several layers. The thickness of the glaze obscured most incised decoration; consequently, Longquan potters favored simple, elegant shapes as the perfect vehicle for their lustrous glazes.

FLAT-RIMMED LONGQUAN BRUSH-WASHER

Southern Song Dynasty
Longquan kilns, Zhejiang province

Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

This brush washer with everted lip shows the Longquan glaze to great advantage. A rare shape that derives from a metal prototype, the brush washer perfectly proportioned, and the glaze beautifully hued.

SHALLOW LONGQUAN SAUCER DISH WITH CARVED PETALS

Southern Song Dynasty
Longquan kilns, Zhejiang province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

A band of deftly carved, overlapping petals decorate the exterior of the vessel.

DEEP LONGQUAN LOTUS BOWL WITH INCISED PETAL DECORATION

Southern Song Dynasty
Longquan kilns, Zhejiang province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Lotus friezes originated in Chinese gold and silver bowls made in the late seventh and early eighth century. In ceramics, lotus friezes were a common feature of Yue ware and continued to be a popular decorative motif in Longquan wares into the Yuan period.

FLOWER-SHAPED LONGQUAN BOWL

Southern Song Dynasty
Dayao kilns, Longquan region, Zhejiang province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

The six-petalled mallow blossom was a commonly employed decorative motif in lacquerware, the most expensive, and thus, most desirable material at the time.

LONGQUAN CONICAL BOWL

Southern Song Dynasty
Longquan kilns, Zhejiang province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Conical bowls, commonly used for the drinking of tea, were produced at Longquan and many other kilns during the Song and later periods. The Longquan potters created bowls such as this for both domestic and export markets.

LONGQUAN BRONZE-FORM TRIPOD CENSOR

Southern Song Dynasty
Longquan kilns, Zhejiang province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

During the Southern Song and Yuan, potters at the Longquan kilns shaped some of their pieces to resemble ancient bronze ritual vessels. This tripod censor is in the form of a Shang or Zhou-

dynasty *liding* cauldron, a bronze vessel used in ceremonies honoring the spirits of deceased ancestors.

LONGQUAN BOWL WITH INCURVED RIM

Southern Song Dynasty
Longquan kilns, Zhejiang province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

SMALL LONGQUAN BOWL WITH GROOVED LIP

Late Southern Song Dynasty
Longquan kilns, Zhejiang province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

LONGQUAN DISH WITH MOLDED FISH DECORATION

Late Southern Song – Yuan Dynasty
Longquan kilns, Zhejiang province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Very late in the Southern Song or early in the Yuan, Longquan potters began decorating their wares with appliqué elements, such as the two plump fish on the interior of this bowl.

LONGQUAN BOWL WITH CARVED AND INCISED PETAL DECORATION

Yuan Dynasty
Longquan kilns, Zhejiang province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

PAIR OF LONGQUAN ARROW VASES

Yuan Dynasty
Longquan kilns, Zhejiang province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

These vases are in the shape of arrow vases, the primary accessory for a drinking game played by the elite in traditional China. While large arrow vases functioned as the object into which arrows were thrown during the game, these small vases were intended as flower vases, possibly for a home altar.

LONGQUAN BOTTLE OF MEIPING SHAPE

Yuan – early Ming Dynasty, late 14th – early 15th century
Longquan kilns, Zhejiang province
Collection of Dr. Robert E. Barron, III

Late in the Yuan Dynasty, Longquan potters returned to the carved designs and clear transparent glazes that had been their mainstay in the Northern Song period.