

PAN

AMSTERDAM

VANDERVEN ORIENTAL ART



Archaic Bronze Water Basin "Jian"

Bronze, China, Spring & Autumn Period (770 - 476 BC)
Height: 28.8 cm | Width: 53.6 cm | Diameter: 68 cm,

A jian is a type of ancient Chinese bronze ritual basin, used for water or ice. The densely patterned stylized decoration of interlaced mythical beasts in low relief, is divided into three horizontal bands. This type of stylized decoration is characteristic of this period. The two sturdy monster masks (taotie) handles, may have had rings. When full of water, the surface was also used as a mirror. The word jian later came to mean "mirror" in Chinese. This type of bronze would have been cast in ceramic moulds, a technique which allowed casting of intricate decorative motifs. When newly made it would have been very impressive and the material a bright golden colour.