

# ESKENAZI

ESKENAZI SHOWS

*SIX DYNASTIES ART FROM THE NORMAN A. KURLAND COLLECTION  
PART TWO*

AN EXHIBITION OF CHINESE ART OF THE 5<sup>th</sup> AND 6<sup>th</sup> CENTURIES FROM  
THE MOST IMPORTANT COLLECTION OF ITS TYPE IN PRIVATE HANDS

1 to 24 November 2018, London



From 1 to 24 November 2018, Eskenazi will show the second part of the collection of Norman A. Kurland, a renowned American film and television agent who over a period of four decades has assembled the most important private collection of art and sculpture from the Six Dynasties period (220 to 581 AD). The exhibition follows the success of Part one which was held in November 2017 and which attracted great attention with works now residing in museum and private collections. Part two will feature 38 works including two highly important early Buddhist sculptures alongside rare and exceptional examples of earthenware, metalwork and textiles. Highlights can be viewed [here](#).

The Kurland Collection (Parts one and two) has represented the first exhibitions at Eskenazi dedicated solely to the art of the Six Dynasties. The exhibition in November 2018 will be accompanied by a catalogue which includes essays by two of the foremost scholars in the field: Professor Albert E. Dien, professor emeritus at Stanford University, and Annette Juliano, Professor of Asian Art History at Rutgers University, New Jersey, as well as an essay by Michael Franses, the renowned scholar and collector of textiles and carpets. Two videos present fascinating insights into the collection and how it was assembled; a video with Mr. Kurland can be viewed [here](#) and a video with Giuseppe Eskenazi can be seen [here](#).

The exhibition includes a diverse range of art and objects from the Six Dynasties (220 to 581 AD), a period of great political upheaval which followed the fragmentation and collapse of the Han Dynasty (206 BC to 220 AD). During this period, art, poetry and religion flourished throughout the rival kingdoms, and trading channels including the 'Silk Route' brought numerous new ideas, imagery and raw materials into China.

Leading highlights of the exhibition include two highly important early Buddhist sculptures. An outstanding example carved in limestone from the Northern Wei Dynasty, early 6th century, depicts Maitreya and originally hails from the Imperially sponsored Longmen cave temples, Henan province. It was previously in the collection of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, New York. Another exceptional limestone sculpture is a bust of Buddha from the Northern Qi period (550 – 577 AD) which is remarkable for its combination of the beautifully carved face set in an expression of deep meditation, together with the very simple, clinging robes under which the body is evident. It is closely related to a small group of sculptures originally found at the site of the Longxing Temple in Qingzhou.

A great rarity from the period are two Chinese silk textiles; only approximately 230 examples from this period are thought to have survived with the majority in museum collections. One example shows lions, elephants and camels, and the other depicts dragons in confrontation. The exhibition also features an astounding array of earthenware tomb figures of people and animals which opens a fascinating window into daily life at the time. Representing the diversity of the trade routes, these include a painted figure of a Bactrian camel with a Central Asian groom carrying supplies of silk, and a monkey brought from India. Other earthenware highlights include a pair of large painted guardians previously in the collection of The T. T. Tsui Museum of Art, Hong Kong. As well as their striking and imposing pose and presence, these figures have remained in exceptional condition offering a fascinating opportunity to observe the armour of the period.

A further highlight is an inscribed limestone epitaph stone and cover from the Eastern Wei period. The epitaph stone is inscribed with a date corresponding to 535 AD and is for Mr. Pei, the Late Administrator of the Section for Outer Troops in the Court of Garrison. The cover has an additional inscription with a date corresponding to 571 AD at which point Mr. Pei was moved next to Duke of Xian [likely the honorific title of his late father]. The stone was last seen in London in 2000 when it was included in *Chinese epitaphs and their influence on the paintings of Brice Marden* at Matthew Marks Gallery.

The exhibition coincides with the 21<sup>st</sup> edition of *Asian Art in London* (1 to 10 November 2018), the annual event that unites London's Asian art dealers, major auction houses and societies in a series of selling exhibitions, auctions, receptions and seminars.

**Norman A. Kurland** started collecting in the 1970s. Attracted by the grace and immediacy of the art of the Six Dynasties, he realised that he could build a comprehensive collection, outstanding in quality, if he limited himself to the timeframe set by the period. In the 1980s, he met Giuseppe Eskenazi from whom he bought many of the items in the present exhibition and who eventually persuaded him to add Buddhist sculptures to his collection. In an interview for the exhibition, Norman describes “...artworks that I think are gloriously beautiful, and which kept me going intellectually and artistically since the mid-1970s.” Aside from collecting, Norman is a renowned literary agent who worked with a host of highly rated films and television shows; his agency represented the scriptwriters of, among others, *Cheers*, *Frasier*, *Will and Grace*, *Magnum PI*, *The X-Files*, *Scrubs*, *NCIS* and *Two and a Half Men*. He was also the agent responsible for the scripts of box office hits including *Romancing the Stone*, *The Bodyguard* and *The Big Chill*. Norman retired in 2002 to become Senior Advisor to the President of the J. Paul Getty Trust in London (2002 to 2006). Having earlier graduated from both Princeton and Harvard, he has since earned three Master's degrees; two from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, and one investigating 'Buddhist Art: History and Conservation' at The Courtauld Institute of Art, London, in 2015. He was a Trustee of the National Museums Liverpool (2007 to 2014).

**Eskenazi Ltd** is widely recognised as one of the world's leading galleries for Chinese works of art and its exhibitions are always eagerly awaited for the rarity and beauty of the objects offered. The family business was founded in Milan in 1923 and the Eskenazi name has since become synonymous with expertise in this area. Giuseppe Eskenazi, who has been head of the business for over fifty years, has an unrivalled reputation for his knowledge and love of the subject and clients have included over eighty of the world's major museums as well as private collectors. Visit [www.eskenazi.co.uk](http://www.eskenazi.co.uk) for further details.

**Location:** Eskenazi Ltd, 10 Clifford Street, London W1S 2LJ

**Opening hours during exhibition:**

Monday to Friday	09.30 - 17.30
Saturday, 3 November	10.00 - 17.00
Sunday, 4 November	10.00 - 17.00
Monday, 5 November	09.30 - 20.30
Saturday, 10 November	10.00 - 13.00
Saturday, 17 November	10.00 - 13.00
Saturday, 24 November	10.00 - 13.00

For any further information and images, please contact Matthew Paton: [info@patonarts.com](mailto:info@patonarts.com) / +44 (0) 7711 112425

