



Pair of Kangxi Ewers for the Islamic Market

Jingdezhen, China, Kangxi Period (1662-1722)

Porcelain painted with iron-red enamel and gold

35.5cm high

Stock no.: A5877

Provenance: French private collection since the 19th century.

These elegant, porcelain ewers are decorated with iron red and gilt on a white ground. The pear-shaped body stands on a short foot ring. A lightly curved s-shaped spout attaches at the centre of the body, and a curved handle at the top of the body. This form derives from Indian metal ewers (*aftaba*), used for hand-washing and ritual ablutions.¹ A raised petal collar links the body and neck, which is divided in two by a bulbous band. Each ewer retains its lid, with onion shaped knob. The form is derived from Indian metal ewers (*aftaba*), used for hand-washing and ritual ablutions.

A panel in the form of a raised teardrop at the centre of the body is decorated with a double handled vase containing a sprig of flowers and decorated with a small lotus flower. This motif is surrounded with *ruyi* clouds in relief. A similar ewer with lid, dated to c. 1710, is in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London (accession no. [240B&C-1876](#)). Two more dated to c. 1710-1730 are held in the Topkapı Palace Museum, Istanbul (TKS 15/4042 and TKS 15/4058), but neither has its original lid and one is missing its original handle.² All three comparative examples have stylised lotus flowers at the centre of the teardrop panel on the body, rather than the vase motif.

[1] Examples illustrated in Zebrowski, Mark. *Gold, Silver & Bronze from Mughal India*. London: Alexandria Press in association with Laurence King, 1997. pp. 139, 144, 160.

[2] Illustrated in Krahl, Regina, John Ayers, and Nurdan Erbahar. *Chinese Ceramics in the Topkapi Saray Museum, Istanbul: A Complete Catalogue*. London: published in association with the directorate of the Topkapi Saray Museum by Sotheby's, 1986. p. 1192.