



Safavid Grisaille Jar

Iran, Second half of the 17th century with 19th century mounts

Fritware with grey-blue decoration under a clear glaze and brass mounts

46 cm high (including mounts), 33 cm diameter

Stock no.: A6097

A large Safavid jar of 'guan' form with Qajar brass mounts. The jar has an unusual grisaille palette, belonging to a group attributed by Yolande Crowe to the second half of the 17th century.¹ The variety of grey colours are achieved by adding copper, manganese, and iron oxides to cobalt.

The central register is decorated with a pastoral scene, including a lion, bird-filled trees, rocks, and a stream. Around the foot ring there is a border of ruyi clouds and at the shoulder a lobed band filled with peonies in reserve with hatched and cross-hatched detailing. These motifs are likely copied from a Chinese prototype.

Several bowls and dishes dated to the 17th century in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, share the grisaille palette. A dish with a similar pastoral scene (no. [460-1878](#)) shares the unusual areas of striped decoration in the foreground. Another (accession no. [1115-1876](#)), dated to the 17th century, shares a similar lion. A bowl (accession no. [467-1878](#)) features similar pastoral motifs. A bowl in the same collection (accession no. [2901-1876](#)), this time with blue decoration, has a band of fretwork

inside the bowl which resembles the pattern at the neck of our jar.

A very similar jar in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (object no. [30.95.160a,b](#)) similarly has Qajar mounts.

n.b. accession nos are clickable links

[1] Crowe, Yolande. *Persia and China : Safavid Blue and White Ceramics in the Victoria & Albert Museum, 1501-1738*. London/Geneva: Victoria & Albert Museum/La Borie, 2002, p. 187.