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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. 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. <u>460-1878</u>) shares the unusual areas of striped decoration in the foreground. Another (accession no. <u>1115-1876</u>), dated to the 17th century, shares a similar lion. A bowl (accession no. <u>467-1878</u>) features similar pastoral motifs. A bowl in the same collection (accession no. <u>2901-1876</u>), 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. <u>30.95.160a,b</u>) 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.