

Caishen, deity of wealth

Chinese Collection

Accession Nr.: 53.135.1 

Type: sculpture; statuette; pottery

Date of production: 1st half of the 19th century
Qing dynasty

Place of production: Jiangxi, China

Materials: bisquite

Techniques: glazed

Dimensions: height: 24.5 cm
diameter (base): 12.1 cm

The male figure stands on a short, ovoid base. On the back of the figure, there is a round aperture. He wears a yellow-glazed official's hat and a short, pale blue coat that closes in the middle. The coat is decorated with four medallions of flowers, and its back part resembles to a floor-length gown. The coat is slightly open in the front; under it, the deity wears armour. The armour is decorated with mask heads.

Caishens, venerated as deities of wealth, are popular deities of the Chinese folk mythology. They were worshipped in several forms. An iconographic version of Caishen is this figure wearing civilian clothes on his upper body and military clothes on his lower body. This representation symbolises double wealth. Its modelling and glazing show similarities with those of series of Taoist immortals made in the first half of the 19th century.

