

STAR SALES

*A majolica game pie dish, a Victorian bat brooch and a 21st-century enamel bowl... **Caroline Wheeler** picks her auction highlights*



1. Goddess Shines Her Light

Estimate £400–£600 Sold £273,000

Ancient bronzes from Asia can make phenomenal prices at auction, as illustrated by this beautifully crafted bodhisattva figure depicting the four-faced, eight-armed goddess, Amoghapāśa, which sold at Sworders recently with a 'come and get me' estimate. The Buddhist deity was found in the bottom of a box of miscellaneous metalware by

Sworders specialist Yexue Li, and the shell-shocked seller has since invited experts back to look at other things. The figure, which dates to the 11th or 12th century, was made during the time of the Pala dynasty, which ruled north-eastern India for 400 years. At the time, the region, which borders Nepal, was one of the last strongholds of Buddhism in India and became a centre of production of Buddhist artefacts made for pilgrims. The bronze figure of

Amoghapāśa – known as the 'wisdom giver' – was created using the lost wax casting process and decorated with silver and copper inlay. The tiny 900-year-old goddess, sitting on a double lotus pedestal and measuring just 7.8cm high, sparked a bidding battle amongst UK dealers. Now freed from her life in a box, she's one of the most expensive Pala dynasty bronzes ever sold at auction.

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