

Bronze vessels held great ritual significance in ancient China.

Symbols of power, they were used to make offerings to the heavenly and ancestral spirits, a practice based on the belief that life continued after death, and that the deceased communed with their living kin. Ritual and ceremony maintained the rigid hierarchy that flowed from the heavens to the king, and from the courts to the people.

In this exhibition, Mia's Chinese art curator Liu Yang and world-renowned art director and film designer Tim Yip (*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*) have created an experiential progression to engage your senses. Featuring some 150 Chinese bronze objects from Mia's world-renowned collection, "Eternal Offerings" offers you an immersive experience designed to evoke the mystery of heavenly and ancestral worship.

'Eternal Offerings' is a journey.

This is an exhibition of dualities: light and dark, ancient and present, heavenly and earthly. Each gallery embodies a facet of the rituals enacted to honor the divinities, from the solemnity of the temple, to the intoxication of lavish banquets. The progression leads you into a world where art collides with the aesthetics of theater and film.

Though each room is its own production, they are sequential and thematic; across seven galleries, you will participate in stages of a full ritual ceremony. A soundscape, dramatic lighting, dazzling projections, and painted images animate each multisensory space.

<p>6 RULES OF PROPRIETY</p>  <p>Standing figure, Warring States period, 5th–4th centuries BCE 2003.140.3</p> <p>Gui food vessel, Western Zhou dynasty, 10th century BCE, 50.46.119</p>	<p>5 BANQUET</p>  <p>Jue wine vessel, Early Shang dynasty, 16th–15th century BCE 98.80.2</p>	<p>4 RITUAL</p>  <p>Gui food vessel, Early Western Zhou dynasty, 11th century BCE 50.46.8</p>	<p>3 TEMPLE</p>  <p>Wine vessel he, Early Western Zhou dynasty 11th–10th century BCE 50.46.107</p>	<p>2 AN ANIMISTIC WORLD</p>  <p>Wine vessel zun in the shape of an owl, Late Shang dynasty, 13th–12th century BCE 50.46.116</p>
<p>7 COMING FULL CIRCLE</p>	<h1>Key Themes by Room</h1>			<p>1 SETTING THE SCENE</p>

Creative Collaborators



ABOUT THE DESIGNER

Tim Yip

Tim Yip is a visual artist, costume designer, and art director for theater and film inspired by ancient culture. His work on *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2001) won him an Oscar and a British Academy of Film and Television Arts award. His costumes have appeared in stage productions of *The King and I* and *Rite of Spring*, Netflix's *Marco Polo*, the Hong Kong Ballet and the English National Ballet, and the Chinese Olympic team. His art has been featured in exhibitions in Taiwan, France, the Netherlands, Spain, and the United States.



ABOUT THE CURATOR

Liu Yang

Liu Yang, PhD, is Mia's Chair of Asian Art and curator of Chinese art. In his previous role at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney, he mounted an impressive number of major exhibitions. Since joining Mia in 2011, Liu has curated several popular exhibitions, including "China's Terracotta Warriors: The First Emperor's Legacy" (2013), and "Power and Beauty in China's Last Dynasty" (2018), an unprecedented collaboration with theater artist Robert Wilson highlighting the drama, rituals, and opulence of the Qing Empire.

Benefactors of Mia's Bronze Collection



The "Pillsbury owl" can be found in Room 2 of this exhibition.

Mia possesses one of this nation's great collections of archaic Chinese bronzes. While additions have been made in recent years, thanks to generous contributions from Ruth and Bruce Dayton, Louis W. Hill, Jr., and Augustus L. Searle, one donor deserves special credit: Alfred Fiske Pillsbury (1869–1950).

An heir to the Pillsbury Company, which operated flour mills along the Mississippi River, Pillsbury was a business and civic leader. But a trip to Asia following WWI sparked an interest in Chinese art, and he became an avid collector. His attraction to unique animal forms was a signature of his collecting career. For example, perhaps the most famous piece in the Pillsbury collection is a ceremonial wine vessel (*zun*) in the form of an owl (commonly known as the "Pillsbury owl," on view in the second gallery). In 1950, Pillsbury bequeathed over 1,000 objects, including 143 bronzes, to Mia. Pillsbury's collections of ancient Chinese bronzes are exceptional in their depth, rarity, and high aesthetic standards.

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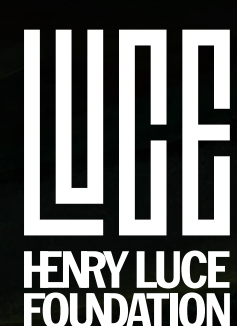
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Image: China, *zun* wine vessel
in the shape of an owl, 18th–12th
century BCE, bronze, Bequest of
Alfred F. Pillsbury 50.46.116