

Imperial Chinese £1 charity shop find to bring £50,000



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STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET.- A lucky shopper who picked up a Chinese vase for £1 in a charity shop discovered it was actually worth up to £80,000 because it was made for a 18th century emperor.

Unaware of its significance, the buyer who wishes to remain anonymous, listed the small yellow vase on eBay to see if it was worth anything - only to be inundated with messages and bids.

Realising the vase must be valuable, he removed it from the bidding site and took it to specialists at [Sworders Fine Art Auctioneers](#) in Stansted Mountfitchet where it was valued at £50,000 to £80,000.

The 8-inch-high vase, found in Hertfordshire, was made around 300 years ago in China and was marked with a symbol that meant it wasn't for export, but for the Emperor's palace.

Now the Qianlong famille rose wall vase will go under the hammer at Sworders on November 8.

It's inscribed with an imperial poem that 'praises incense' and two iron-red seal marks that read 'Qianlong chen han' or 'the Qianlong Emperor's own mark'.

It also reads 'Weijing weiyi' - 'be precise, be undivided'.

The pear-shaped vase is designed to be attached to a wall, with a flat back and floral decoration on the front.

Yexue Li, head of the Asian art department at Sworders, said: "The vase is special because it comes with the inscription by the Qianlong Emperor, and he must have commissioned this vase.

"The enamel on the vase is special because it uses yangcai (foreign) enamels on a yellow ground - a special colour traditionally reserved for the emperor.

"It's a high quality vase because it was court commissioned, so it would have been of a high value when it was made.

"It is very exciting, and we've had a lot of interest already."