

Patricia Ferguson

Asian Reflections:

***The reception of Chinese reverse painted glass
in 18th-century Britain***



The
GLASS
SOCIETY

**ZOOM LECTURE - Tuesday 29th September 2020
7pm - UK time**

Richly coloured Chinese paintings on mirrored plate glass, exquisitely mounted in fashionable European giltwood frames, furnish the interiors of many English country houses, such as Shugborough, in Staffordshire, the seat of the Anson family, yet there is a paucity of information about their individual histories since leaving Canton.

Among the half dozen examples in the Anson collection owned by the National Trust is an unusual pair depicting mandarins and their attendants on a terrace beneath a festoon border of beribboned flowers, atypically for their date, the ornate frame appears to be carved from padouk and partly gilt. They were recorded in the Chinese House, a folly in the garden in 1842. Many of the Asian objects in the house were presumed to have been acquired by Admiral George Anson, who famously circumnavigated the globe in 1740–44 and became enormously wealthy through prize money. However, the 'Chinese mirrors' may have been purchased in London at an auction held by Messrs. Christie and Ansell on 10 February 1780 by his nephew, George Adam Anson. They were described in the sale catalogue as 'A most beautiful high finished Chinese Painting on Plate Glass, buildings, figures, &c., embellished with festoons of flowers, ...in a carved and partly gilt frame'. They were part of the store of Captain Carr, probably Robert Carr, of the *Greenwich*, a merchant vessel in the service of the East India Company from 1770 to 1775.



This paper considers their provenance in the context of the reception of similar objects in Britain.

Time: The ZOOM talk will start promptly at 7pm (UK time).

To book, please contact David Willars at gsocfinancial@gmail.com Please note, places are limited. You will be sent details of how to join the Zoom meeting before the 29th September.

We expect to continue to hold meetings on this platform for the rest of the year, and will let members know when we feel able to restart meetings in London and elsewhere.

Picture credit: Chinese reverse painted mirrored looking glass, circa 1755, Saltram, Devon, National Trust Images.