

86b. PHOENIX EWER

Cu Lao Cham shipwreck, late 15th century

Stoneware, H: 26 cm × D: 15.9 cm

National Museum of Vietnamese History, Ha Noi, LSB 24550

The phoenix, a symbol of immortality, was frequently depicted in Vietnamese art. The mold from which this bird ewer was made follows the contours of the bird's anatomy, and those forms are further articulated in the way the creature is painted. Variation in the feathers creates texture, while the neck hackles fly back, giving the impression of movement though the bird stands still. The tail feathers that form the handle take on the appearance of a floral motif, while the discreet spout, which doesn't correspond to any body part, has been decorated with abstract lines. The abstracted clouds between the bird's talons suggest that it rises above the clouds.

LITERATURE

Co Vat Viet Nam (Vietnamese Antiquities), 2003.