

MOM'S JOY ROOM

2964 Fairmont Road, Morgantown, WV 26501 | (304) 282-3671

CERTIFICATE OF DESCRIPTION & VALUATION

Carved Wood Decorative Sculpture — Tang Dynasty War-Horse Style — Restored

THE GOLD COAST WAR HORSE

42" Carved & Gilded Wood — Tang Dynasty War-Horse Style — circa 1930s–1940s (estimated)



*42" Carved Wood War-Horse Sculpture
Tang Dynasty Style — Gold Gilt Finish
Carved Saddle, Bridle & Regalia Detail
Restored & Repainted — NY Gold Coast Estate Provenance*

Carved Wood War Horse — Tang Dynasty Style — 42" — circa 1930s–1940s (estimated)

*Solid Carved Wood — Gold Gilt Finish — Carved Saddle, Bridle, Blanket & Regalia
Restored & Repainted — Formerly of a New York Gold Coast Estate*

DESCRIPTION & HISTORY

This impressive 42-inch sculpture depicts a rearing war horse carved in the decorative style associated with Tang Dynasty (618–907 AD) tomb figures — a subject that has been reproduced and reinterpreted continuously in Chinese and Chinese-export decorative arts from the imperial era right through the 20th century. The original Tang Dynasty horses were glazed earthenware tomb goods (many famously finished in the tri-color "sancai" glaze), created to accompany the deceased into the afterlife and to symbolize the wealth, military might, and status of the tomb's occupant — the Tang Dynasty being especially renowned for its cavalry and its prized Ferghana "heavenly horses" imported from Central Asia. Those original ceramic horses have become icons of Chinese art history and are held in major museum collections worldwide. Their dramatic rearing poses, muscular

MARKET VALUE

\$500–850

*Realistic quick-sale price, private/
shop market — reflects disclosed
restoration*

ESTIMATED WORTH

**\$1,000–
1,500**

*Ceiling reflecting size & carving
quality, decorative arts market*

forms, and elaborately rendered tack and regalia have inspired countless decorative reinterpretations by craftsmen working in other media — including, as here, carved and gilded wood — well into the 20th century, particularly for Western collectors and export markets fascinated by Chinoiserie and Asian-inspired decorative themes.

It is important to note plainly that this piece is a **carved wood decorative sculpture executed in the Tang war-horse style**, rather than an actual ancient Tang Dynasty artifact — genuine Tang Dynasty horses are ceramic tomb figures, not carved wood, and no example of this scale and material would be mistaken for an antiquity by anyone familiar with the type. Based on family recollection and the construction style of the piece, it is estimated to date to the 1930s–1940s, a period when large-scale carved Chinoiserie decorative pieces were popular commissions for wealthy American homes seeking an exotic, worldly aesthetic statement.

The sculpture itself is elaborately carved with a full saddle, blanket, bridle, and hanging tassel-form regalia running along its flanks, all finished in a rich gold finish reminiscent of gilding — a treatment that would have caught candlelight or lamplight dramatically in a formal entry hall or library, exactly the kind of setting such a piece was likely designed for. It originated from a **New York Gold Coast estate sale** — the historic Long Island North Shore region famous for its Gilded Age and early 20th-century mansions built by industrialists, financiers, and old New York families, later immortalized in literature (most famously as the setting evoked by F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*). A piece of this scale and decorative ambition would have been acquired or commissioned specifically as a statement piece for one of these grand homes, likely displayed prominently rather than tucked away — carved Asian-inspired sculpture of this size was a recognized marker of worldly taste and means among Gold Coast society in the era.

The horse arrived into Sandy's hands in worn and

broken condition, having clearly suffered damage over its decades of display and, presumably, storage and transport since leaving its original estate setting. It has since been professionally repaired and repainted to closely match its original gold finish, a restoration that returns the piece to full decorative display quality while remaining honestly disclosed here as a factor collectors should weigh against a theoretical undamaged, all-original example.

◆ *"Tang Dynasty war-horse imagery has been reproduced for centuries in Chinese decorative arts as a symbol of strength, nobility, and status — this large carved wood interpretation would have made a striking statement piece in an early 20th-century American Gold Coast estate."* ◆

NOTABLE INFORMATION

- ◆ Subject: Rearing war horse, Tang Dynasty decorative style
- ◆ Size: 42 inches tall
- ◆ Material: Solid carved wood
- ◆ Finish: Gold gilt-style finish, professionally restored
- ◆ Carved detail: Full saddle, blanket, bridle & hanging regalia
- ◆ Provenance: New York Gold Coast estate sale
- ◆ Estimated era: 1930s–1940s (family estimate)
- ◆ Condition: Arrived worn & broken — professionally repaired & repainted
- ◆ Comparable: Large gilt wood decorative horse sculptures — \$138–\$980+ (Rubylane, Chairish)

Honest Disclosure: This sculpture is a 20th-century decorative carved wood piece made in the style of ancient Tang Dynasty war horses — it is not an authentic ancient artifact, and no maker's mark has been identified. The estimated 1930s–1940s date is based on family recollection and estate history rather than documented provenance. The piece has undergone professional repair and repainting to restore its original gold finish following damage; this restoration is disclosed here as it may affect value compared to a piece in fully original, undamaged condition.

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Certificate Issued: July 2026 | Values based on Rubylane, Chairish & decorative
arts market data 2024–2025

Sandy Wade, Proprietor

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