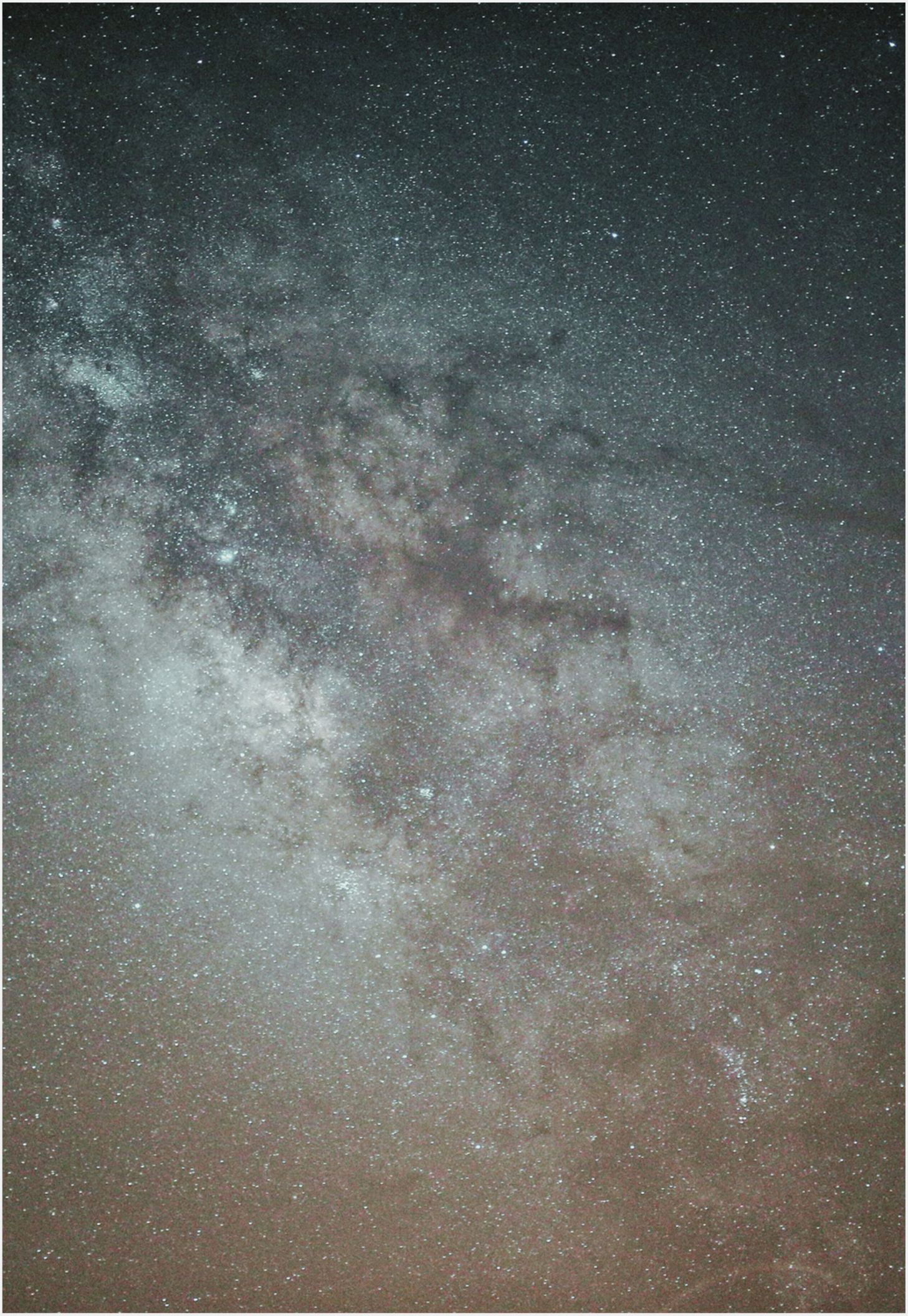


SAY TIAN HNG BUDDHA SHOP

Est. 1840

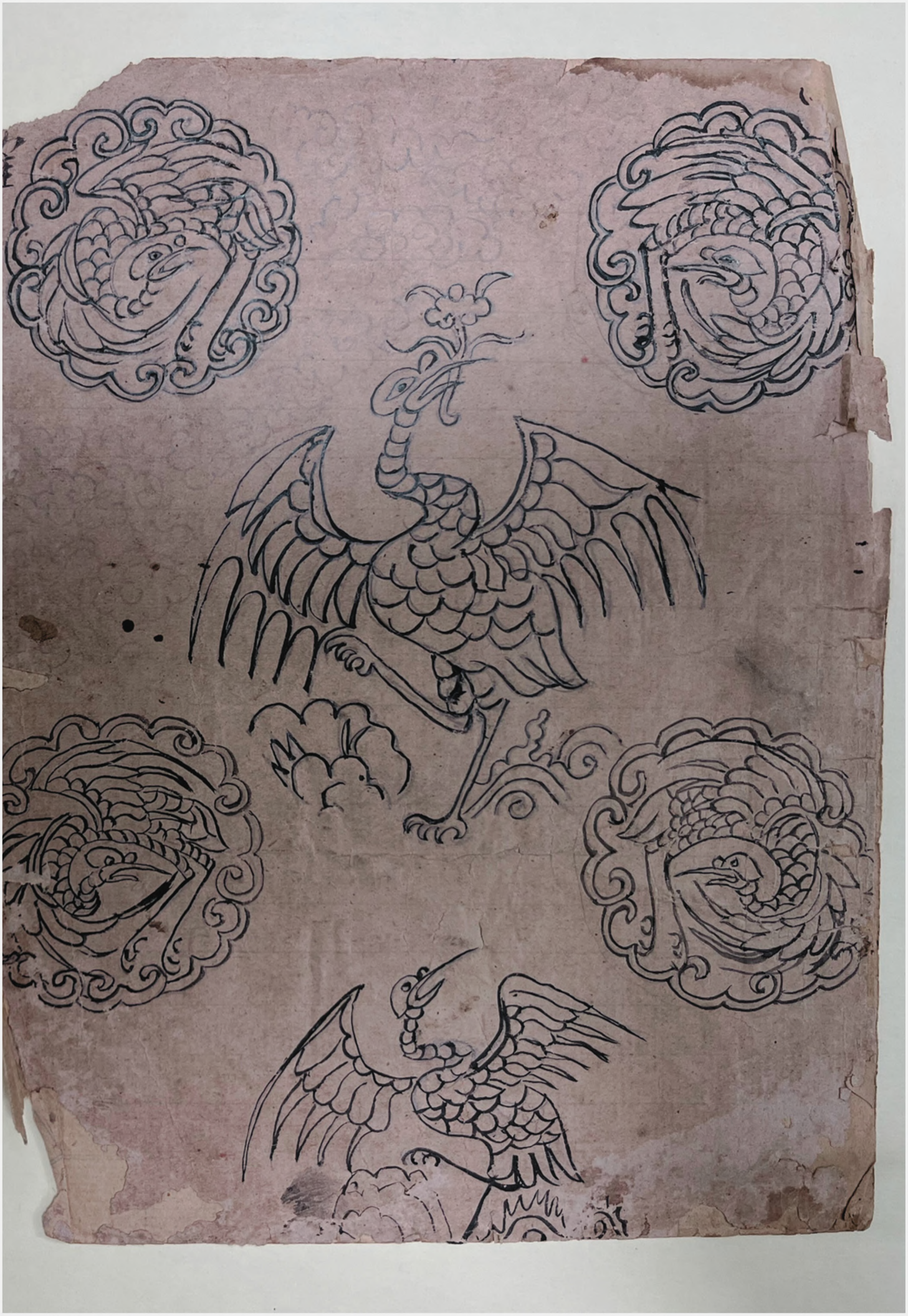
B R A N D B O O K & C A T A L O G U E



Say Tian Hng means “Garden in West Heaven” in Hokkien,
a dialect of Southern China. It refers to a celestial realm,
associated with transcendence, where the gods and goddesses
of Daoism and Chinese folk religion dwell.

Our 6th-generation atelier invites this celestial sensibility
into everyday spaces, through tropical hardwood sculptures
hand-crafted with early Qing dynasty techniques
and ancestral knowledge.





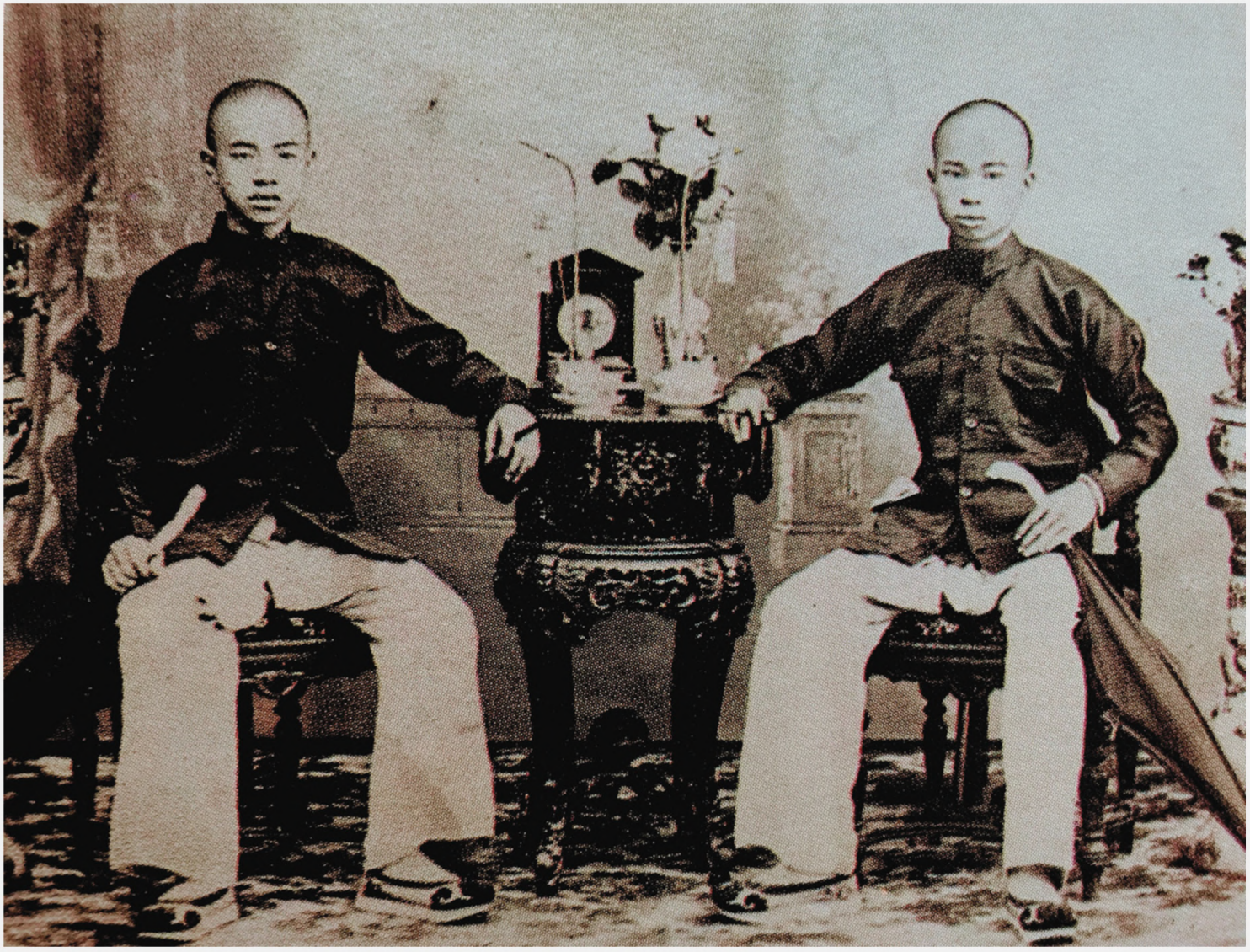
Around 1840, our ancestor - a wandering keymaker - met and discipled under a master sculptor in Tong An village, in the 45th district of Nan An County, Fu Jian province, China.

Several years later, the master sculptor died unexpectedly, leaving behind a young son. Our ancestor imparted his newly-acquired skills to the boy so he would have a means of supporting himself, then left to set up his own shop in another province, to avoid competing out of respect for his late master.

In 1896, amid the decline of the Qing dynasty, we fled the chaos and poverty in China, moving to Southeast Asia to settle in the multi-cultural British colony of Singapore.

Back in China, civil war erupted, followed by the Cultural Revolution, erasing traditional crafts and beliefs.

In Singapore, our shop survived.





Hand-carved from sturdy tropical hardwood
native to Southeast Asia



Holy incense ash from temples is collected and hand-kneaded into fine threads, then twirled to create relief motifs of mythological symbols. Known as thread sculpture, this early Qing Dynasty technique is a National Intangible Cultural Heritage of China.



It is believed that hand-crafted statues imbue the craftsman's Qì (气) - the universe's life force - over the hours of dedication and artistry. This is especially true of wooden statues, which retain harmony with nature, and allow Qì to remain pure.



Upon request, sculptures are gilded with gold leaf, featherlight films of real gold.
A material that does not tarnish over time, gold represents the eternity of the divine.
It is an offering of man's most prized possession back to the universe.

Today, our work explores how material tradition can bridge
the East and West, reconnecting us with
ancient legends and the timeless values they embody,
which remain just as relevant - if not more so - in our
modern, turbulent world.

We collaborate with UNESCO, the Asian Civilisations
Museum (Singapore), and the Michelangelo Foundation
(Switzerland) in the work of preserving
the intangible cultural heritage of humanity.



OUR CATALOGUE COMPRISES
HUNDREDS OF DESIGNS



SUDHANA
The boy who sought 53 teachers



AMITABHA
The prince of light



NIANG NIANG
The divine feminine



XUAN WU
The repented butcher



BUDAI
The laughing buddha



LEI GONG
The enforcer of justice



ER LANG SHEN
The general who sees the truth



SHI YIN
Seals of authority



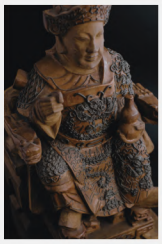
GUAN YIN
The devoted daughter



HU YE
The guardians of homes



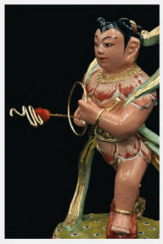
ZHEN WU
The personification of the North



YUAN SHUAI
Commanders of celestial armies



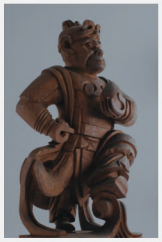
MA ZU
The guardian of sailors & fishermen



NE ZHA
The rebellious prince



GUAN GONG
The virtuous outlaw



SUN WUKONG
The misunderstood upstart

Every sculpture evokes an ancient story.









A plump Peach of Immortality (Xiān Táo / 仙桃), stolen from the celestial garden, serves as a poignant reminder of the Monkey God's past transgressions - but also holds out the powerful promise of redemption

Deftly surfing a puff of cloud, the Monkey God traverses one and a half times around the Earth in a single leap - a magical power known as the Cloud Somersault (Jīn Dǒu Yún / 筋斗云) gained from inner cultivation.

An irremovable golden headband (Jīn Gū / 金箍) tormented the Monkey God with hellish headaches whenever he fell prey to impulse and pride.

The Monkey God
孙悟空
Sūn Wù Kōng

Popularised as a superhero in contemporary pop culture,
cinema and theatre, the Monkey God is widely known
but rarely understood, his deeper meaning obscured
in ancient mythology.

He is the literary representation of the
Monkey Mind (心猿 / Xīn Yuán), the Daoist and Buddhist
concept of uncontrolled consciousness
where the restless mind jumps from thought to thought,
like a monkey leaping from branch to branch.

Yet, Sun Wukong also offers us a way to stillness.

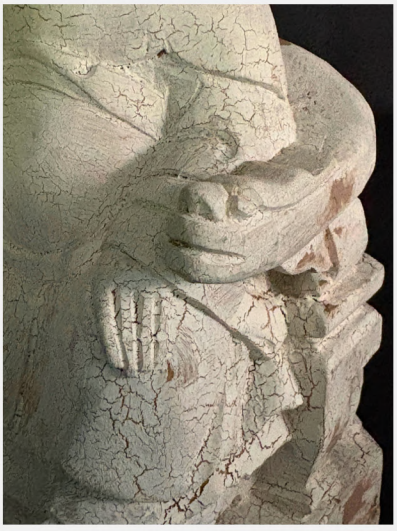
In the 16th-century Chinese classic The Journey to the West,
he succeeds in taming his impulses after a 514-year struggle,
attaining Buddhahood and finally embodying the meaning
of his name: 悟空 - "Enlightened Emptiness".

In the Monkey God, we find a mirror for the human condition.









In spite of her gender, Ma Zu dons a headwear reserved for emperors, the flat-topped hat known as the Miǎn Guān (冕冠).

Imperial China was patriarchal, but the celestial world it imagined was egalitarian.

Draped down the sides of the flat-topped hat is a ribbon (Shòu / 绶) that represents - despite its modest size - the mighty Milky Way.

Tenderly cradled in the nook of her arm is a sceptre, a ceremonial symbol of authority. Its Chinese name - Rú Yì (如意) - translates as “wishes fulfilled”.

The Goddess of the Sea
妈祖
Mā Zǔ

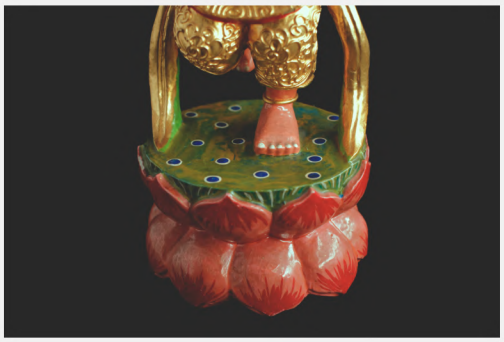
From a country helmed in by deserts to the north, mountains to the west, and jungles to the south, the Chinese's link to the outside world laid in the east, across open ocean.

As generations of traders, fishermen and migrants set sail in search of livelihoods, refuge and adventure, they looked to the Goddess of the Sea for safety amid the storms, at sea and in life.









In Sudhana's perfectly-balanced stance, one can be reminded of the importance of finding equilibrium.

Instead of elegant regalia or fearsome armour, he dons a Dù Dōu (肚兜), a bareback undergarment worn by children in ancient China.

The lotus flower on which he stands offers a reminder of how purity can be attained, even if one was once stuck in the mud of worldly attachments.

Sudhana

善财童子

Shàn Cái Tóng Zǐ

A boy from a wealthy family set out on a quest for truth,
learning from 53 teachers including gods and ordinary men.

Sudhana's story reminds us how wisdom can be found
in unlikely places.



Holy incense ash finish



Matte white finish



Minimum: 4 inches
Maximum: 24 inches

"My statue arrived in France in perfect condition.
The quality is exceptional and the statue looks even nicer
than what I expected from the photographs.
I have visited many shops in Asia selling similar statues
and I have to say that the quality of your work
is far above."

Mr Joel D.
of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, France
(Owner of a 20-inch statue of Zhen Wu,
the personification of the North)

WAYS TO PARTNER

Commission-based, made to order



1. The concept piece above is displayed in your shop. Space required: 30cm by 30cm.
2. When customers scan the QR code, the actual sculpture is revealed.
3. Customers order directly from Say Tian Hng Buddha Shop via the same QR code.
4. Commission is paid to partner shops immediately.
5. Sculpture is shipped directly to customer 3 to 4 months later.
6. There is no requirement for partner shops to manage inventory, packaging and shipping.

WAYS TO PARTNER

Trade in vintage sculptures



1. Sign up to be notified when devotees in Southeast Asia need to rehome vintage sculptures from private shrines retired from ritual worship.
2. Without our rehoming programme, sculptures would typically be abandoned under trees, or be brought to temples to be destroyed.
3. In our rehoming programme, sculptures will be deconsecrated by Daoist priests, then appraised by Say Tian Hng Buddha Shop for cultural value.
4. Sculptures will depict a myriad of gods and goddesses from the vast pantheon of Daoism, Shenism, and Chinese folk religion.
5. Partners who share our commitment to cultural preservation can enquire for acquisition.

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Photography by
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