



**A PAIR OF CHINESE CLOISONNÉ VASES
MOUNTED AS LAMPS**

Dimensions: H: 32 in / 82 cm | Dia: 7 in / 17 cm

9932



In the 17th century England & Holland, two small, warlike seafaring nations vied for supremacy in the newly established trade in the then extraordinary commodities, such as spices, silks, porcelain, lacquer, and design, which now are taken for granted. Chinese translucent porcelain, unknown at that time in Europe, and the affiliated decorative patterns, ('Willow pattern' prunus flowers, mythological animals court scenes and dragons, inter alia) were, as is said 'all the rage'. The ancient art of 'Cloisonné' enamelling using coloured molten glass was used in China some two millennia BC. The word comes from the French for 'cell', as a metal surface was dressed with patterns in brass, gold or silver wire, and the 'cells' created were then enamelled, and polished to a fine and even surface. In the present case of our lamps, initially Chinese vases, foliates and birds are to be seen. These vases were brought to the West, and, with a stroke of inspiration employed as oil lamps, being fitted with ormolu bases in the oriental taste and oil reservoirs and burners; here, the original wick adjusters are retained. Thus, artistic effort, knowledge and tradition were combined with typical Victorian practicality, and with our adaptation for electricity, a century and a half later, the decorative lighting function is in use again.

Chinese & French, late 19th century