



**A LARGE PAIR OF CHINESE ROSE CANTON VASES**

**Dimensions: H: 36 in / 91.5 cm | Dia: 15.5 in / 39.5 cm**

**10636**



### A Large Pair of Chinese Rose Canton Vases

The pair of [porcelain](#) vases produced for export, of very large bulbous size with a flared neck and scalloped parcel gilt rim, the surface hand-decorated with a plethora of colourful butterflies expertly executed in vibrant polychrome famille rose glazes, the shoulder and neck with applied parcel gilt chilong dragons and handles.

Chinese, Qing Dynasty, circa 1850

Canton famille rose with butterfly and insect decoration emerged as a distinct export type in the early 19th century, produced in Guangzhou for Western markets hungry for decorative [chinoiserie](#). The palette consisting of dense pinks, greens, and golds derives from the famille rose tradition introduced around 1720, when a new opaque pink enamel transformed Chinese decorative painting. The insect-and-flower variant, deliberately avoiding human figures, suited Victorian tastes for naturalistic ornament and sat comfortably in Western interiors without reading as foreign in an

uncomfortable way. Butterflies and bees carried Chinese symbolic weight (longevity, conjugal happiness, industry) that Western buyers largely didn't register but didn't need to.