

André Romão, *Argus*, 2021
Tree branch, peacock feathers

Poems

The Albuquerque Collection by André Romão

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André Romão by Guillaume Vieira

ANDRÉ ROMÃO IN DIALOGUE WITH THE ALBUQUERQUE COLLECTION OF CHINESE CERAMICS

The Albuquerque Foundation presents *Poems – The Albuquerque Collection by André Romão*, an exhibition conceived around a selection of works from the Albuquerque Collection of Chinese Ceramics alongside a group of sculptures by the artist.

Taking the Chinese scholar's studio as its point of departure, the exhibition proposes an approach to the collection through poetry, writing, the materiality of objects, and the relationships they establish with one another.
The choice of this framework stems from André Romão's interest in Chinese literature from the Ming and Qing periods, particularly the fantastic and supernatural tales compiled by the writer Pu Songling. For the artist, the scholar's studio also represents a place where different disciplines and materialities converge, offering an open field for discovery and for the construction of relationships between objects.

"The scholar's studio provides the setting for much of the Chinese literature from the Ming and Qing periods that particularly interests me. It is also a meeting point for different disciplines and materialities, creating a broad enough field to explore a variety of ideas and remain open to what I might discover within the collection," says André Romão.

In developing this project, the artist undertook an extensive exploration of the Albuquerque Foundation's collection. Alongside its best-known holdings, he encountered a range of works that broadened his perception of the collection, particularly older examples of Chinese ceramic production, an area in which he has developed a growing interest in recent years.



Ewer, white porcelain, China, Song dynasty (960–1279), 10th century

Poems also reflects central aspects of Romão's artistic practice. Working regularly between sculpture and poetry, the artist found in the scholar's studio a context in which different forms of expression coexist without rigid hierarchies, allowing objects, texts, and images to generate meaning together.

"I work mainly with sculpture and poetry, and this space of intersection within the scholar's studio brings together these encounters and this horizontality, in which very different things can coexist and produce meaning together. I also seek this in my own work: the poems influence the sculptures, and vice versa."

The exhibition's title underscores this perspective. In *Poems*, poetry appears not only as text, but also as a quality inherent to the objects themselves and to the relationships established between them. Throughout the exhibition, works from different periods in the history of Chinese export ceramics enter into dialogue through formal, material, and imaginative associations, accompanied by André Romão's sculptures, which share this same poetic universe.

"For me, each object in the exhibition possesses a poetic force, and poetry is not confined to words. Thinking of all the objects as poems frees them from hierarchies between different art forms," the artist notes.

Rather than proposing a chronological or exclusively historical reading of the collection, *Poems* presents a network of relationships constructed through observation, the material proximity between objects, and the freedom of association that characterises the artist's gaze.

Poems – The Albuquerque Collection by André Romão will be on view at the Contemporary Exhibitions Pavilion of the Albuquerque Foundation, in Sintra, from 10 October 2026 to 7 February 2027.



André Romão, *Milky Way*, 2026
Sculpture Fragments (Terracotta, Italy, 1930's), bells

Exhibition Sections

The Scholar's Studio

Poems – The Albuquerque Collection by André Romão presents André Romão's reading of the Albuquerque Foundation Collection through a carefully considered selection of objects and the dialogues established between them.
The exhibition takes as its point of departure the Chinese scholar's studio, a historical model that crystallised during the Ming and Qing dynasties. It was a space for study, reflection and contemplation; for the collection of artistic and natural objects; for reflections on nature, philosophy and religion; for the reading of classical texts and literary production; and for the practice of calligraphy and poetry. Characterised by a distinctive material culture, it was filled with objects such as inkstones, brushes, folding screens, flower vases, antiquities, books, tea wares and incense burners.
Within the scholar's studio, words, objects, plants, rituals, references to different temporalities, literary traditions and geographies coexist in a fluid and vibrant constellation.

The exhibition is punctuated by sculptures by André Romão that expand this universe and resonate with the environment evoked by the exhibition.

Poems

The association between poetry and ceramic objects has a long history within Chinese culture. Poems are not confined to books; they exist in the world, in ceramics, and in the conversations sparked by the presence of these objects.
This selection moves freely between objects bearing poems and inscriptions and objects associated with the act of writing, with little desire to distinguish between them. Brush pots, inkstones and other writing implements coexist with bowls and jars that transform narratives and poems into tangible objects.



Oil lamp, China, *Blanc de Chine* porcelain, Dehua kilns - Ming Dynasty,
Chongzhen period (1628-1644), mid-17th century



André Romão, *Weeping Willow*, 2026
Sculpture fragment (terracotta, France, 1970's), brass, oxidation

Materiality, writing, ritual and orality merge and overlap, reflecting the more fluid and non-hierarchical boundaries between disciplines and categories that characterised the Chinese scholar's studio.
In a wall-mounted display case, a series of vividly coloured dishes stands apart from the preceding group, hovering like flying saucers between worlds. Mythological narratives are continuously translated and retranslated: from Greek popular tales to Roman poetry, through Italian engravings, before finding their way onto Chinese porcelain and being exported back to Europe. A circular poem, perpetually expanding and contracting.

Monochromes (Metaphysical Landscapes)

The monochrome has been a recurring theme in Chinese ceramic production from its earliest periods through to the present day.
A refined focus on form and on the visual and tactile qualities of glazes gave rise to objects of remarkable simplicity and sophistication. Beyond the initial impression of an almost metaphysical abstraction, echoes of the world emerge through these works: in the stylisation of natural forms, including flowers, roots and plants; in references to earlier forms, such as archaeological artefacts and antiquities; and in the shapes of ritual objects, whether sacred or quotidian.
The glazes themselves, the result of centuries of alchemical experimentation in the kiln, reveal an approach to the world that is at once sensory and magical: from celadon glazes that aspire to the qualities of jade to glazes bearing poetic names that evoke animals and plants.
Within this landscape, objects dating from the 2nd to the 18th century drift together like a dream. The grouping begins and ends with ceramic pillows. A small pagoda-shaped incense burner disrupts the ensemble, introducing an architectural scale to the surrounding objects, while small animals and mythical creatures stand watch as guardians.



Brushes with caps, Porcelain decorated in underglaze cobalt blue, Jingdezhen kilns - Ming Dynasty, late Wanli - early Transitional period, 17th century



André Romão by Guillaume Vieira

André Romão

André Romão was born in Lisbon in 1984, where he lives and works. He studied at the Faculdade de Belas-Artes of the University of Lisbon and the Accademia di Brera in Milan between 2002 and 2007. Since then, he has been an artist-in-residence at Künstlerhaus Bethanien (Berlin), MACRO (Rome), Gasworks (London), and Luma (Arles).

Romão's practice focuses on sculpture and poetry, creating dreamlike figures and landscapes that often inhabit a liminal space between the literary and the natural. His work investigates themes of transformation, mutation, and fluidity. In his approach, sculpture becomes a site of hybridity, where material presence, emotional resonance, imagination, and narrative converge to form a distinctive visual lexicon.

Romão's work has been presented at institutions including the Serralves Museum (Porto), the Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève, the 2021 Liverpool Biennial, MAAT (Lisbon), the Berardo Collection Museum (Lisbon), Futura (Prague), The Green Parrot (Barcelona), MACRO (Rome), the Astrup Fearnley Museet (Oslo), CAPC Musée d'Art Contemporain de Bordeaux, Spike Island (Bristol), and Kunsthalle Lissabon, among others.

His work is represented in several public and private collections, including the Gulbenkian Foundation, the Serralves Foundation, the EDP Foundation, MACAM, the Leal Rios Foundation (on long-term loan to the Serralves Museum), and FRAC Franche-Comté.



Albuquerque Foundation, photo by Fernando Guerra

The Albuquerque Foundation

Founded by the Brazilian collector Renato de Albuquerque and his granddaughter, Mariana A. Teixeira de Carvalho, the Albuquerque Foundation is based in the municipality of Sintra, recognised by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in the category of “Cultural Landscape”. Located on a property that once served as the Albuquerque family’s holiday home, the Foundation permanently houses the Albuquerque Collection of Chinese Ceramics, a body of heritage that constitutes a central axis of the institution’s identity and asserts its relevance in the present through its dialogue with the contemporary programme. Within this context, the Foundation promotes artistic and research residencies, as well as temporary exhibitions dedicated to contemporary ceramics, involving both emerging and established artists whose practice lies within the expanded field of this discipline. Currently directed by Rita Sousa Tavares, the Albuquerque Foundation has established itself as a meeting point for heritage, contemporary artistic practice and research.

The rehabilitation project, developed by the architectural studio Bernardes Arquitetura, enhances the historic building by adapting it to new functions and establishing a dialogue between the pre-existing structure and a new wing conceived to accommodate the Foundation’s activities. This integration of historical and contemporary elements reflects the institution’s mission to bring together tradition and innovation through a programme that includes a pavilion for temporary exhibitions, a specialised library, a restaurant dedicated to local and sustainable gastronomy, a concept store, and a publicly accessible garden, fostering interaction between art, culture, and community.

FACT SHEET

Address
Albuquerque Foundation
Rua António dos Reis 189
2710-302 Sintra
Portugal

Site
http://albuquerquefoundation.pt

Instagram
@albuquerquefoundation

Admissions
Adults: €10
Children (under 12): Free
Students and Young People (under 18): €8
Seniors (65+): €8
Sintra Residents: Free Sunday mornings until 1 PM

Opening Hours
The Albuquerque Foundation is open to the public year-round during the following hours:

Monday: Closed
Tuesday - Sunday: 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM
(Hours may differ on public holidays)

Acessibility
The Albuquerque Foundation provides wheelchair access and has designated accessible parking spaces near the entrance.

Transport

Car
30 minutes from Lisbon city centre
Onsite parking is available

Public Transport
The nearest train station is Portela de Sintra.
From there, take bus 1623 or 1629 to Rua António dos Reis, stop 124.

Catalogue
100 Highlights from the Albuquerque Collection

Introductory Text by William R. Sargent
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Press Kit