

Margaret Dolinsky

Assistant Professor, H.R. Hope School of Fine Arts and Research Scientist,
University Information Technology Services, Indiana University Bloomington

Research Assistant: Dmitrij Hmeljak

3D Models and Environments: Mathew A. Powers and Craig Strubing

Sound Environments: Adam P. Schweigert



*China, Qing Dynasty, 1644–1911
Brushpot with scenes of country
pursuits about 1700; various inlays in
zitan wood*

*Gift of Professor and Mrs. R. Norris
Shreve and Mr. and Mrs. Herman C.
Krannert by exchange*



*China, Eastern Han Dynasty, 25–220
Model of wellhead about 150;
earthenware*

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Eli Lilly

Cabinet of Dreams

“Cabinet of Dreams” is a 3D virtual environment showcasing highlights of the Indianapolis Museum of Art’s Chinese art collection. Dr. James J. Robinson, Jane Weldon Myers Curator of Asian Art and head of the Asian Art Department worked closely with the team from the Henry Radford Hope School of Fine Arts to select objects which are recreated as 3D computer graphics and displayed in virtual environments. The objects range in date from 1000 BC to the mid-1800s and include bronze, earthenware, and wood ceremonial pieces, such as an inkstone, a brushpot, soul urns, figures, and household items. One of the objects is a Qing dynasty cabinet made of cloisonné, glass, and zitan wood that was a gift of Mrs. George Phillip Meier. The cabinet is the metaphoric center of the installation, reflected in the art and the display device as if it were a modern day Wunderkabinett. The cabinet hints at the collection of rarities that are hidden within the virtual environment and the museum itself. By combining the actual cabinet with the virtual dreams inspired by the real objects, computer graphic environments represent a structure of times past as well as a sense of removed space.

“Cabinet of Dreams” 3D viewing occurs on a device called the John-e-Box, a portable, large-format, 3D stereo display system developed by Indiana University’s Advanced Visualization Lab in conjunction with the IU Bloomington Department of Chemistry. (For more about the John-e-Box, see: avl.iu.edu.)