

ULTIMATE GIFTS

Dragon Quest



THE GIFT

THE LAST AVAILABLE LOIMINCHAY NINE DRAGONS PEN.

A SET OF TWO LOIMINCHAY TIBETAN GODDESSES PENS.

A TWO-HEADED GILDED-BRONZE PEN STAND.

\$310,000

IN THE LATE 1980s, Patrick Chu walked into a pen store in Manhattan and asked if he could take a look at a 1950s-era Parker Duofold. He purchased the pen for \$275, thus beginning a nearly two-decade-long obsession. "I don't know how many pens I have collected since then," Chu says. "Maybe 1,000?"

Chu began parlaying his passion into a profession in 1999. As a collector of Montblanc's Patron of Art series, he decided his first pen design would pay tribute to a prominent Chinese art collector. "Emperor Qianlong spent 30 years collecting all of China's most significant art and bringing it to the Forbidden City," says Chu, whose design commemorating the emperor was released in 2001. He chose ebonite for the pen's barrel and cap because L.E. Waterman used the material to make the first practical version of a fountain pen in 1884. Chu used the pen's clip—made from jade, China's most precious stone—to create a signature look for his company, which he called Loiminchay.

Another signature design element of Loiminchay pens is the elaborate maki-e paintings and techniques applied to some of the pens' ebonite bodies by artisans in Japan. Loiminchay releases a new limited-edition maki-e design every year, and for 2010 the company will offer a two-pen set called Tibetan Goddesses, which depicts two goddesses that are significant to Tibetan Buddhism. "I was fascinated by the original drawing of Kurukulla and Palden Lhamo that inspired this design," says Chu. "I

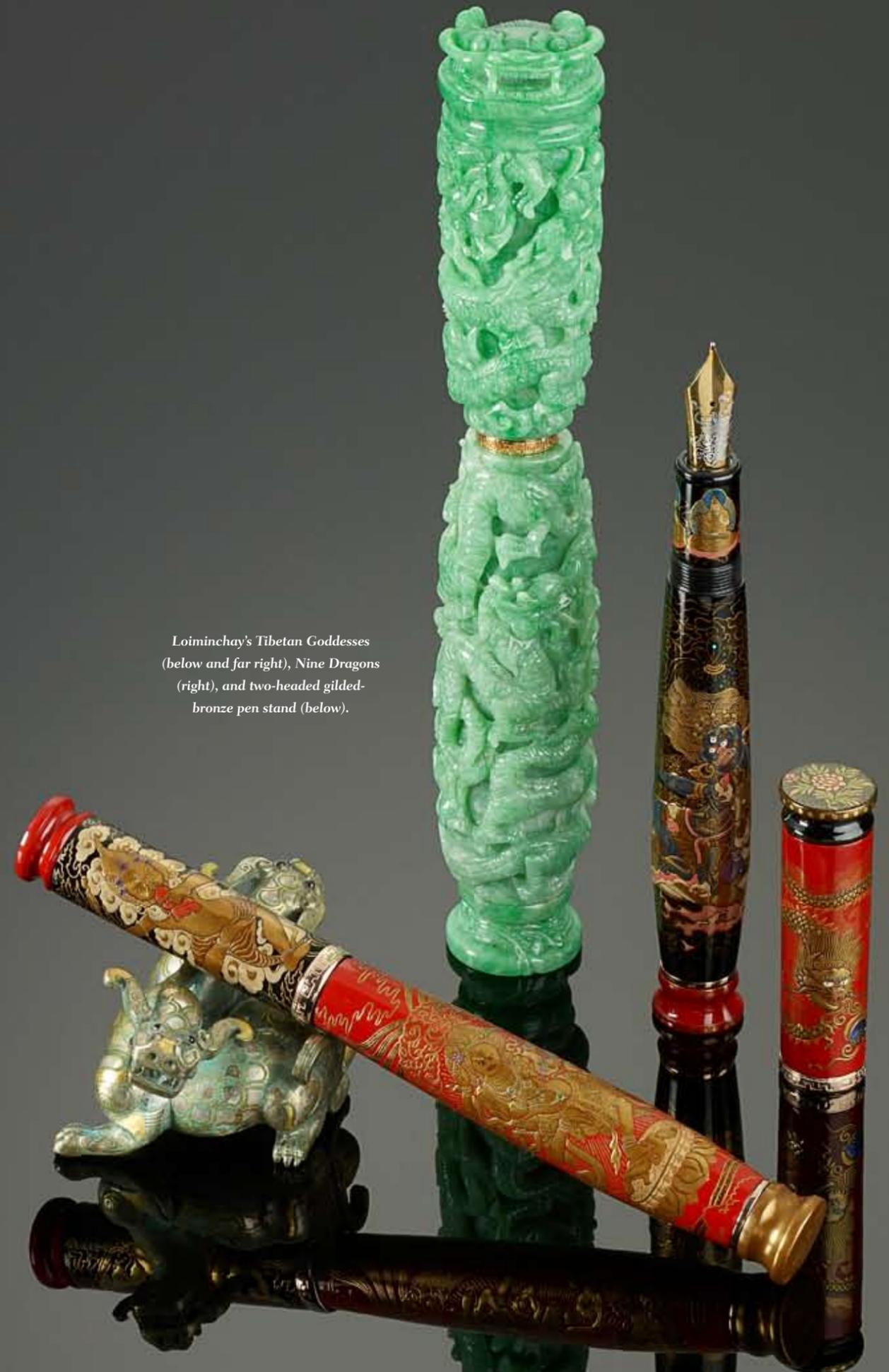
also wanted to introduce something spiritual, rather than political, from Tibet to the market."

But Loiminchay's ultimate writing instruments are its 10 Nine Dragons pens, which, aside from an 18-karat-gold nib, Chu made entirely from jade. "Every other pen company has released a limited-edition jewelry pen with diamonds and rubies that is worth tens of thousands of dollars," he says. "[Jade] was my challenge."

Chu's challenging design incorporates nine intricately carved dragons coiled around the barrel and cap of the 8.24-inch dip pen. "The Chinese think that dragons are the sons of God," says Chu, who commissioned the ten pens from two blocks of premium-quality Burmese jade carved by a master artisan in Guangdong, China. Chu chose the number nine because it represents the highest value in Chinese culture. It is the greatest single-digit number and is used to signify the emperor of China, whose robes are often adorned with nine dragons.

Chu has sold eight Nine Dragons pens to six collectors worldwide, and he is keeping number 10 for himself. But he has reserved the most coveted pen in the series—the model numbered nine—for one *Robb Report* reader. In addition to the ninth Nine Dragons pen and a Tibetan Goddesses set, Chu will include with this gift one of just 28 gilded-bronze pen stands that he modeled after a 3,000-year-old figurine. —JENNIFER RYAN

Loiminchay, 212.941.7488, www.loiminchay.com



Loiminchay's Tibetan Goddesses (below and far right), Nine Dragons (right), and two-headed gilded-bronze pen stand (below).

TED MORRISON