The SB Collection

Have you ever met anyone in your life who brings joy and colour when she steps into a room? Somebody who may turn up in a rain hat (clear plastic, or in later days, a smart reversible Burberry — because it does always seem to rain in London) but when the rain is shaken off, and the umbrella put to one side, the sun is shining.

Do you know someone who has that overall sense of beauty in form and shape but who also loves detail and the narrative in a storytelling piece of art?

I do, and that person is the owner of The SB Collection.

Madame B grew up in Brussels and had a comfortable, if somewhat over-protected, childhood in smart society. She was tutored at home, with time off for riding lessons, tennis, and seaside holidays at her family’s villa. She could have led a quiet, conventional, shielded existence with her family until marriage, but she chose instead to take a history degree, an unusual step for a woman at that time. She recalls difficult years during the Second World War. Her father, a Belgian Air Force Officer, tried to escape Belgium via France to join the RAF but was captured before reaching England and endured three years of hard labour. As a young woman Madame B joined the Red Cross and began the many friendships that were to continue into her later years.

Life took Madame B to the Far East and it was in 1954 in Singapore that she purchased her first snuff bottle. How did her passion for collecting originate? I have spoken with her daughter who recalls that her mother always encouraged her and her brother to join in the fun of collecting: at first, it was tropical shells on the beaches, then butterflies in the jungles of Malaysia. Her daughter says, “It was a great way to open our eyes to the wonders of the world and at the same time sharpen our eye for pattern and colour.”

In the 1960s Madame B moved to Hong Kong and there her passion for snuff bottles was really ignited. She was a careful housewife and juggled her budget to buy the best bottles she could. She collected many porcelain examples, not only because they were more affordable for her, but also because she delighted in the stories they often illustrated. Given her interest in porcelain, two particular bottles catch the eye: the two bottles in the form of Chinese scrolls, recording how porcelain is manufactured, (no. 22 and no. 25). These are both very rare and in good condition and highly sought after. She had an eye for detail and took pleasure in the tiniest nuances of a bottle’s potential and narrative fine points. She also enjoyed the way an artist carved an agate bottle, creating a design from the different colours in the material. And she loved the colour and translucence of glass bottles: plain bottles to some, but she saw beauty in their form and colour and in the way, when grouped together, the colours danced together and created their own dynamic.

Having settled in England, Madame B continued collecting snuff bottles and friends. She filled her days playing bridge (she was a life Master of the English Bridge Union) and meeting with her fellow countrymen as a member of the Council of the Anglo Belgian Association. She was also a member of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Association of the South East. She would search out local auctions and antique fairs, and also frequently visited our shop in Clifford Street, London to satisfy her collecting pastime. Madame B kept her treasures in boxes, but they were often brought out to be handled, looked at and admired.

We hope to have created with this catalogue not only a record of her collecting days, but also a tribute to her brightness and joie de vivre.

Suzan Page
Robert Hall
February 2011
1. **Glass**, translucent sapphire-blue, the sides carved with mask-and-ring handles, on a protruding, oval footrim.
   - 1780-1850
   - Height: 7cm

2. **Amber**, root amber of pebble form, carved with Meng Hao analog riding a donkey, followed by his assistant carrying blossoms, the reverse with a scholar seated on a boat passing beside a waterfall which flows into a turbulent sea.
   - 1780-1850
   - Height: 5.2cm

3. **Glass**, overlay of blue, pale green and yellow carved with a fish curled on a wave, the reverse with a yellow peony and lush green leaves.
   - Beijing Palace Glassworks, Qianlong, 1736-1795
   - Height: 5.8cm

4. **Carnelian**, deep orange surrounded by white crystalline material and carved with a swirling cloud design.
   - 1780-1850
   - Height: 5.5cm

5. **Porcelain**, painted in famille rose enamels, one side with a walled city, the other with a harbour, the base with an iron-red coiled dragon.
   - Jingdezhen, 1796-1850
   - Height: 7.3cm
   - Published: Robert Hall, Chinese Snuff Bottles X, The Burton Collection, no 18

6. **Glass**, layers of opaque and translucent turquoise-green, the lateral sides carved with mask-and-ring handles.
   - 1780-1850
   - Height: 6.3cm
7  Neprite, the ochre skin carved with Liu Hai and his three-legged toad, the other side with a figure in a sampan carrying a peach, with another figure in a swirling cloud above.
18th Century
Height: 6.4cm

8  Glass, a layer of swirly pink, green and white between layers of translucent pale green glass.
1780-1850
Height: 5.7cm

9  Porcelain, rounded form with flattened sides, painted in famille rose enamels with Meng Haoran on a donkey in search of prunus blossom, the reverse with his attendant picking blossom from a tree, the foot inscribed in inverted seal script Daoguang nian zhi (‘Made during the Daoguang Period’).
Jingdezhen, 1821-1850
Height: 5.4cm

10 Burlwood, well patinated material resting on a protruding oval footrim.
1780-1850
Height: 7.3cm

11  Lapis lazuli, of rectangular form resting on an oval footrim.
1780-1850
Height: 6.2cm

12  Glass, pale turquoise, of rounded form on a dimpled base, with a wide mouth.
18th Century
Height: 6cm

13  Glass, blue, of rounded form with pink and maroon splashes and traces of aventurine.
1780-1850
Height: 6.3cm
14. Porcelain, of pebble shape, painted in famille rose enamels, with a grasshopper on a leaf, the reverse with a cicada.
   Jingdezhen, 1821-1850
   Height: 6.2cm

15. Glass, imitating realgar, carved as a finger citron.
   1730-1780
   Height: 6cm

16. Glass, opaque white with incised inscriptions in panels on front, reverse and lateral sides.
   1780-1850
   Height: 6.1cm

   The lines are a poem by Wang Shipeng (1112-1171) entitled Wangyue tai (Terrace to View the Moon):
   A bright pearl spat out far away from the head of a reclining dragon
   Gradually seems a flash of pure light floating a myriad miles away.
   When people look up to you, make sure they look to you as they look at the moon
   You must always appear like a mirror and never like a hook.

   (The "bright pearl" is the moon, and the "reclining dragon" is the outline of a mountain range seen against the evening sky. The "head" of the dragon is the summit of the range. "Spat" describes how the moon appears suddenly from behind the mountains. As a mirror reflects so an upright, compassionate, and responsive official "mirrors" the hopes and concerns of the people under his jurisdiction; he never should seem like a "hook", a crescent, not full moon, which implies mean-spiritedness. That is, he should never seize them by a hook, never treat them harshly, never exploit them).

   The two lateral sides read:
   A marvel outside the human world.
   Lies in the midst of the sky.

17. Glass, imperial yellow, of triangular form resting on a dimpled base.
   Imperial Glassworks, Beijing
   Qianlong, 1736-1795
   Height: 5.7cm

18. Glass, translucent peacock-blue, of elongated form resting on a protruding, oval footrim.
   1780-1850
   Height: 6.2cm

19. Mother-of-pearl, carved with panels containing a dragon and a pearl, the other side with a bat surrounding a shou medallion, the sides with mask-and-ring handles.
   1780-1850
   Height: 5.3cm

20. Porcelain, of tall cylindrical form, painted in underglaze-blue with a dramatic tall pine tree in an idyllic mountain landscape, and a fisherman seated on a sampan, whilst his assistant holds a net, the base with concentric rings.
   Jingdezhen, 1796-1850
   Height: 10.3cm
Porcelain, moulded in the form of a scroll, painted with enamels depicting the process of making porcelain cups, one side with a lengthy inscription which has extended passages taken from the book Jingdezhen taolu by Lan Pu first published in 1815, specifically here from the second chapter Xumó (Mould making).

Jingdezhen, 1850-1920
Height: 7.5cm

Similar example: Moss, Graham, Tsang A Treasury of Chinese Snuff Bottles, no 1411

Jalcura, embellished with figures in a garden near a pavilion, the other side with a blossoming tree.

Japan, 19th Century
Height: 6.6cm

Porcelain, moulded in the form of a scroll, painted with enamels depicting the process of making porcelain cups, one side with a lengthy inscription which has extended passages from the book Jingdezhen taolu by Lan Pu first published in 1815, specifically here from the first chapter Qumí (Collecting Clay).

Jingdezhen, 1850-1920
Height: 7.5cm

Similar Example: Moss, Graham, Tsang A Treasury of Chinese Snuff Bottles, no 1411

Lac-burgauté, embellished with figures in a garden near a pavilion, the other side with a blossoming tree.

Japan, 19th Century
Height: 6.6cm

Porcelain, moulded in the form of a scroll and painted in black and iron-red enamels with a figure carrying baskets towards a water wheel in a mountainous landscape, one side with a lengthy inscription which has extended passages from the book Jingdezhen taolu by Lan Pu first published in 1815, specifically here from the first chapter Quní (Collecting Clay).

Jingdezhen, 1850-1920
Height: 7.5cm

Similar Example: Moss, Graham, Tsang A Treasury of Chinese Snuff Bottles, no 1411

Chalcedony, dark material with black and ochre areas carved with a cheeky cricket standing on its cage, the reverse with one plump fish and one smaller fish swimming amongst lotus plants.

1780-1850
Height: 7cm

Glass, translucent brown resembling amber, the sides carved with mask-and-ring handles.

Beijing, 1780-1850
Height: 7.3cm

Glass, opalescent with orange splashes, resting on a dimpled base.

1780-1850
Height: 5.5cm

Glass, pale, translucent green of plain form resting on a rounded, protruding footrim.

1780-1850
Height: 5.8cm
28 Porcelain, of pebble form, painted with a grasshopper on a begonia plant, the reverse with a butterfly above a cicada, the foot inscribed in iron-red seal script, Daoguang nian zhi. (Made during the Daoguang Period).
Imperial kilns, Jingdezhen, 1821-1850
Height: 6.4cm

29 Agate, honey colour with ochre inclusions and green dendritic markings, well hollowed.
1780-1850
Height: 5.3cm

30 Glass, sapphire-blue with splashes of mottled green, blue, and aventurine, resting on a protruding, oval footrim.
1780-1850
Height: 4.6cm

31 Porcelain, each face with a moulded panel painted in famille rose enamels with two figures in a garden; the surrounds painted to imitate woodgrain.
Jingdezhen, 1796-1850
Height: 6.5cm
Published: Robert Hall, Chinese Snuff Bottles X, The Button Collection no 37

32 Glass, painted in enamels with lush blossoming flowers including peonies, daisies, roses and prunus, the foot inscribed in iron-red regular script Guyue xuan (Ancient Moon Pavilion).
Guyue xuan, 1750-1795
Height: 5.5cm

33 Porcelain, in the form of a wine jar with the characters Fu (Good Fortune) and Shou (Long Life) in cobalt-blue on a white band encircling the bottle, the sides with mask-and-ring handles.
Jingdezhen, 1800-1850
Height: 5.5cm

34 Porcelain, underglaze-blue and red painted with a bearded fisherman wearing a reed coat clutching a fish, possibly on his way home to enjoy his catch.
Jingdezhen, 19th Century
Height: 7.3cm
35. Glass, translucent pink, of small elegant vase form, resting on a protruding, oval footrim. 
1780-1850 
Height: 5.7cm

36. Glass, opaque white with blue overlay carved in low relief with central coiled dragons, the base formed from the overlay. 
Beijing, 1780-1850 
Height: 5.9cm

37. Glass, deep powder-blue of rounded form resting on a protruding, oval footrim. 
1780-1850 
Height: 4.8cm

38. Agate, small form with a white band encircling the body, the bottle extremely well hollowed and sitting on a flat base. 
1780-1850 
Height: 4.6cm

39. Porcelain, of unusual amphora form, one side with a kneeling man holding a flower, the other with a body holding a lotus, all on a speckled turquoise ground. 
19th Century 
Height: 4.4cm

40. Porcelain, painted in underglaze-blue with a fisherman standing beside a weeping willow tree hidden from view by a bamboo, the neck surrounded by pendant ruyi, the foot inscribed in regular script Yongzheng nian zu ('Made during the Yongzheng period'). 
Jingdezhen, 19th Century 
Height: 6cm

41. Nephrite, mottled brown, carved with a frog on a leaf, the stopper also moulded as a frog on a leaf. 
1780-1850 
Height: 6.2cm

42. Bamboo, carved in the form of three overlapping pods with tendrils and leaves around the shoulder. 
19th Century 
Height: 6.3cm
Porcelain, spade-shaped, painted in famille rose and gold enamels with scenes of a dragon boat festival, the reverse with a crowd of smiling boys surrounding two dogs with a horn and drum band, the sides decorated in iron-red with formalised scrolling motifs, the foot inscribed in iron-red seal script, Qianlong nian zhi (‘made during the Qianlong Period’) (small restoration on neck).
Imperial kilns, Jingdezhen, Qianlong, 1736-1795
Height: 5.4cm

Porcelain, crackle glaze painted in underglaze-blue with a fierce, scaly, five-clawed dragon, chasing a flaming pearl, the base formed by concentric rings.
Jingdezhen, 1800-1850
Height: 8.1cm

Rock crystal, of pebble form carved with trees issuing from rockwork.
1780-1850
Height: 5.3cm

Porcelain, biscuit, unfired underglaze-blue painted with a dwelling in the woods, a fenced area to one side, and a figure on a sampan waiting beside large rocks.
Jingdezhen, 19th Century
Height: 8.9cm

Glass, opaque white with red overlay carved with baby dragons coiled under fruiting vines.
Beijing, 1780-1850
Height: 7.9cm

Glass, turquoise-green, tall, triangular form on a protruding footrim.
1780-1850
Height: 7.1cm

Porcelain, soft paste, decorated in underglaze-blue with roundels of dragons, the neck surrounded with a formalized scrolling design, the foot inscribed in regular script Yongzheng nian zhi (‘Made during the Yongzheng period’).
Jingdezhen, 19th Century
Height: 6.5cm
Glass, a layer of white splashes sandwiched between two layers of translucent bright green material creating a sumptuous mottled effect.

Imperial Glassworks, Beijing
Qianlong 1736-1795
Height: 5.2cm

Porcelain, moulded, carved and partially covered with a colourless glaze with the Eighteen Lohan and their attributes, the foot unglazed.

Jingdezhen, 1780-1850
Height: 5.9cm

Porcelain, decorated in underglaze-blue with the continuous scene of the four noble professions: a woodcutter, a farmer, a fisherman and a scholar all set in an idyllic landscape, the neck decorated with pendant ruyi the foot inscribed in regular script Yongzheng nian zhi (‘made during the Yongzheng period’).

Jingdezhen, 19th Century
Height: 8.1cm
item 57-63

**57.** Glass, yellow, imitating Baltic amber, of small rounded form.  
1780-1850  
Height: 3.9cm

**58.** Agate, small form with swirling ochre and green markings resembling a thumbprint.  
1780-1850  
Height: 4.6cm

**59.** Porcelain, tall cylindrical form, painted in underglaze-blue with an idyllic landscape scene with a fisherman on a mossy bank, a flock of geese above, another landscape scene around the neck, and the stopper also decorated with a fisherman on a lake.  
Jingdezhen, 19th century  
Height: 7.5cm

**60.** Turquoise, the well patinated material of elegant form and carved with central circular panels, the lateral sides with mask- and-ring handles, the base incised with a mark in regular script Yongzheng nian zhi ('Made during the Yongzheng period') (which was probably added later).  
1700-1780  
Height: 3.5cm

**61.** Glass, unusual cinnabar-red, of rounded disc form with a dimpled base.  
1750-1850  
Height: 5.4cm

**62.** Porcelain, painted in underglaze-blue with a continuous scene of officials standing next to a garden structure and looking crossly at an assistant who is clutching a book, the reverse with an official looking through a window at two ladies standing in a garden, the foot inscribed in regular script Yongzheng nian zhi ('Made during the Yongzheng period').  
Jingdezhen, 19th Century  
Height: 5.5cm

**63.** Porcelain, painted in enamels with a solitary sage standing below a gnarled pine tree; the reverse with huntsmen, a hawk on the wrist of one, and both with leashed dogs, the sides raised and painted with mask-and-ring handles, the foot inscribed in iron-red seal script Xianfeng nian zhi ('Made during the Xianfeng period').  
Jingdezhen, Xianfeng, 1851-1861  
Height: 7cm
Cloisonne enamel depicting scholar’s objects, including ancient vessels, books and plants set against a wave design with ruyi fungus around the neck. 1780-1850 Height: 6.6cm

Glass, opaque white, in the form of a small egg. 19th Century Height: 3.4cm

Glass, in imitation of realgar with splashes of orange, red and yellow sandwiched between layers of clear glass. Beijing Palace Glassworks, 18th Century Height: 5.6cm

Banded agate, with two white bands around the centre of the well hollowed bottle, standing on an oval footrim. 1780-1850 Height: 5.9cm

Porcelain, soft-paste, decorated in underglaze-blue with the legend of the cowherd and the spinning maid, the neck decorated with bamboo, the foot inscribed in regular script ‘Yongzheng nian zhi’ (‘Made during the Yongzheng period’). Jingdezhen, 19th Century Height: 8.7cm

Agate, pale with an ochre skin carved with a monkey seated on a rock, the reverse with a scholar seated on a rock with waves and sun, a lengthy inscription above which translates as:

Let reign the auspicious signs of South Polaris So Your Honour may enjoy longevity and prosperity and the whole world be stable and at peace.

1780-1850 Height: 6.8cm

Nanji is an abbreviation of Nanji laoren xing (South Polaris, Star of the Elderly), the Chinese name for Canopus, the brightest star in the southern constellation of Carina and Argo Navis, and the second brightest star in the night-time sky, after Sirius. In China it is the patron star of the elderly. The salutation is obviously to celebrate the birthday of some elderly person, the snuff bottle the gift itself.
item 70-75

Porcelain, of disc form, with rounded panels painted with a figure standing next to a horse, the reverse with a horse standing alone with pricked ears.
Jingdezhen, 19th Century
Height: 5.6cm

Crystal, translucent material carved intricately on each side, one side with an orchid plant the other with a raised running script inscription which translates as:
In the empty valley secluded orchids dance to welcome the breeze, shaking so they waft a pure fragrance to fill my sleeves.
Imperial Palace Workshops
Qianlong, 1736-1795
Height: 5.4cm

Coconut shell, two halves joined to form the bottle, one side carved with a flowering prunus branch, the other with an inscription which translates as:
What a delight!
The very first to arrive is the glory of the year.
All greenery is beauty astonishing.
Signed Lu Jun, followed by an undecipherable seal.
Lu Jun, 1820-1880
Height: 7.1cm

Lu Jun has been identified with Lu Fengjun in Yu Jianhua, Zhongguo Meishujia Cidian (Shanghai: Rebmin chubanshe, 1985), 971 and 982. A native of Hangzhou, Lu became a minor official who made his mark as a poet in the lyric form of the song dynasty, the ci, which is the form here of the lines inscribed. Lu also was a noted painter of flowers and plants, especially peonies. His dates are unknown, but he was designated a juren (provincial graduate) in 1822 and one well-known painting by him of bamboos and rocks is dated 1842, evidence which suggests that he was born about 1800 or a little later.

Porcelain, painted in underglaze-blue and white with a scrolling lota design, the foot inscribed in regular script Xuande nian zhi ('made during the Xuande period') in double concentric rings.
Jingdezhen, 1800-1880
Height: 7.7cm

The mark on this bottle Xuande nian zhi refers to the reign of 1426-1435, and is a tribute to the good quality porcelain of the Ming Period.

Glass, painted inside in ink and muted colours with a hawk perched on a rocky outcrop, with an inscription which reads: 'painted by Yan Yutian in the wuxu year' (1898) and two artist’s seals reading Yu and Tian, the reverse with a flowering prunus branch issuing from a gnarled wooden trunk.
Yan Yutian, Beijing, 1898
Height: 6.5cm

Glass, pale brown overlay, carved in low relief with a long-tailed bird perched on a gnarled branch above rock work, the reverse with a sampan floating above a pavilion and trees with an inscription above reads: ‘painted the Old Fellow of South Field’.
Yangzhou School, 1780-1850
Height: 6.3cm

'Old Fellow of South Field' is a sobriquet taken late in life by Yun Shouping (1633-1690), a native of Wujin in Jiangsu. Yun was a most important landscape and flowers painter and major calligrapher of the early Qing, and is regarded as one of the six great painters of the early Qing dynasty, along with Yun Shouping, Wang Shimen (1592-1680), Wang Jian (1598-1677), Wang Hui (1632-1717), and Wu Li (1632-1718). He is known for his use of strong colours in paintings, including reds and purples, which became a salient feature of his style. His followers formed the Changzhou school of painting.

Porcelain, painted in underglaze-blue and white with a scrolling lota design, the foot inscribed in regular script Xuande nian zhi ('made during the Xuande period') in double concentric rings.
Jingdezhen, 1800-1880
Height: 7.7cm

The mark on this bottle Xuande nian zhi refers to the reign of 1426-1435, and is a tribute to the good quality porcelain of the Ming Period.
76 Porcelain, painted in black enamel, with ancient vessels on wooden stands filled with bamboos, chrysanthemum and ferns.
19th Century
Height: 7.4cm

77 Glass, opaque powder-blue, of squared form carved with panels.
1780-1850
Height: 6.7cm

78 Nephrite, brown and green pebble, the surface well patinated and with leather-like markings.
18th Century
Height: 7.2cm

79 Glass, painted inside in ink and colours with a storm sweeping over a figure holding up an umbrella whilst being punted on a sampan, with trees bending before the storm, the reverse with a grasshopper and praying mantis on a mossy bank, a dragonfly hovering above, an inscription reads "Painted by Chen Zhongyan at the capital in the jiyou year" (1909).
Chen Zhongyan, Beijing, 1909
Height: 5.7cm

80 Glass, opaque white painted in famille rose enamels with boys trying to catch dragon flies, the reverse with the boys inspecting pots under a tree, the foot inscribed in iron-red regular script Guyue xuan (Ancient Moon Pavilion).
Guyue xuan, 1750 - 1795
Height: 6.1cm

81 Porcelain, of rounded shape, painted in famille rose enamels with a wrinkled elephant with colourful attire carrying a vase on its back, the reverse with a still life of a basket containing grasses standing on a table, with daisies appearing from rockwork nearby, foot inscribed in iron-red seal script Daoguang nian zhi (Made during the Daoguang period).
Imperial Kilns, Jingdezhen
Daoguang, 1821-1850
Height: 6cm

An elephant (xiang) carrying a vase (ping) on its back forms the rebus taiping youxiang expressing a wish for peaceful times.
Porcelain, decorated in underglaze-blue and red with a fisherman floating in a sampan in an idyllic landscape with a village surrounding a lake with mountains, some tinged red in the background, a band of formalized floral panels around the shoulders and base, the neck with a band of pendant beads.

Jingdezhen, 19th Century
Height: 8.8cm

Porcelain, disc form with raised rounded panels painted in enamels with a centipede nibbling a begonia plant and a butterfly hovering above, the reverse with a frog near a begonia leaf with a snake wrapping itself around a ruyi with a butterfly above.

Jingdezhen, 1780-1850
Height: 5.6cm

Porcelain, biscuit, moulded with an unusual basket design.

19th century
Height: 7cm

Banded agate, exceptionally well hallowed, with hazy bands.

1780-1850
Height: 5.6cm

Glass, spade-shaped, beige with multicoloured splashes, the foot recessed.

1750-1800
Height: 5.4cm

Provenance: Thewlis Collection, Lionel Copley.
Published: Lawrence Clare, The Thewlis Collection of Chinese Snuff Bottles, London 1990, no 42
Robert Hall, Chinese Snuff Bottles VI, from the collection of Lionel Copley, Part I, no 37

Glass, red overlay carved with a deer holding a ruyi in its mouth under a pine, the reverse with a crane also holding a ruyi in its beak under pine, the shoulders with loose rings in mask handles and below each, a bee.

Palace workshops, Beijing, 1780-1850
Height: 5.7cm

Deer, crane, pine and ruyi are all symbols of longevity.

Glass, mottled yellow and green on a dimpled base.

1780-1850
Height: 5.2cm
89  Puddingstone, the body with different sizes of brown quartz pebbles interspersed in the grey chert matrix.  
1780-1850  
Height: 5.2cm

90  Glass, opaque white painted in famille rose enamels one side with peaches and peony, the other with pomegranate and flowers, the neck decorated with a band of pendant ruyi, the foot inscribed in seal script Qianlong nian zhi ('Made during the Qianlong period'). Possibly by Wang Xisan,  
20th Century  
Height: 5.9cm  
The shape of this bottle is irregular, bulging in a ridge at the centre of each panel.

91  Glass, pink overlay carved with dragons chasing a pearl, the neck surrounded by ruyi lappets.  
1820-1880  
Height: 6.5cm

92  Nephrite pebble, of natural form, well hollowed through a tiny opening.  
18th Century  
Height: 7.2cm

93  Porcelain, spade shape, panels on each side painted in famille rose enamels with pavilions beside a lake with mountains in the background, the sides and neck decorated in underglaze-blue and gold enamel with scrolling floral motifs, the foot inscribed in underglaze-blue seal script Qianlong nian zhi ('Made during the Qianlong period'). Imperial Kilns, Jingdezhen, 1750-1795  
Height: 6.2cm

94  Yixing pottery, covered in deep blue enamel and painted with a pair of magpies, one seated coyly on a flowering prunus branch, the other swooping towards its mate, seeming to perform acrobatics to attract her attention.  
Yixing, 1821-1850  
Height: 8.3cm
**Glass, opaque white decorated in famille rose enamels with a panel on each side, one painted with a figure plucking prunus blossom from a tree, the reverse with a figure standing in a stream with floating baskets of flowers, the sides with intertwined prunus branches, the foot inscribed in iron-red regular script Guyue xuan (Ancient Moon Pavilion).**

Guyue xuan, 18th Century  
Height: 5.9cm

**Nephrite, spinach green, the radically flattened spade shape with an everted mouth and resting on a tiny flat foot.**

1780-1850  
Height: 5.8cm

**Nephrite, carved using the ochre skin with large furled leaves and twirling tendrils, with a bee to one side.**

18th Century  
Height: 6cm

**Lapis lazuli, plain, uncarved, resting on a protruding, oval footrim.**

18th Century  
Height: 5.9cm

**Crystal, of bulbous form, the sides carved with mask-and-ring handles, resting on a small, round footrim.**

1780-1850  
Height: 6cm

**Chalcedony, the pale material with white and green inclusions, carved with a frog under a water lily, a natural crystal inclusion carved as a lotus leaf.**

1721-1850  
Height: 6.6cm

**Porcelain, decorated in famille rose enamels with the scene of a duel between two warriors, one of whom wields a sword. The other bearded warrior with his arms behind his back, the reverse with the bearded figure sitting peacefully in a boat, whilst the other warrior stands in the bow of the vessel, the foot inscribed in iron-red seal script Daoguang nian zhi (made during the Daoguang period).**

Imperial kilns, Jingdezhen, 1821-1850  
Height: 5.7cm

**Glass, eau-de-nil, carved with integral snuff dishes on the front and reverse and oval panels on the lateral sides, resting on a protruding, oval footrim.**

18th Century  
Height: 5.4cm

**Porcelain: Ko Family Collection, Lionel Copley**

Robert Hall, Chinese Snuff Bottles VI, from the collection of Lionel Copley, Part I, no 40

**Porcelain, decorated in famille rose enamels with the scene of a duel between two warriors, one of whom wields a sword. The other bearded warrior with his arms behind his back, the reverse with the bearded figure sitting peacefully in a boat, whilst the other warrior stands in the bow of the vessel, the foot inscribed in iron-red seal script Daoguang nian zhi (made during the Daoguang period).**

Imperial kilns, Jingdezhen, 1821-1850  
Height: 5.7cm
these two lines are taken from a four-line poem by the ming loyalist chen gongjun (1631–1700ad). the poem is entitled Du Qinji (Reading the Records of the Qin dynasty). the 1st line of the inscription (the 3rd in the poem) refers to a story from the Han dynasty concerning Zhang liang (262-189bc) who one day met an old man on a bridge. the old man deliberately threw his own shoe off the bridge and ordered Zhang to retrieve it for him. Zhang agreed to do this and also helped the man put it on. at this the old man proclaimed ‘this child can be educated’ and arranged to meet with Zhang at the same place five days later. on the appointed day Zhang arrived late and was told by the disgruntled old man to return again in another 5 days. again the old man arrived earlier than Zhang. on the third occasion Zhang got there in the middle of the night so as to be sure of arriving before the old man. the old man was impressed and presented Zhang with a book Taigong bingfa (military strategy of taigong), revealing himself to be the hermit, Huang shigong. having studied this book in depth, Zhang liang became a famous military strategist and was later known as one of the Hanchu sanjie (three Heroes of the early Han). it is this book Taigong bingfa that is mentioned in the poem with reference to the episode in the history of the Qin dynasty (221-206bc) when the first emperor of Qin, Qin shihuang ordered hundreds of Confucian scholars to be put to death and all but a selection of sanctioned books burnt.

Porcelain, moulded in the form of a cicada with its legs tucked under its body, and painted realistically in famille rose enamels with details of wings and legs, its eyes picked out in black.

Jingdezhen, 1821-1850
Height: 6.9cm

Banded agate, with markings of thumbprint formation, extremely well hollowed and resting on a protruding footrim.

1780-1850
Height: 5.3cm

Glass, possibly imitating crystal, carved overall with shou medallions.

1780-1850
Height: 5.7cm

Glass, ruby-red overlay on a snowflake ground, carved with a panel on each side, one enclosing a lotus plant growing from waves, the other with an orchid springing from rockwork and ruyi, the lateral sides with mask-and-ring handles and the footrim also carved from the overlay.

Jingdezhen, 1821-1850
Height: 7.5cm

Glass, single overlay of black on opaque white carved with a continuous design of blossoming prunus including, exceptionally, the foot which is formed as a flower.

Beijing, 1736-1795
Height: 5.7cm

Porcelain, enamelled with a scholar seated under a tree holding a fly whisk, his attendant below, the reverse with an idyllic landscape with a pavilion amidst flowering cherry blossom, an inscription above Du Qinji meaning ‘Reading the Records of the Qin Dynasty’ and Yeban qiaobian hu ruzi, Renjian you you wei shaoshu. ‘At midnight, by the side of the bridge, a child was called. In the realms of man there remain books not yet burned,’ the foot inscribed in iron-red seal script Daoguang nian zhi (Made during the Daoguang period)

Jingdezhen, 1821-1850
Height: 5.9cm

Calcified nephrite, the brown and beige material extremely well hollowed with a wide mouth.

1780-1850
Height: 6.7cm

A loose pebble in the shoulder of this piece has been re-inserted at some stage in the bottle’s life.

Agate, well hollowed with brown abstract markings, the sides carved with mask-and-ring handles.

1760-1850
Height: 6.2cm
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111. Glass, translucent grey, heavily weighted in imitation of smoky crystal. 1750-1850. Height: 5.6cm

112. Crystal, of small shield shape, one side carved with water lilies, the other with orchids, the sides carved with key fret design. 1780-1850. Height: 4.5cm

113. Porcelain, painted in famille rose enamels with peonies issuing from rockwork, and with a grated yellow prunus branch behind, the bottle of unusual baluster form. Jingdezhen, 19th Century. Height: 6.1cm

114. Glass, painted inside in ink and colours with a man hiding up a tree listening to the conversation of ladies below, two of whom are carrying lanterns with an inscription which reads Qiao Nian wuchen quye Ye Zhongsan zuo meaning ‘Qiao niang (painted by) Ye Zhongsan in the winter of the wuchen year’ (1928), the other side with figures in an interior setting with a man bowing to his waist towards two ladies. Ye Zhongsan, Beijing. 1928. Height: 6.4cm

115. Glass, red overlay on a bubble-suffused ground carved with a tortoise and snake, whose body curls round to form the base of the bottle, the reverse with a lizard seated on and under large lily pads. Palace Workshops, Beijing. Qianlong, 1736-1795. Height: 3.6cm

116. Jasper, plain olive-green with ochre inclusions and attractive swirling markings, the sides carved with mask-and-ring handles. 1780-1850. Height: 6.2cm

117. Porcelain, enameled in underglaze-blue and red with a continuous scene at lakeside with dwellings and bridges, the base with a coiled dragon in underglaze-blue. Jingdezhen. 1800-1880. Height: 7.7cm

The tale of Qiao Nian is to be found in the collection of supernatural stories Liaozhai zhiyi (strange tales from a Chinese studio) written during the Qing dynasty by Pu songling (1640-1715). This story relates how a young man, playing truant from his studies, meets with a Vixen Spirit.
Brown seed-pod in snuff bottle form, with silver mounts forming the shoulders and mouth.
19th Century
Height: 5.9cm

Crystal, painted inside with a continuous landscape in which two figures stand in a grassy area with waterfall, trees and mountains in the background; an inscription reads Renchen dongyue xieyu Jingshi Ouxiang zhai Zhou Leyuan which translates as ‘Painted by Zhou leyuan in the studio of the fragrant lotus Root at the capital during the winter of the renchen year’ (1892).
Unknown artist, Beijing, 1892
Height: 5.9cm

Cinnabar lacquer, carved with two figures standing under an umbrella in a mountainous landscape, the reverse with two figures floating on a sampan pulling back the woven cover of the roof, the neck with cloud patterns, the stopper matching.
Imperial, Qianlong, 1736-1795
Height: 6.3cm

Porcelain, painted in enamels with three figures in a garden, the reverse with two ladies and a scholar seated at his desk, the foot inscribed in iron-red seal script Daoguang nian zhi (‘made during the Daoguang period’).
Imperial kilns, Jingdezhen, 1821-1850
Height: 6cm

Nephrite, pale lavender-blue, well-hollowed and resting on a dimpled base.
Qianlong, 1736-1795
Height: 5.4cm

Cloisonné enamel, decorated with butterflies flying amongst flowers on a dark blue background.
1780-1850
Height: 5.6cm

Glass, honey colour with slightly darker splashes, the sandwich glass material imitating agate.
Beijing, 1736-1795
Height: 5.3cm

Glass, translucent light green with manchon overlay carved with the eight horses of Mu Wang, the mouth carved with a ropework border, the footrim also carved from the overlay.
Beijing, 1780-1850
Height: 6.7cm

ITEM 118-125
Nephrite, creamy with an ochre fissure, carved overall with basket weave design.
Qianlong, 1736-1795
Height: 5.6cm

Ye Zhongsan, Beijing, 1928
Ye Zhongsan departs this mortal world in the city of Yangzhou in the 4th month of the wuchen year, 1928.

Ye Zhongsan, Beijing, 1928
This inscription refers to the title of the 14th chapter of the Qing dynasty novel Hongloumeng (The Dream of the Red Chamber) by Cao Xueqin. Lin Ruhai is the father of Lin Daiyu, one of the main characters in the novel. He dies towards the beginning of the story making it necessary for Lin Daiyu to go and live with her relatives in the capital.

Nephrite, of pebble form, carved using the natural inclusions with bamboo, fruiting lychee, butterfly, ruyi and twisting vine.
Qianlong, 1736-1795
Height: 8cm

Chalcedony, unusually vivid ochre dendritic markings on a brown background, of elegant form, the lateral sides with mask-and-ring handles.
1780-1860
Height: 6.4cm

Walrus ivory, of flattened rectangular form, stained green to imitate jadeite.
1780-1850
Height: 5.8cm

Porcelain, of cylindrical form with eight panels, decorated in famille rose enamels with the continuous scene of two gentlemen having a conversation in a garden being overlooked by ladies in a garden gazebo, the surrounds decorated in underglaze-blue with gold enamel, the foot inscribed in iron-red seal script Jiaqing nian zhi ('Made during the Jiaqing period').
Imperial Kilns, Jingdezhen, 1796-1821
Height: 6.4cm

Glass, ruby-red overlay on a bubble-suffused ground carved with chi dragons on each side, the footrim also carved from the overlay.
Palace Workshops, Beijing
Gianlong, 1736-1795
Height: 5.9cm

Glass, opaque white painted in famille rose enamels with a fisherman punting in a river against a mountainous background, the other side with a figure carrying two heavy baskets over his shoulders, a dwelling to one side, the sides and neck surrounded by twisting blossom, the foot inscribed in iron-red script Guyue xuan ('Ancient Moon Pavilion').
Guyue xuan, 1750-1795
Height: 7.2cm

Porcelain, of cylindrical form with eight panels, decorated in famille rose enamels with the continuous scene of two gentlemen having a conversation in a garden being overlooked by ladies in a garden gazebo, the surrounds decorated in underglaze-blue with gold enamel, the foot inscribed in iron-red seal script Jiaqing nian zhi ('Made during the Jiaqing period').
134. Glass, translucent greenish-yellow resting on a protruding oval footrim.
Beijing, 1780-1850
Height: 6.1cm

135. Yixing pottery, unctuous purple-brown, sitting on a raised oval footrim.
Yixing, 1821-1850
Height: 5.3cm

136. Porcelain, soft-paste, decorated in underglaze-blue with a continuous scene of the four noble professions: a woodcutter, a farmer, a fisherman and a scholar all in an idyllic landscape, the neck decorated with a band of ruyi and the foot inscribed in regular script Yongzheng nian zhi (‘made during the Yongzheng period’).
Jingdezhen, 19th Century
Height: 6.4cm

137. Porcelain, moulded, carved, and painted in famille-rose and gold enamels, a shaped panel on each side, one enclosing a kneeling figure tugging the sleeve of another, the reverse with a figure trying to grab hold of a staff which is held by another figure, whilst another looks on amused, the surround decorated in floral motifs and gold enamels, the sides carved with mask-and-ring handles and the foot inscribed in gold over brown enamel in seal script Qianlong nian zhi (‘made during the Qianlong period’).
Jingdezhen, 19th Century
Height: 7.5cm

138. Chalcedony, of bulbous shape, well hollowed and minimally carved using the darker material to reveal the silhouette of a man reclining on a rocky outcrop looking at the moon, the reverse with a circular marking.
Jingdezhen, 19th Century
Height: 5.5cm

139. Porcelain, the tall cylindrical form covered with a brown leadust glaze.
Jingdezhen, 19th Century
Height: 7.9cm

140. Glass, emerald-green, carved from a solid ingot and hollowed in the same manner as hardstones with chi dragons climbing up each side, their tails curling to form the base.
Palace Workshops, Beijing, 18th Century
Height: 5.2cm

141. Nephrite, the pebble skin with ochre inclusions, the sides carved with mask-and-ring handles, resting on a protruding oval footrim.
Jingdezhen, 19th Century
Height: 6.3cm
Porcelain, moulded and enamelled in the form of a lotus leaf, with pink buds to one side. Jingdezhen, 19th century
Height: 6.7cm

Glass, turquoise-green overlay on a bubble-suffused ground intricately carved with a grasshopper on a leafing branch, the other side with a praying mantis, the green overlay also forming the footrim.
Palace Workshops, Beijing, 1780-1850
Height: 7.7cm

Porcelain, moulded and enamelled in the form of a lotus leaf, with pink buds to one side.
Jingdezhen, 19th Century
Height: 6.7cm

Porcelain, moulded and enamelled with design to look like a wine jar wrapped in raffia, with seals and inscriptions ‘Shao Zhe’ [most likely the name of the wine merchant] Old Wine or mellow wine ‘Jia Zhong Fuxing laodian’ ‘Heavy weight/overweight’ ‘The Fuxing old shop’ the base painted with a shou medallion.
Jingdezhen, 1780-1850
Height: 5.1cm

Porcelain, of flattened rounded form painted in famille rose and gold enamels, with scenes from the subjugation of Zhang Ge’er: one side with a battle scene, with warriors recklessly throwing swords, the reverse with what appears to be a court or tribute scene, the foot painted in regular script with the mark Yongle tang (‘Harmony at the Hall of Eternal Happiness’).
Jingdezhen, 1821-1850
Height: 6cm

Similar example: Moss, Graham, Tsang: A Treasury of Chinese Snuff Bottles, Volume 6, Part 3, no 1328

Nephrite, spinach green, of plain baluster shape.
19th Century
Height: 6.4cm
Porcelain, moulded and carved in the form of a Chinese cabbage, and left in biscuit porcelain.

Jingdezhen, 19th Century
Height: 7.3cm

Chalcedony, ‘macaroni agate’ with white and grey markings, standing on a protruding, oval footrim.

1780-1850
Height: 5.5cm

Crystal, painted inside with a hunting scene in a snowy landscape, a natural flaw in the material cleverly left to look like a cave, an archer in pursuit of a stag which has an arrow in its hind legs, and a boy on horseback holding a stake with a dog running beside him, below an inscription which reads: Yisi heyue zuo yu Jingshi Ye Zhongsan yin ‘Painted at the capital by Ye Zhongsan in the sixth month of the yisi year’ i.e. 1905.

Ye Zhongsan, Beijing, 1905
Height: 7cm

Chalcedony enamel, decorated with shaded pink lotus surrounded by green, turquoise and yellow floral scrolls on a dark blue ground.

Beijing, 1796-1821
Height: 6.4cm

Published: Robert Hall: Chinese Snuff Bottles X, The Button Collection, no 2

Glass, translucent pale green with a concave panel on each main side, with raised dimples on each lateral side from the shoulders to the neck.

Beijing, 1740-1800
Height: 5.4cm

Glass, peacock blue, carved in the form of an elephant with a vase on its back, his head turning to one side and with ruyi lappets around the shoulders.

Beijing, 1780-1850
Height: 5.6cm

Jasper, mottled green, red, and ochre, carved with a peach on a branch with crinkled leaves.

19th Century
Height: 5.4cm
Chalcedony, cylindrical form, extremely well hollowed, with a rounded lip and a flat circular foot incised in regular seal script Xingyouheng Tang ('Hall of Constancy').

Imperial Palace Workshop, Beijing, 1800-1853
Height: 5.4cm

Similar Example: Moss, Graham, Tsang Treasury, no 359

Similar Example, but different mark: Moss, Graham, Tsang Treasury no 348, 358

Zaiquan, the fifth Prince Dian, was a great-great-grandson of the Qianlong Emperor and inherited the princedom upon the death of his father in 1836. His birth date does not seem to be recorded, but he died in 1854. He held various important posts during the Daoguang and Xianfeng reigns. A keen collector and connoisseur of works of art ranging from paintings to snuff bottles, he was also a noted poet, collector and patron of the arts. His studio was known as the Xingyouheng Tang, and many objects of art have been recorded with his hallmark.

Porcelain, moulded and reticulated, carved with a fierce five-clawed dragon chasing a flaming pearl, all set against clouds in relief, the foot inscribed in seal script Wang Bingrong zuo ('made by Wang Bingrong'), unglazed with the pupils of the dragon's eyes picked out in black.

Jingdezhen, 1800-1850
Height: 6cm

Glass, ruby-red, of elegant disc form, with a draped base and flared neck.

Beijing, 1780-1850
Height: 4.7cm

Porcelain, moulded and carved, painted in famille rose enamels with a phoenix and dragon against a wave ground, with clouds above, the neck adorned by a band of lemons, the foot inscribed in seal script in iron-red enamel Qianlong nian zhi ('Made during the Qianlong Period').

Jingdezhen, 19th Century
Height: 6.8cm

Glass, bubble suffused transparent ground with a single plane of multicolour of dark green, turquoise, red, pink and yellow carried with peaches on a branch with a bat hovering above.

Beijing, 1736-1795
Height: 6cm

Glass, opaque white with black overlay carved in low relief with a continuous design of nine rivets, four on one side and five on the other, the lateral sides with mask-and-ring handles, the oval footrim also carved from the overlay.

Beijing, 1760-1860
Height: 6cm

The unusual decoration on this bottle imitates rivets of the type traditionally used in China to repair large ceramic bowls or vases that were cracked or broken. The Chinese word for these rivets is liuding and the motif forms a rebus wishing for many sons. Nine is a very potent male number in Chinese mythology. An identical bottle is illustrated in Moss, Graham, Tsang The Art of the Chinese Snuff Bottle (The J & J Collection), Page 637.
Porcelain, covered in a white glaze and decorated with gold and iron-red enamel with a formalized floral design and dragons, inset with panels of lacquer: one side with a deserted waterside pavilion beneath trees, the other with two scholars strolling in a rocky garden with overhanging trees. Jingdezhen, then Beijing, 18th century. Height: 6.7cm. Provenance: Neil Henderson. Published: Robert Hall, Chinese Snuff Bottles III, no 72.

Ivory, of rounded, rectangular form, incised in minute detail, one side with a scholar being rowed in a sampan by an attendant wearing a reed coat and hat in stormy weather, the other side with a lady kneeling in a garden playing a lute to a seated scholar and another standing figure. Late 19th Century. Height: 6.4cm.

Porcelain, covered in a white glaze and decorated with gold and iron-red enamel with a formalized floral design and dragons, inset with panels of lacquer: one side with a deserted waterside pavilion beneath trees, the other with two scholars strolling in a rocky garden with overhanging trees. Jingdezhen, then Beijing, 18th Century. Height: 6.7cm. Provenance: Neil Henderson. Published: Robert Hall, Chinese Snuff Bottles III, no 72.

Glass, mottled, swirling ochre, yellow and brown in imitation of realgar, sitting on a small oval footring. Beijing, 1730-1820. Height: 5.3cm.

Ivory, of disc form inset with coconut panels. 19th Century. Height: 4.1cm.

Jasper, deep maroon and green of rectangular form with rounded sides. 19th Century. Height: 6.5cm.

Ivory, of rounded, rectangular form, incised in minute detail, one side with a scholar being rowed in a sampan by an attendant wearing a reed coat and hat in stormy weather, the other side with a lady kneeling in a garden playing a lute to a seated scholar and another standing figure. Late 19th Century. Height: 6.4cm.

Ivory, of disc form inset with coconut panels. 19th Century. Height: 4.1cm.

Porcelain miniatures, in the form of a double gourd, an olive, and a pea pod decorated in a green glaze. Jingdezhen, 19th Century. Heights: 3cm, 3.2cm and 3.5cm. Miniature bottles of this provincial group are discussed by Hugh M. Moss in Chinese Snuff Bottles, 5, Page 71. Others are illustrated in The Blair Bequest: Chinese Snuff Bottles from the Princeton University Art Museum by Michael C. Hughes, P. 236.
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