

# Selected Bottles from the Four Winds Collection

## 四風齋珍藏



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Selected Snuff Bottles  
from the  
Four Winds Collection



092  
An iron-red porcelain snuff bottle of slender baluster shape tapering to an elongated neck, with a recessed glazed base surrounded by an unglazed foot rim painted to depict Zhong Kui attended to his demon helpers. Carved coral coloured glass stopper with a gilt bronze collar.  
Height: 7.3 cm



093  
A matt-black enamelled and molded porcelain snuff bottle, of ovoid form with a waisted neck, flared lip and mask handles at the shoulders, resting on a raised oval footrim with a recessed base, molded in continuous relief to depict the twelve animals of the Chinese zodiac. Coral stopper set in a silver gilt collar.  
Height: 6.5 cm

19<sup>th</sup> century, probably early Guangxu period  
Zhong Kui is a popular deity in Chinese mythology, traditionally regarded as a vanquisher of ghosts and evil beings. He is universally depicted as a large man with a bushy beard, bulging eyes and a wrathful expression, and is able to command demons to do his bidding. He is often associated with the five bats of fortune.  
The present bottle is a fine example of early Guangxu iron reds, characterized by the tones of red, the faces with eyes picked out in black, and in particular the way of drawing the arms and legs of the figures, using double lines. This style of depicting in porcelain is known as the double outline colouring method (双线勾勒画法) or simply the double outline method (双线法). It started during the Wanli (万历) period (1573-1620) of the Ming Dynasty. In the past, the common practice was to incise the outline and fill it with colour. For painted porcelain, this method helps to prevent the colour from diffusion out of its boundaries.

Provenance: Tuyen Ngyet and Stephen Markbreiter Collection  
Sotheby's Hong Kong, 3 December 2021, lot 1092



Ref: 208.HK21S8BY

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"One of the most endearing features of this unusual bottle rests in the faces of the mask handles, which are splendidly goofy, each with no lower jaw and with three greenstone teeth emerging from the upper jaw. The effect of looking completely silly is compounded by tufts of hair that give the beast the appearance of having had its tail plugged directly into the National Grid."

Provenance: Hugh Moss (HK) Ltd., 1991  
Mary and George Bloch Collection  
Sotheby's Hong Kong, 24 November 2014, lot 179

Published: *A Treasury of Chinese Snuff Bottles*, Vol. 7, No. 1472



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Jingdechen Kilns, 1790-1850  
Rubbly molded porcelain bottles reached their height of popularity during the Daoguang period, and are most usually found in famille rose enamels. Less commonly, they are seen in plain creamy white glaze or biscuit finish. It is rare to find one with a matt-black finish. A similarly enamelled bottle, albeit with different subject matter, formerly in the collection of Harry H. Ross, is illustrated in Hugh Moss, *Chinese Snuff Bottles* No. 3, p.52, fig.22, where the enamel is described as "a rather rare imitation of pewter or lead".

There are several known bottles that appear to come from the same 'zodiac' mold. One is in the Mallin Collection, and another in the Barton Collection. A third is illustrated in Michael C. Hughes, *The Blue Report: Chinese Snuff Bottles from the Princeton University Art Museum*, 2002, p.208, no.281. A fourth example is illustrated in Robert Hall, *Chinese Snuff Bottles IV*, p.75, no.74. A fifth, formerly in the Emily Byrne Curtis Collection, was sold at Bonham's New York on 21 September 2021, lot 671. All these examples have a gold gilt finish set against a backdrop of turquoise blue glaze.

Provenance: James Sreckaris, Connecticut  
Sotheby's New York, 27 October 1986, lot 26  
Ashkenazi & Co., San Francisco, November 1988  
Rachelle B. Holden, New York (no. 183)  
Christie's New York, *Important Snuff Bottles from the Rachelle B. Holden Collection*, 29 March 2022, lot 47

Literature: R. Holden, *Rivers and Mountains Fair from the World*, New York, 1994, p. 177, no. 75

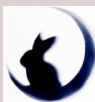
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Moon Rabbit Publications  
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