



Snuff Bottle

Date

1644-1911

Medium

Porcelain, metal, cork and pearl

Description

Snuff bottles were introduced to China by Jesuit Missionaries during the early Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). The solution inside is made by grinding dried tobacco leaves into a fine powder and mixing it with spices, herbs and aromatics. When inhaled through the nose it gives the user a nicotine rush. Though modern science suggests that long term use of snuff can lead to chronic health issues, during the Qing dynasty it was used medically to cure headaches, stomach ailments, coughing and other maladies. The Kangxi Emperor (r. 1661-1722) is credited with the development of handheld snuff bottles around the end of the 17th century. These small, airtight containers solved the issue of snuff being ruined by China's high humidity. The bottles took many forms and could be made from glass, various minerals, metals, porcelain,

and internally painted glass.

Dimensions

with stopper: 3 3/8 × 1 1/2 × 1 in. (8.6 × 3.8 × 2.5 cm)