

Basic Detail Report



Betel Nut Container (Kun-It)

Date

19th Century

Medium

Wood and lacquer

Description

This is a container for storing betel nut, or a kun-it in Burmese vernacular. There are at least three theories on

how this style of cylindrical, incised lacquer container originally came to Myanmar which span a 600-year period and indicate that any of the neighboring countries could have been the point of origin. What is known is that the area around the country's ancient capital of Bagan has been a center for producing lacquerware probably since 1200 CE. Lacquerware in Myanmar is divided into six different categories, with this container falling into the incised group usually reserved for objects of a purely aesthetic nature. Bamboo and horsehair create the frame of the vessel which is then covered in multiple layers of lacquer. An iron stylus is used to draw the intricate designs seen on the container.

Dimensions

A: $2 \frac{1}{4} \times 3 \times 3$ in. (5.7 × 7.6 × 7.6 cm) B: $1 \frac{7}{8} \times 3 \times 3$ in. (4.8 × 7.6 × 7.6 cm)