

For Immediate Release

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CHRISTIE'S TO OFFER SNUFF BOTTLES FROM COLLECTION OF CANADIAN PHILANTHROPIST MARY MARGARET YOUNG

The Meriem Collection: Important Chinese Snuff Bottles September 19, 2007

New York – On September 19, following the sale of *Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art*, Christie's will offer *The Meriem Collection: Important Chinese Snuff Bottles*, a single owner collection of 107 snuff bottles collected by Mary Margaret Young, a Canadian philanthropist and art collector who passed away in 2005.

Mary Margaret Young was the daughter of Earl B. Finning, the founder of Finning Tractor Equipment Co. Ltd and was educated at Pomona College and the University of British Columbia where she studied philosophy. With her husband Maury, she embarked on a collecting journey that would last a lifetime, culminating in collections of 20th century Canadian paintings and Chinese snuff bottles, both ranking amongst the world's finest. Mary's initial contact with the wondrous world of snuff bottles came through forays into local galleries as well as the seminal book *Chinese Snuff Bottles – The Adventures and Studies of a Collector* by Lilla S. Perry. This work sparked her interest and the subsequent encounter with Eunice Cameron, assistant to the well-known snuff bottle dealer Hugh Moss, marked turning points in her collecting life. Over the years, she built a superb collection and with it a strong and admiring circle of fellow collectors, for Mary never turned down a request to see the collection or lend it to exhibitions. She had a passion for education and the learning/teaching aspect resulting from the many exchanges with other individuals in the field satisfied this passion from different perspectives. Throughout her collecting career, she kept extensive notes and records which have been invaluable to the creation of the sales catalogue.

Highlights of the collection include:



- A superb and very rare Beijing enamel snuff bottle, Imperial, Palace Workshops, Beijing, Kangxi Yuzhi mark and of the period, 1715-1722 (estimate: \$400,000-600,000). This bottle belongs to an extremely rare group of Kangxi Imperial-command snuff bottles made by the Beijing workshops of which there are only thirteen known examples. This is the only known example which still retains its original stopper.



- A superb Beijing enamel 'European Subject' snuff bottle, Imperial, Palace workshops, Beijing, Qianlong mark and of the period, 1736-1750 (estimate: \$120,000-180,000). The subject matter of this bottle clearly shows the influence of Jesuit artists at the Chinese Court, who passed their skills on to the craftsmen employed by the Imperial workshops. European painted-enamel panels and other objects were sent to the court in Beijing to inspire and instruct, and the depictions of plump ladies and cherubic children painted with a combination of sapphire-blue, ruby-red and rich orange-yellow enamel finds its exact counterpart in the French and Swiss enamels of the 17th century.



- A very rare enameled white glass lotus-bud-form snuff bottle, Imperial, Palace workshops, Beijing, Qianlong mark and of the period, 1760-1795 (estimate: \$200,000-250,000). This bottle is extremely rare and apparently unique in its design. The enameling on this bottle may be related to the Guyue Xuan style, an elite Imperial group of enameled glass wares.



- A fine and very rare enameled gold-ground white glass snuff bottle, Imperial, Palace workshops, Beijing, Qianlong mark and of the period, 1740-1795 (estimate: \$120,000-150,000). Besides being a superb example of enameled glass wares, which were extremely difficult to manufacture, this bottle is doubly rare because of its *mille fleurs* decoration which required extraordinary skill and talent from the artist because of the complexities of executing this striking design on this miniature scale.

Auction: The Meriem Collection: Important Chinese Snuff Bottles

September 19 at
approx. 5 p.m.

Viewing: Christie's Galleries at Rockefeller Center

September 14 - 18

About Christie's

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