

[HKMoA exhibition showcases nearly 500 pieces of Chinese snuff bottles from Fuyun Xuan Collection \(with photos\)](#)

Last year, the Hong Kong Museum of Art (HKMoA) received a generous donation of nearly 500 pieces of Chinese snuff bottles from the Fuyun Xuan Collection for the museum's permanent collection from Mrs Josephine Sin, the wife of the late local collector, Mr Christopher Sin. The HKMoA will stage a new exhibition, the "Art of Gifting: The Fuyun Xuan Collection of Chinese Snuff Bottles", to feature this entire significant donation. The opening ceremony of the exhibition and donation ceremony was held today (April 11) at the HKMoA.

Addressing the opening ceremony, the Director of Leisure and Cultural Services, Mr Vincent Liu, said that Mr Sin's collection is recognised as one of the most important private collections of snuff bottles in the world. His unwavering efforts during his lifetime had greatly contributed to the promotion of the art of Chinese snuff bottles. In line with his legacy and the spirit of his generosity, Mrs Sin donated the Fuyun Xuan Collection to the HKMoA to enable the public to appreciate these precious cultural gems in a gesture of extraordinary generosity.

Mr Liu added that the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) is committed to promoting Chinese history and culture. This exhibition showcases the broad and profound cultural aspects of China through delicate and exquisite Chinese snuff bottles, allowing audiences to appreciate the passion and affection of Hong Kong collectors towards artefacts of Chinese culture. The museum will continue to collaborate with local collectors, making Hong Kong an important international hub for Chinese art collections and exhibitions, and telling good stories of China to the world from Hong Kong's unique curatorial perspective.

Mrs Sin stated in her donation message that the HKMoA has been relentless in collaborating with local private collectors to narrate the history of Chinese art collecting in the city. In hopes of honouring and expanding his legacy, she entrusted Mr Sin's lifetime treasured collection to the museum to provide the public with the opportunity to appreciate the beauty of this unique form of Chinese art.

Other officiating guests included the son of Mr and Mrs Sin, Mr Nicholas Sin; the Chairman of the Museum Advisory Committee, Professor Douglas So; and the Museum Director of the HKMoA, Dr Maria Mok.

Established by the late collector Mr Sin, the Fuyun Xuan Collection is an internationally renowned private collection of snuff bottles located in Hong Kong. This generous donation encompasses the gems of Mr Sin's lifelong collection. Remarkable in both its quantity and quality, the donation stands

as the most extensive and comprehensive of its kind ever received by a museum in Hong Kong. Within the collection is a double gourd-shaped glass snuff bottle with floral design in painted enamels on yellow ground, which Mr Sin insisted on acquiring even in his final days. Such an acquisition showcases Mr Sin's deep fascination with snuff bottles, and earned him the nickname "Snuff Bottle Enthusiast" among other collectors.

Other highlight exhibits include an aventurine glass snuff bottle with chi-dragons and shou medallion design; a coral snuff bottle with "Liu Hai playing with a toad" design carved in the round; a gold snuff bottle with scene of mother and children in painted enamels; a snuff bottle with magpies and plums in two-colour overlay on light rouge ground; a coupled-vase-shaped snuff bottle with imperial poem inscription and floral design in fencai enamels; and a set of snuff bottles inside painted with "Along the River during Qingming Festival".

After being brought into China, snuff was cherished among the nobility and prominent officials, becoming highly popular in Qing society. It then led to the emergence of small bottles for holding snuff, which later evolved from practical vessels into fashionable icons of exquisite craft, making them precious gifts in diplomatic, official and social settings. The exhibition is divided into five zones: "Refined Materials", "Timeless Classics", "Novel Trends", "Playful Alternatives" and "Personal Touch", covering themes from material selection to craftsmanship techniques, guiding visitors into appreciating this unique Chinese art form from the perspective of gifting.

Albeit being petite in size, snuff bottles encompass a wide array of materials and craftsmanship. Exhibits comprise jade, porcelain, glassware, lacquerware, calabash, enamelware, and inside-painted varieties, making them a miniature embodiment of Chinese art and craft history. The exhibition features a large-scale projection that showcases the intricate details and exquisite artistry of snuff bottles. The accompanying talk for the exhibition will be held in mid-2024. Collector Mr Humphrey Hui, a close friend of Mr Sin, has been invited to share stories about the establishment of the Fuyun Xuan Collection. The museum will also establish a permanent display for this donation after the exhibition.

The exhibition will run from April 12 at the Chinese Antiquities Gallery on the third floor of the HKMoA. For details of the exhibition, please visit the website at hk.art.museum/en/web/ma/exhibitions-and-events/art-of-gifting.html, or call 2721 0116 for enquiries.

The exhibition is also one of the activities in the Chinese Culture Promotion Series. The LCSd has all along promoted Chinese history and culture through organising an array of programmes and activities to enable the public to learn more about the broad and profound aspects of Chinese culture. For more information, please visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/ccpo/index.html.



