

## Obtaining Immortality and Personal Wellbeing: The Influence of the Chinese Bottle Gourd Motif



Artifact Display by Meghan Jones

## Display Design

- Audience Appeal
  1. Bold colors attract sight
  2. Artifacts intrigue
  3. Labels inform
- Bold colors
  - Black
  - White
  - Red Chinese Silk
    - Longevity Symbol
    - Chinese Dragons
- Red and White draws the eyes to labels and artifacts



## Chinese Bottle Gourd Artifacts

- Motif Styles
  - Picture of the gourd
  - In the shape of the gourd
- Materials
  - Ivory, Stone, Porcelain, Cloisonné, Metal, Vegetable, Paper,



## Artifact Care

- White textured placing underneath artifacts acts as a buffer
- Over long periods of time damage can occur
  - Silk is acid
  - Red fabric bleeds
- Securing artifacts safely
  - Foam Board



## Mixing Chinese Religions

- View of Religion
  - Western vs. Chinese
- Harmonizing Culture : Wedding Vase
  - Confucian = Headdress
  - Taoist = Gourd
  - Buddhist = Canopy
  - Folk Religion = Coins
- The bottle gourd has a connection with all religions and philosophical beliefs in china.



## Making Art Sacred

- Motif on Art
- A gourd talisman is believed to have the spiritual power to promote long life and personal well being
- Sympathetic Magic
- Cloisonné Vase
  - Double Motif
- Porcelain Gourd
  - Multiple Symbols



## Continual use of the Bottle Gourd

- Throughout the years Chinese people have used the bottle gourd for practical and spiritual purposes
- Carrying vessel
- Medicinal Religious Adoption
- Snuff Bottle: Snuff Medicinal Healing Qualities



## The Taoist Bottle Gourd

- Taoist Awakening
- Sacred Symbol of Longevity and Immortality
- God of Longevity
- Eight Immortals
  - Humans becoming Immortal
  - Li Tie – Kuai
  - Gourd Immortality



## God Of Longevity

- Highly popular Chinese Deity
- Singular Statue
- Three Star Gourd
  - Longevity
  - Wealth
  - Happiness
- Worshipping the God of Longevity is believed to bring about long life as well as good luck



## Elixir of Immortality

- Supernatural space inside the bottle gourd
- Producing the “Elixir of Immortality”
- Gaining Immortality
- Creators of Elixir
  - Li Tie – Kuai
  - Taoist Priests



## Thank You

- **Cory Willmott**, Cultural Anthropology Councilor SIUe - For taking photos of growing gourds, use of talisman gourds, reviewing labels, and aiding in organization of display work
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- **Kelly Dobos** (Art Major) and **Tiffany Arnold**-For audience appeal when selecting type of Chinese Silk Fabric
- **Ricky Buchanan**, Editor at Edwardsville Intelligencer- For editing my labels

## Photographs & Artifacts Used

- Painted screen of man drinking from bottle gourd owned and photographed by Cory Willmott
- Growing gourds in a medicine shop photograph taken by Cory Willmott in 2005 while visiting a medicine-shop in Beijing.
- Three Star Lord Talisman owned and photographed by Meghan Jones
- University Museum:
  - Black Cloisonné Bottle Gourd Vase 91.0448
  - Dragon White Bottle Gourd With Holes 91.0968
  - University Museum Artifact Photograph:
    - Large Social Sueton Vase QR 303
    - Porcelain Red Blue and White Gourd Snuff Bottle OR 1988
    - Porcelain Blue Red and White Gourd Snuff Bottle OR 1989
    - White Stone with Opal Bird Gourd Snuff Bottle 91.0448
    - Purple Stone Gourd Snuff Bottle 92.0255
    - Green Stone Gourd Snuff Bottle 92.0253
    - Bronze Metal Gourd Snuff Bottle 92.0420
- Photograph Eight Immortals Porcelain Set Missing One
  - Symbol of Immortal - Name of Immortal
  - Bottle Gourd = Li T'ieh-kuai OR 1468
  - Musical Reed = Chang Kuo OR 1708
  - Fan = Chang-li Ch'üan OR 1468
  - Basket = Lan T'ei-ho OR 1468
  - Lotus Flower = Ho Hsien Ku OR 1468
  - Flute = Han Hsiang Tz'ü OR 1468
  - Clappers = Ts'ao Kuo-chiu OR 1468
  - Stone Set of Eight Immortals
    - Symbol of Immortal - Name of Immortal
    - Bottle Gourd = Li T'ieh-kuai 91.0874
    - Sword = Li Tung-pin 91.0845
    - Musical Reed = Chang Kuo 91.0843
    - Fan = Chang-li Ch'üan 91.0867
    - Basket = Lan T'ei-ho 91.0898
    - Lotus Flower = Ho Hsien Ku 91.0869
    - Flute = Han Hsiang Tz'ü 91.0867
    - Clappers = Ts'ao Kuo-chiu 91.0871
  - Wood Statue God of Longevity 91.968
  - Ivory Tusk God of Longevity 92.0835

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