

# Ornamental vessel with lid - With gilded insect motifs on a dark purple background

Ceramics and Glass Collection

Accession Nr.: 9548.a-b 

Date of production: ca. 1872

Place of production: Stoke-on-Trent (Staffordshire)

Inscription: talpán masszába nyomva: MINTON- „A”; kereszt háromszögben (a gyártási időszak jele); 1285 (gyári formaszám)

Materials: frit porcelain

Techniques: cast; gilt decoration; pierced decoration; soft porcelain glaze

Dimensions: height (with lid): 33,3 cm  
maximum width: 13,6 cm  
opening diameter: 8,5 cm  
base diameter: 12,5 cm

Ovoid vase standing on a low cylindrical base, supported by four relief-work stumps extending from a branch drawn in gold. The openwork of the vertical mouth rim is decorated by two intertwining gilded ribbons, through which the muted sheen of the gold of the lid rim shows through. The entire surface is covered by "plumcoloured" glaze in a subtle play of blue and purple, with which the Minton company drew great attention at the Vienna World's Fair. On top of the shimmering glaze, relief representations of four insects (ladybird, winged beetle, butterfly and oak cerambyx) are repeated in several bands on the lid, and the body and base are marked out in gilding of varying brightness. The forms, decorative motifs and glazing technique betray the inspiration of Far Eastern pottery. The last secrets of Chinese porcelain manufacture found their way to Europe in the second half of the 19th century. The high temperature required for the European (German) "hard porcelain" burned out all colours except cobalt blue. Coloured decoration could only be applied on top of the colourless glaze and fired on at a lower temperature. The English Minton's Pottery and Porcelain Factory pioneered the development of clay compositions which maintained their colour, and of self-colour "soft porcelain" glazes and enamels which could be fired with the clay on high temperature. Its products prompted the main French and German manufacturers, Sevres and Berlin, to compete at world's fairs. In Hungary, where industrial development was gaining momentum, Vilmos Zsolnay (1828–1900) started developing high-fired coloured feldspathic enamels in his tiny workshop in Pécs, drawing on his observations at the 1873 World's Fair and partly following Minton pieces he had bought and received as gifts.

## Literature

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