

Object Summary



Gem-Inset Enamelled Gold Octagonal Lidded Box and Finial with Floral and Bird Motifs

19th century

India

British India/Princely States

Enameled gold, gemstones

Overall: 2 x 2 1/8 in. (5.1 x 5.4cm)

This octagonal box is likely a pandan, a container used to store betel nut.

Thin slices of betel nut were mixed with lime paste and spices to create paan, a mild intoxicant enjoyed at the Mughal court. The box is decorated with translucent green and red enamel and topped with a finial set with diamonds. The sides of the box display alternating patterns with bird motifs and floral designs inlaid with diamonds. The bottom of the box

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reveals the exposed gold and is decorated with a central rosette and a border of leaves and lotuses.