

PORCELAIN AND PEN 2016,
EXHIBITION



BY CAROLE BENNETT

GALLERY 8, 8 DUKE STREET ST JAMES'S,
LONDON SW1

24TH-26TH MAY 2016



The Studio, Fletching 2016

PREFACE

“I would like to say an enormous thank you to Carole & Neil Bennett for their support of The Prince’s Trust. The funds raised from this exhibition will make a significant difference to the lives of disadvantaged young people.

Young people like James, 26, who had struggled with social anxiety from a young age. James did not do well at school and on leaving found it difficult to get a job.

James attended the Prince’s Trust’s Enterprise course and was given the support and encouragement to succeed. He has been able to turn his passion for art into a source of income and now runs a conservation business restoring art works and is considering going to university.

This year The Prince’s Trust is celebrating its 40th birthday and in that time has helped more than 825,000 young people like James. This exhibition will help us support a few more.”



Prince’s Trust

Martina Milburn
Chief Executive
The Prince’s Trust

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INTRODUCTION

Thirty six years have passed since I made this humble bowl (seen in the photo of my studio on page 2, containing an orchid); a coil pot comprised of recycled, local clay named St Thomas's Body which came from the neighbouring county of my birth, Derbyshire. The Latin inscription shows an early desire for harmony, a fascination with other cultures and their languages and a love of ceramics. I have carried this bowl with me, throughout my life, sometimes like a traveller, carrying just one precious possession.

Of course a pot will always have many stories to tell as it sits silently in a room. Every pot in the exhibition has a story from The Silk Road. Not one piece sits in splendid isolation, but each forms a part of the long story of The Silk Road; from Xi'an the ancient capital in China to the souks of Constantinople. I have worked mainly in porcelain, although a few of the larger vessels have been hand thrown in stoneware, in deference to the potters of the Abassid period who struggled to imitate the mighty, white porcelain with stoneware and slip glazes. How they must have struggled to recreate the luminescent, hard and smooth material that they had seen carried upon the backs of the Bactrian camels, passing through Baghdad.

You will see the delicate, celadon tea bowls from China, the black 'lacquer ware' glazes from Japan, the grand statement flasks from across the Middle East and the black underglaze texts inspired by the slipware of Nishapur in Iran.

Occasionally my imagination has carried me away to the Far and Middle East of my childhood stories and one can see Scheherazade's flask and ancient Arabic texts of unknown fruits, fragrant gardens and love. Indeed, I have researched Arabic poetry from as early as the 6th century and some of these adorn the porcelain, alongside my own short, poetic contributions. I am at the foothills in this, but for some of life's events, poetry is the only passage.

I hope that the collection stirs your own fascination for the arts and creativity of far away places and people. We are all connected by our creativity. The work in the collection is being sold, in its entirety, for The Prince's Trust. In this way, we can help young people realise their dreams, as well as our own.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the following people and organizations for their incredible generosity with their own time, skills and know how: Clive, Catriona and Rosie Alderton, Rose Armstrong, Victoria Buckroyd, Dr Feras Alkabani and Nisreen Alkabani, Neil, Violet and Clementine Bennett, the Craft Potters Association, Charlene Chau, Laura Deakin, Lady Alexandra Gage, Christine Hesketh, The London Library, Lucy Lunn, Prof. James Montgomery, Kate O'Neill, Oriental Ceramics Society, Tom Parkhouse, Dr Stacey Pierson, Sophie Popham, Samantha Phillips, Sevenoaks School Art Department and The School of Oriental and African Studies.

Carole Bennett, May 2016



1. Bowl. Porcelain with black text under a transparent glaze. Text reads:

*"The earth spreads out a green carpet
The daisies open up and the world blossoms:
Speak of the white lily and praise its beauty.
And forget not the magnificence of the rose,
And place the narcissus on the left.
And mention not the jasmine, until it blooms."*

By Ibn Quzman (1078 - 1160)

D: 220mm H: 73mm



2. **Flask.** Stoneware with green underglaze text with celadon glaze and gold lustre 'tashkeel'.

Poem by Ibn Marj al-Kahl al-Andalusi

"Many an evening have I remained, watching closely the Moment." (see 56)

W: 180mm H: 370mm



3. **Saki Flask.** Porcelain with celadon glaze and gold lustre signature.

W 125mm H: 192mm



4. Scheherazade's Flask: Porcelain with light blue, celadon glaze.
Gold overglaze text from 1001 Nights.
W: 155mm H 310mm



5. Sake Flask: Porcelain with cream glaze.
Gold lustre overglaze signature.
W: 95mm H: 205mm



6. Rice Bowl: Porcelain with 'qingbai' bluish crackle glaze with gold lustre overglaze signature.

D: 207mm H: 93mm



7. Flask: Porcelain with 'qingbai' glaze with gold lustre overglaze.

Text: Poem by Nizar Qabbani (1923 - 1998).

*"I want to make you a unique alphabet
 In it I want
 The rhythm of the rain,
 The dust of the moon,
 the sadness of the grey clouds,
 The pain of the fallen willow leaves
 Under the wheels of Autumn."*

W: 120mm H: 232mm



8. The Ambassador's Bowl: Porcelain with cream glaze.
Gold lustre overglaze. Text: Arabic alphabet.
D: 220mm H: 83mm



9. Bowl. Porcelain with 'qingbai' crackle glaze with gold lustre overglaze signature.
D: 181mm H: 102mm



10. Flask: Porcelain, 'qingbai' glaze with gold lustre overglaze.
Text: Poem by Ibn Sara (1043 – 1123)

*“Yonder stands the orange-tree, showing off its fruits to me,
Gleaming teardrops lovers shed, Stained by passion's heartbreak red.
Balls of agate carmine-bright, Hung on boughs of chrysolite,
Sent a -spinning from the trees, By the mallet of the breeze.*

Now I kiss them, now inhale;

Thus my senses I regale

With their cheeks' so tender bloom

And the sweets of their perfume.

D: 120mm H: 190mm



11. Bowl: Porcelain, green underglaze text with transparent glaze.

11th Century poem in muwashsha form. Text reads:

*“The earth spreads out a green carpet
 The daisies open up and the world blossoms:
 Speak of the white lily and praise its beauty.
 And forget not the magnificence of the rose,
 And place the narcissus on the left.
 And mention not the jasmine until it blooms.”*

D: 254mm H: 92mm



12. Bowl: Porcelain with cream glaze, gold lustre overglaze. Text reads:

“Two Brothers in the Desert

*By the oasis the first brother spoke to the second, sitting in the shade of the palm.
 “Don’t leave without my coat and some money,” the elder brother said to the younger.
 As dawn broke, his shape merged into the storm.
 Since that time, of him there has been no trace.”*

C. Bennett 2016

D: 254mm H: 92mm



13. Flask: Porcelain, turquoise glaze with gold lustre decoration.
W: 108mm H: 141mm



14. Flask: Porcelain with green underglaze text and transparent overglaze. Text reads:

*“Stop, and snatch the violet’s audacious pride
How wondrous is the beauty of the garden bed
Over a courtyard, in the little pool of water
The sun declines toward darkening sunset
The sun declines toward the yellow twilight
And gilds the leaves of climbing vines with gold
Branches appear in unexpected forms
And dress up the happiness of souls
While the garden spreads forth its verdure
In raiment which rivals a bride’s clothes
A bird, ensconced in the branches,
He is like a Friday preacher on his pulpit
Over a courtyard, in the little pool of water
The sun declines toward darkening sunset.”*

W: 160mm H: 350 mm



15. Flask: Stoneware, celadon glaze, gold lustre overglaze text.

Poem by Abid Ibn al-Abras, 6th century poet. Text reads:

*I watched through the night the flashes that lit the towering high-
piled cloud-masses
filled to the full, nigh bursting:
The heavily burdened wombs of the fruitful waters, that spout forth
rain from many a rift of blackness:
The mists built up in darkness unfathomed, raindrops that carve
deep caverns
when they are cast to earth ward.
The mass grew one, compact in an even surface and poured forth
rain in streams from its clefts, unstinted;
Like night in its gloom it swept over all the champaign, one
blackness, or like the sea with advancing billows.
It seemed, when the lightningclove it and flashed and flickered,
as though in the smile of rain bringing constellations
One saw the white teeth flash forth in a sudden gladness from
faces of black eyed maidens that laugh in joyance.
Nay, ask thou the poets if they can swim as I swim the seas of the art
of song, or can dive as I dive!
My tongue, in the shaping deftly of praise, or banning, and choosing
of cunning words, it is nimbler a swimmer
Than in the sea the fish that amid the billows swims bravely, and
dives deep down to the depths of Ocean.
When he darts forward, see how his sides flash brightly,
and how when he turns the white scales shine and glitter;
And how, on the right and left, as he swims,
the watching shoal of small fry keep close to the smooth rocks'
shelter-
The brood of the sea – no life have they left, if only thou liftest them
from the wave where they dart and circle.
But he, if the hand goes forth in attempt to grasp him, he slips from
beneath it, not to be caught with fingers!
So swims he, advancing now and retreating smoothly, and black in
the sea are slippery fishes ever,
The sea's own colour, guarded by scaly armour set close as the scales
on doublets of mail well woven.*

H: 350 mm W: 160 mm



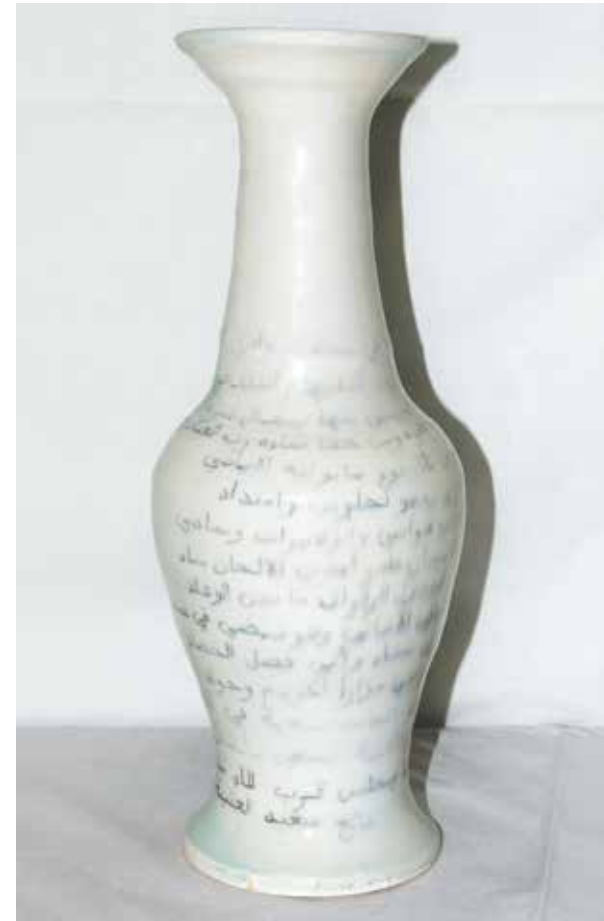
16. Bowl: Porcelain, cream glaze with gold lustre overglaze text. Text reads:
“Choose the neighbour before the house and the companion before the way”
 W: 190mm H: 70mm



17. Bowl: Porcelain, black underglaze under transparent glaze.
 Text from The Qur'an. Chapter 6. Verse 99:
*“And it is He who sends down rain from the sky, and we produce thereby the growth of all things.
 We produce from it greenery from which We produce grains arranged in layers.
 And from the palm trees – of its emerging fruit are clusters hanging low.
 And [We produce] gardens of grapevines and olives and pomegranates, similar yet varied.
 Look at [each of] its fruit when it yields and [at] its ripening.
 Indeed in that are signs for a people who believe.”*
 D: 170mm H: 28mm



18. Small Flask: Porcelain, 'qingbai' glaze with gold lustre overglaze decoration.
W: 110mm H: 192mm



19. Tall Flask: Porcelain, grey underglaze text with cloud transparent glaze.

Text: Poem by Mana Otaiba. Translation – Dr Feras Al Kabani

*"A paradise in the valley's lap, from which I don't want to be apart. I see it every day; yet I long for it increasingly
I fill my eyes with its extraordinary beauty. Here's Paradise: thus, indeed, willed the Lord Trees of all sorts for
which (people's) hands can reach*

And the abundant shade (of the trees) invites (the onlooker) to sit (relax) and stretch.

The grass is my mattress and the flowers my pillow. On the boughs is a singing bird with sweet melodies

As the babbling brook flows along the valley (low land).

Gurgling (chanting) the sweetest of songs as it goes by reluctantly

As winter passes and the harvest season arrives, the valley becomes a destination for the generous

Grazing gazelles, difficult to hunt (not to be hunted)

One of which determinedly climbs up to the top (peak). The gazelle settles by the brook, longing for more."

W: 110mm H: 380mm



20. Travellers Bowl: Porcelain, cream glaze with green and gold lustre overglaze decoration.
Iranian influence.

D: 162mm H: 80mm



21. Flask: Porcelain, black underglaze with transparent glaze. Text: Poem by
Ibn Sara – Andalusian poet from Santaren (d. 1123). Translated. A.J. Arberry

*“Yonder stands the orange tree,
Showing off its fruits to me,
Gleaming teardrops lovers shed
Stained by passion’s heartbreak red
Balls of agate carmine-bright
Hung on boughs of chrysolite,
Sent a spinning from the trees
By the mallet of the breeze
Now I kiss them, now inhale;
Thus my senses I regale
With their cheeks’ so tender bloom
And the sweets of their perfume.”*

H: 310mm W: 130mm



22. Bowl: Porcelain with black text under transparent glaze. Text reads:
"Charity does not decrease wealth".
 Centre carries magic square discovered in Xi'an, dating to Mongol period.
 H: 40mm W: 270mm



23. Flask: Porcelain with black underglaze text, transparent glaze and gold lustre overglaze "tashkeel".
 Text: Poem by Khalil Gibran. Translated. George Kheirallah.

Youth
 Hope is found not in the forest,
 Nor the wild portray despair;
 Why should forest long for portions
 When the all is centered there?
 Should one search the forest hopeful,
 When all nature is the Aim?
 For to hope is but an ailment,
 So are station, wealth and fame.
 Give to me the reed and sing thou!
 For the song is flame and light,
 And the reed's plaint is a yearning
 Unattained by lazy wight.
 H: 330mm W: 160mm



24. Large Flask: Porcelain with transparent glaze and overglaze text in amber lustre and design in gold lustre. Text reads:

*“The snow falls across the region of the Middle East,
But you and I, we look at the same cold moon.”*

C. Bennett 2016

H: 350mm W: 180MM



25. Flask: Porcelain, with amber lustre overglaze and gold lustre decoration:

Text: Poem by Ibn Maraj al-Andalusi

*“Many an evening have I remained, watching closely the moment
The days grant them generously after much difficulty
In a garden, we obtain from them every desire
When you breathe it, it gives the scent of ambergris
The birds sing, and the lawn seats are folded up
While the sun dances on in a yellow chemise
The gardens float between adornment in silver and gold
And the flowers, becoming dirhams and dinars
The face of the sun yellows as it westers
Only because it departs from the beauty of that scene.”*

H: 300mm W: 130mm



26. Bowl: Porcelain, black decoration under a transparent glaze.
Inspired by 10th century slipware of Nishapur. Inscription reads:
“Generosity is a quality of the people of Paradise and good health is a blessing”.
H. 83 mm W. 187 mm



27. Vase: Porcelain, with lilac glaze and silver lustre decoration.
H: 120mm W: 120mm



28. Flask: Porcelain, transparent glaze with overglaze, gold lustre signature and simple band around neck.

H: 160mm W: 120mm



29. Vase: Porcelain, lilac glaze with overglaze, gold lustre band at foot.

H: 140mm W: 110mm



30. Scorpion Bowl: Porcelain with black underglaze text with transparent glaze.
Poem by Muhammad Ali al Awsi (known as al Aqrab “The Scorpion”)

W: 240mm H: 75mm



31 Bowl: Black underglaze text with transparent glaze. Text from 9th Century bowl from Northern Iran held in Museo Nazionale d’Arte Orientale in Rome. Text reads
“Rich is not the one who donates in the time of plenty, but the one who gives also in poverty.”

W: 240mm H: 70mm



32. **Bowl:** Porcelain, black underglaze under transparent glaze.
Gold and silver lustre overglaze.
H: 70mm W: 215mm



33. **Bowl:** Black underglaze text under transparent glaze. Text reads:
"Knowledge (or erudition) is a great quality for the youth and reason is a crown of gold".
H: 77mm W: 217mm



34. Bowl: Porcelain, understated, incised decorative pattern under a forest green glaze.

H: 81mm D: 193mm



35. Pair of Bowls

a) Porcelain, understated, incised decorative pattern under a forest green glaze.

b) Porcelain bowl (small companion) with forest green glaze.

H: 46mm and 40mm W: 142mm and 70mm



36. Pair of Bowls

- a) Porcelain, understated, incised decorative pattern under a forest green glaze.
 - b) Porcelain tea bowl with forest green glaze.
- H: 70mm and 50mm W: 130mm and 80mm



37. Pair of Mulberry Cups: Porcelain, slate grey underglaze text with transparent glaze. Texts Read:

a) *“Of Happiness and Hope
Happiness is a myth we seek,
If manifested surely irks;
Like a river speeding to the plain,
On its arrival slows and murks.
For man is happy only in
His aspiration to the heights;
When he attains his goal, he cools
And longs for other distant flights.
If you should meet a happy one
Who is contented with his lot,
Unlike the rest of all mankind,
Pray his Nirvana disturb not.”*
By Khalil Jibran (1883 – 1931)

b) *“Moon In Eclipse
When as the swarming flood of night
Was ebbing from the sky
The moon, eclipsing, lost the light
Of half its eye.
The moon a blacksmith’s mirror seemed
That, furnaced more and more,
Glowed, till the fiery crimson streamed
Its blackness o’er.
By Ibn Hamdis (d. 1132)
Translated by A.J. Arberry*

W: 77mm and 70mm H: 113mm and 111mm



38. Vase: Porcelain, with black underglaze text with transparent glaze. Text reads:

*“What have we done to you, death
 That you treat us so,
 With always another catch
 One day a warrior
 The next a head of state;
 Charmed by the loyal
 You choose the best.
 Iniquitous, unequaling death.
 I would not complain
 If you were just
 But you take the worthy
 Leaving fools for us.
 Fifty years among us
 Upholding rights
 Annulling wrongs,
 Impatient death
 Could you not wait
 A little longer.
 He still would be here
 And mine, a brother
 Without a flaw. Peace
 Be upon him and Spring
 Rains water his tomb, but
 Could you not wait a little longer, a little longer,
 You came too soon.”*

By Al-Kansa (7th Century poet, famous for her elegies on her brothers).

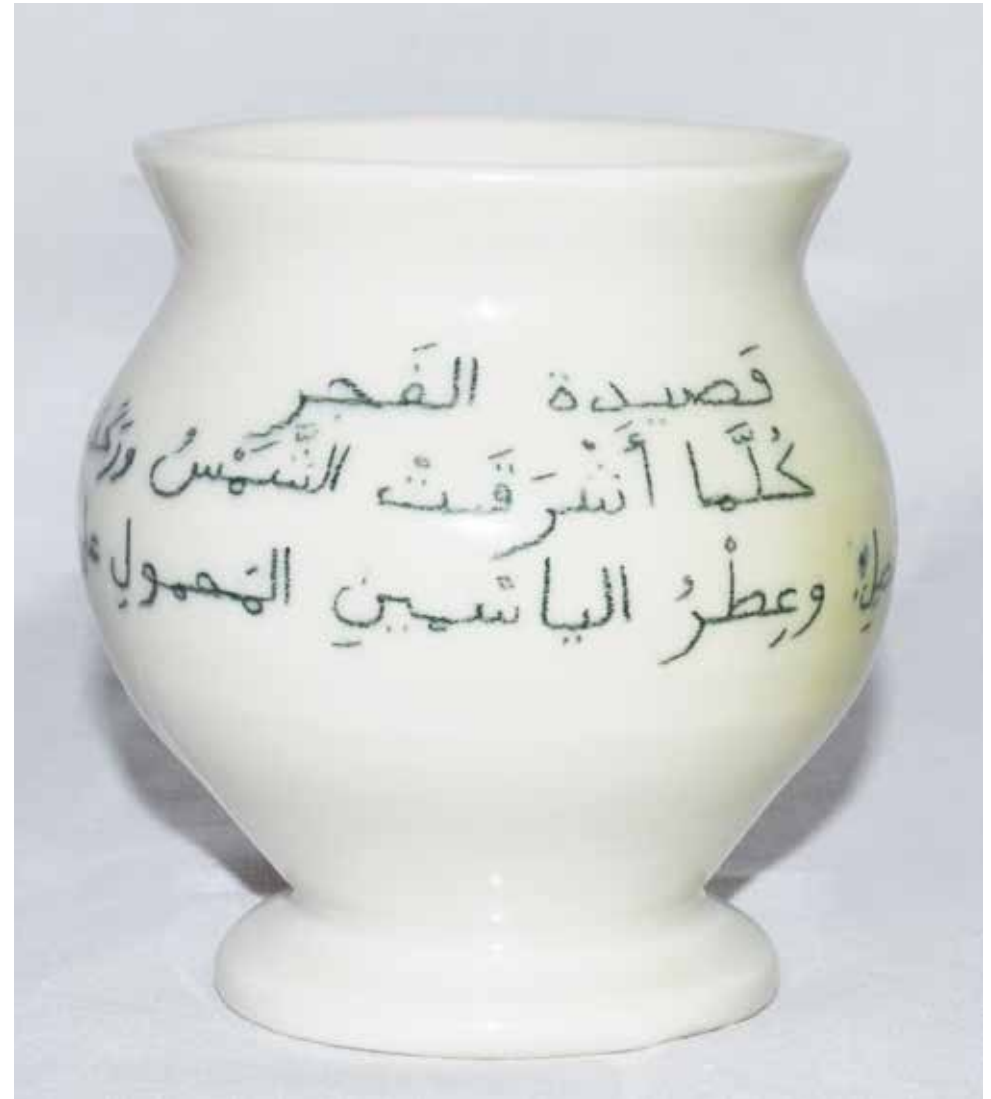
Translated by Omar Pound

W: 137mm H: 191mm



39. **The Black Swan Bowl:** Porcelain, black glaze with lacquer-like gloss.

H: 60mm W: 155mm



40. **Vase:** Porcelain with dark green, underglaze text with cream glaze.

Text: Poem of the Dawn.(C. Bennett, 2016)

H: 104mm W: 84mm



41. Bowl: Porcelain, green underglaze text with light celadon glaze. Text:

Lovely River

*“Lovely river, spread on its stony bed,
Sweeter far to sip than proud beauty’s lip.
Curving through the land like a bracelet, and
Fringed with flowers gay, Heaven’s Milky Way
Overhanging boughs sweep about its brows,
Eyelashes that lie round an azure eye.
As the zephyrs play the lighte branches sway:
Sunset’s gorgeous beam gilds the silver stream.”*

By Ibn Khafaja (d. 1139) Andalusian poet famous for his descriptions of nature.

Translated by A.J. Arberry

H: 73mm D: 222mm



42. Bowl: Porcelain with transparent glaze and lilac and gold lustre decoration: geometric thread with magic number square from the Mongol period.

H: 90mm D: 200mm



43. Bowl: Porcelain, black glaze with gold lustre overglaze decoration in Persian style.

H: 44mm D: 162mm



44. Trio of porcelain tea vessels. Black glaze with gold lustre rim.

H: 92mm, 88mm and 95mm W: 64mm, 66mm and 63mm



45. **Tea Ware:** Quartet of porcelain tea bowls with black glaze.



46. **Rice Bowl:** Porcelain rice bowl, with speckled hen's egg, celadon glaze.
H: 65mm W: 183mm



47. **Bowl:** Porcelain with incised water lily beneath a celadon glaze.
H: 47mm W: 207mm



48. Bowl: Porcelain with incised ring beneath a celadon glaze.
H: 54mm D: 154mm



49. Bowl: Porcelain, with 'bamboo' incisions beneath a celadon glaze.
H: 70mm W: 193mm



50. Flask: Porcelain flask beneath a celadon glaze.
H: 195mm W: 100mm



51. Bowl: Porcelain with incised decorations beneath a turquoise glaze.
H: 39mm D: 250mm



52. Dish: Porcelain with gold lustre. Text: Sura Luqman.
H: 47mm D: 332mm



53. **Tea Ware:** Porcelain trio of black tea ware.

H: 105mm, 106mm and 110mm W: 55mm, 65mm and 60mm



54. **Cup 1 (a):** Porcelain, with turquoise glaze and silver lustre overglaze text.

Poem by Ibn Hamdis (d. 1132) Translated by A.J. Arberry

Water Lilies

Drink by the pool, where shines the beautiful

Water lilies' sheen, crimson on green.

The blossoms break the mirror of the lake,

And adroitly aim their tongues of flame.

Cup 2 (b): Porcelain, with turquoise glaze and silver lustre overglaze. Matching text to 54 a.

Small Flask: Porcelain, with turquoise glaze and silver lustre overglaze.

Poem by Ibn Khafaja (d. 1139)

Of a lovely maid I tell: Sombre eyes of a gazelle,

Throat of hind, and wine red lip, Teeth like bubbles sweet to sip.

Drunkenly she swooned and swayed in her gown of golden braid,

Twinkling stars that interwove round the moon, my radiant love.

Passion's hand enveloped us in his garment amorous

All the night, till it was torn by the jealous hand of morn.



56. Tiles: Porcelain, handmade with transparent glaze and gold lustre overglaze text with silver lustre 'tashkeel'. Text: Poem by Ibn Maras al-Andalusi:

*Many an evening have I remained, washing closely the moment
 The days grant them generously after much difficulty
 In a garden, we obtain from them every desire
 When you breathe it, it gives the scent of ambergris
 The birds sing, and the lawn seats are folded up
 While the sun dances on in a yellow chemise
 The gardens float between adornment in silver and gold
 And the flowers, becoming dirhams and dinars
 The face of the sun yellows as it westers
 Only because it departs from the beauty of that scene.*

H: 270mm W: 370mm



CAROLE BENNETT
www.silkroadceramics.com