

Symbolic Meanings of Chinese Porcelains from the Market Street Chinatown

ABSTRACT

What does a porcelain bowl painted with bamboo mean to a Chinese immigrant in America? Does it mean something special to the person who crossed the ocean and made his living by himself on an unfamiliar continent? This paper argues for a cultural aspect of the Chinese porcelains from the Market Street Chinatown collection. Other than food-serving utensils and decorative artifacts, the porcelains have a third symbolic function because of the various but limited decorative patterns on them. Re-interpretation and analysis of the components of each decorative pattern as well as their symbolic meanings will be presented in detail.

Porcelains from the Market Street Chinatown

Currently, there are two major unsolved problems in the study of Asian porcelains (especially Chinese porcelains) of the overseas Chinese communities. In the first place, scientific measurements and classifications as well as chemical analyses have been done, so that we know the physical features and manufacturing techniques of these Asian wares. But on the other hand, we still do not know much about the objects themselves: from which part of China specifically did they originally come from, why did the Chinese merchants select these specific porcelains, what information did the various but limited

decorative patterns on them convey to us? Mueller in his study has given a brief introduction of the patterns and forms of the Asian porcelains from the Riverside Chinatown in California, and has talked about some of the symbolism of the Chinese porcelains, which is a forerunner of this study.¹

A result of this lack of focus on porcelains themselves, which is at the same time another problem of the study of Chinese porcelains from overseas Chinese communities, is that we lose a useful instrument for understanding the cultural life and spiritual aspect of the Chinese immigrants. Study of artifacts such as porcelain is significant and fundamental for any public archaeology project, since they “contain information about many aspects of the society in which they were made and used”, and could be viewed and studied as “symbols of identity”.² Therefore, in the case of Market Street Chinatown, a study into the material culture of porcelain could offer an effective path to approach the spiritual and cultural aspects of Chinese immigrants, like the topics of ethnicity and identity. As a result, the porcelain should be studied as more than object functioning as food serving and consumption utensil, or decorative artifact. The colorful and limited decorative patterns on the vessels serve as a symbolic function which has a long tradition in China. This symbolic meaning of the porcelain decorations is the major reason why the Chinese immigrants prefer them other than American products as daily utensils.

¹ Fred W. Mueller, Jr., “Asian Tz’u: Porcelain for the American Market,” in *Wong Ho Leun: An American Chinatown*. (San Diego: Great Basin Foundation, 1987), 259-311.

² A. Praetzellis, M. Praetzellis, “Artifacts as Symbols of Identity: An Example from Sacramento’s Gold Rush Era Chinese Community,” in *Living in Cities: Current Research in Urban Archaeology*, E. Staski, et al. (Tucson: Special Publication 5, Society for Historical Archaeology, 1987), 41.

Symbolic Meaning of Chinese Porcelains: History and Cultural Connotation

If a Chinese is going to choose a gift for an elder in celebration of his sixtieth birthday, a perfect one would be a piece of calligraphy or a painting with the following couplets:

福如东海 (Fu ru dong hai)

寿比南山 (Shou bi nan shan)

May one's fortune be as vast as the Eastern Sea,

And one's life as long as the Southern Mountain.¹

In this eight-character couplet, it does not directly convey the wish “May you long life and health”, instead uses a metaphor of sea and mountain, which are seen as symbols of expressing “embodying all” and “long-standing” in Chinese culture.

An important characteristic of traditional Chinese aesthetic culture is its symbolism, or “to speak through objects.” The majority of the decorative patterns that appear on Chinese textiles, paintings, ceramics, furniture, and other artifacts have their implied meanings. This “meaning” is not presented directly, but implicitly through puns, metaphors, rebuses, references, folklores, stories of the images on the objects. The Chinese people believe that by having these objects wearing these symbols in their homes, their wishes will come true. For example, the image of peony, or the “king of flowers” viewed by the Chinese, symbolizes for wealth and honor. An artifact with peony motif means May you be prosperous. And a picture of an official pointing to the sun implies “getting promoted” since the sun rises high in the sky.

¹ Patricia Bjaaland Welch, *Chinese Art: A Guide to Motifs and Visual Imagery*. North Clarendon, VT: Tuttle Pub., 2008. 18.

Although holding different views on the origin of the symbolism in Chinese culture,¹ scholars do have agreement on the Chinese way of expressing meanings through objects implicitly. For C.A.S. Williams, it is a special “recognition system.” In the prehistoric periods of China, the simple pottery decorations of cord pattern, comb lines pattern, bowstring pattern and basket pattern did not have actual symbolic meaning, and only reflected aesthetic values of ancient Chinese people. Since porcelain is relatively a modern invention compared to pottery, the former has been influenced more profoundly by the rising Chinese culture. In later history of China, during Song, Ming and Qing dynasties, the central government had better control of people and state and it was easier to get values and thoughts promoted, the economy was more dynamic, and both elite and popular cultures flourished. When people lived in time of prosperity like Ming and Qing (fifteenth to early twentieth century), they began to consider things more than survival and began to pursue other things such as happiness, wealth, longer life, more offspring, honor, official rank, and fortune. At the time, with the influence of Confucian and Buddhist ideas and images, the auspicious patterns on porcelain began to flourish. The motifs of these auspicious patterns have a great variety: animals, insects, plants and their blossoms, human figures, religious objects, phrases and characters, etc.

¹ For example, Wolfram Eberhard attributes the origin of Chinese symbolism to the social organization of the ancient Chinese. In ancient China people lived together closely either for safety reasons or state order. Families were responsible for any crime committed in their surroundings. Therefore people had to be extremely careful about the words being used, to avoid anything that would lead to dissension in the neighborhood or even in the family. This kind of Chinese “reticence” defined by Eberhard led the Chinese come to form a society which preferred to use symbolical forms to express their minds and hopes. Another scholar, C. A. S Williams traces the basis of symbolism in Chinese art to the animism tradition. The ancient Chinese believed that spirits of their dead ancestors rested on things like rocks, trees, or animals, and had the power to care for their living descendants. They gradually get accustomed to the way of perceiving one thing with another meaning attached. Another study of a Chinese scholar Fumin Zhong argues that Chinese symbolism is related to the prehistoric totem worship, reproduction worship, animism, as well as people’s philosophical view of the relationship of human and heaven.

The meanings carried by these decorative patterns are all auspicious, in a Chinese sense: people hope that these patterns can help them to get avoid of misfortune and disaster, and bring them fortune and luck. The auspicious patterns are material expressions of people's pursuits and values which gradually formed along the evolution of social history. People's wishes for better life, their emotional inclinations, as well as aesthetic values can be transmitted from these visible symbols of auspicious patterns. By and large, the wishes of the Chinese people expressed through the auspicious meanings of the decorative patterns can be divided roughly into five categories: *fu* (good fortune), *lu* (high official rank), *shou* (longevity), *xi* (happy life), *cai* (great wealth). According to a Chinese classic, *Shangshu*, the *fu* or good fortune could be further divided into five fortunes: longevity, wealth, health and peace, good moral, natural death.

One thing to point out is that, since there are a large quantity of these rebuses and symbols in Chinese culture, even an individual of Chinese descent, whether educated or not, cannot recognize all of the symbolic patterns and their meanings. This is resulted from the abundant contents and variations of the symbols and motifs. However, this tradition of "speaking images" has long been deeply rooted in the mind of every Chinese: when they first encounter an object with certain decorative patterns, even if they could not recognize the pattern itself or could not speak out the meaning of them, they have the kind of awareness that there must be a hidden meaning behind these patterns, these are not only functioned as decorative. The Chinese people have been exposed to many of these speaking patterns in their everyday life. This symbolic language of the decorative patterns has been a convention in Chinese culture.

Porcelains from the Market Street Chinatown: Re-Interpretation of Images and Their Symbolic Meanings

Almost all of the Chinese porcelains of the Market Street Chinatown collection fall into five categories based on the decorative patterns painted on the glaze body: Four Seasons, Bamboo, Double Happiness, Celadon, and Sweet Pea.

Four Seasons

This decorative pattern is also called *Four Flowers* according to its floral motif. It appears on a variety of vessels forms, including large, medium and small bowl, serving dish, tea cup, wine cup, and spoon. Four kinds of flowers representing each season are distributed evenly on the surface of the vessels, with the image of a peach in the central part of the vessel. The flowers chosen by the porcelain painters are specified species representing each season: peony for spring; lotus for summer; chrysanthemum for autumn; and plum blossom for winter. When the four flowers appear together on the porcelain, they stand for a complete circuit of four seasons.

Compared to other Chinese porcelains from the Market Street Chinatown collection, the Four Seasons is the most decorative kind in terms of its colorful appearance. The image of the flowers and peach were executed in overglaze polychrome enamels, in a way that the colorfulness of the plants exhibit sceneries of the four seasons. On the other hand, according to the study of Sando and Felton in 1993, the Four Seasons porcelain was more costly than others in the Chinese tableware market. Its colorful and relatively more elaborate decoration is one of the influencing factors for this higher price.

Seasonal groupings of flowers are a common theme in Chinese art and are frequently presented as four parts on an artifact, with each flower standing for a season. Moreover, the flowers on the porcelains from the collection are not only representations of the four seasons, but also conveyers of a full set of meanings auspicious to the Chinese. As talked earlier in this paper, peony as the “king of flowers” is the most popular botanical motif in China, which stands for wealth and honor. Image of peony in a vase (the latter symbolizes safety) means “May you have peace and prosperity.”

The flower for summer, lotus, is another popular theme in Chinese literature and art. Lotus became popular in China with the spread of Buddhism as symbol for purity and harmony. The symbolism of lotus is also derived from the puns that come from the Chinese pronunciation of its name, *he hua* or *lian hua*. *He* and *Lian* are both homophonous with the Chinese word for peace, union, continuity, and to link or connect. Therefore image of lotus is often combined with happy marriage and birth of children. Another name *shui furong* of lotus is a pun for “wealth” and “honor,” hence lotus is also symbol of flourish and prosperity.

The chrysanthemum and plum blossoms are called “Two Friends of Winter,”¹ since they both bloom when most flowers wither under the cold and frost winter winds. Hence the two flowers have been considered as symbols of perseverance and purity. The plum, together with bamboo and pine, is one of the “Three Friends of Winter.” The two flowers have been viewed as Chinese as symbols of longevity. Ancient Chinese drank chrysanthemum wine on the ninth day of the ninth lunar month in order to prolong their

¹ For this name, see Terese Tse Bartholomew, *Hidden Meanings in Chinese Art: [on the Occasion of the Exhibition Hidden Meanings: Symbolism in Chinese Art, Presented at the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco from October 7 through December 31, 2006]* (San Francisco, CA: Asian Art Museum, 2006), 175.

lives. Chrysanthemum can also be used as medicine: people drink tea brewed from its petals, which helps to reduce heat and remove toxic substances in human body. In particular, the plum blossom is also a sign of one's safety. Ancient Chinese people would paint a plum blossom on envelope or letter itself, which announces peace and safety.



Figure 1. The Four Seasons bowl and the endless knot at the bottom. MSCAP collection. Photo taken by author.

Another important decorative pattern that appears on the exterior of the bottom of the Four Seasons porcelains is the endless knot. The pattern is hand-painted with orange glaze. The name of the pattern is so called because the shape turns out to have no beginning or end. The symbol originally came from Buddhism's Eight Auspicious Symbols, and it stands for "endless wisdom and compassion of the Buddha."¹ When it appears as a decorative pattern on porcelains, it usually means eternity or longevity. The four flowers circle the image of a peach in the central part of the vessel. The peach in Chinese culture is a symbol of longevity. Together with the endless knot at the bottom, they mean "May you have endless blessings and longevity."

With the four flowers with their abundant symbolic meanings, when they appear together on the porcelain, it means "May you wealth and fortune throughout the year." The fortune here includes union, marriage, prosperity, longevity, as well as safety, peace, which are all important things that a Chinese immigrant who left his (few her) family and went to America alone for a better life pursued and valued.

¹ Terese Tse Bartholomew, *Hidden Meanings in Chinese Art: [on the Occasion of the Exhibition Hidden Meanings: Symbolism in Chinese Art, Presented at the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco from October 7 through December 31, 2006]* (San Francisco, CA: Asian Art Museum, 2006), 186.

Bamboo

The Bamboo pattern porcelain is a blue-and-white underglaze vessel decorated with a similar floral motif with the Four Seasons. Most archaeologically recovered forms of this pattern are eating bowls, with a few plates. On a Bamboo bowl, the major image of this decorative pattern is a group of plants (from left to right): plum tree with blossoms, a rock in the middle, and bamboo. On the other side of the bowl, there are two secondary decorative patterns. One is an underglaze blue pattern with three circles. The three circles are not connected to each other, and they can roughly form the shape of the Chinese character *pin*, which means rank or quality. Next to the three blue circles is a highly stylized image. Most of the renditions for this pattern have interpreted it as the insect dragonfly or others as bee. However, if it is the case, the combination of the dragonfly or bee together with the bamboo and plum tree on the other side of the vessel will not accord with each other, since dragonfly and bee are insects of summer, while bamboo and plum tree are the plants standing for winter. A more plausible and reasonable interpretation of the image would be the ganoderma, or *ling chi* in Chinese, which refers to a specific kind of fungus in China which is commonly used in medicine and considered by people as symbol for health and longevity.¹

As one of the Three Friends of Winter, bamboo is also a symbol of perseverance and longevity because its evergreen leaves and strong branches remind people of vitality. It also serves as a metaphor for humility and a pure heart because of its hollow stem, and is one of the Four Gentlemen of Flowers. In terms of decorative patterns, the combination of bamboo and plum blossom depicted together is known as the “double happiness of

¹ For the interpretation of the pattern as fungus, see Great Basin Foundation, *Wong Ho Leun: An American Chinatown* (San Diego: Foundation, 1987), 281.

bamboo and plum.”¹ The image of bamboo, rock, and plum blossom painted on the porcelains here are all symbols of longevity. If the stylized pattern on the other side is interpreted as *ling chi*, or fungus, it also symbolizes longevity, which accords with the meaning of the plants and rock.

While analyzing the decorative motifs, there is one thing worthy to point out: it is difficult to identify each of the images because the high-degree abstraction of the patterns. For example, the rock image in the middle of plum and bamboo was painted with only a few strokes: one from upper to the bottom, with another at the bottom depicting the larger base part of the rock. The image of bamboo has also been simplified only to leave the leaves identifiable, in which case the leaves appear to be broader than usual to make them symbolic. The branches of the plum tree were painted without much effort, thus left them to be quite soft and gentle. The plum blossoms, on the other hand, are similar to the bamboo leaves in that they are also painted exaggeratedly. On the other side of the porcelain, the brushworks of the three circles and *ling chi* the fungus are also cursive and simple. This kind of simplification, abstraction, and partial exaggeration of painting is a distinct characteristic of almost all of the Market Street Chinatown porcelains. One of the reasons for this phenomenon is that these porcelain paintings were copies of earlier porcelains in the area, since it is hard for abstraction to happen without a detailed “prototype”.

According to two scholars Qingzheeng Wang and Xianming Feng in their dictionaries of Chinese ceramics, this combination of plum blossoms with bamboo and garden rock is one of the variations of the popular theme “Three Friends of Winter”. The

¹ Patricia Bjaaland Welch, *Chinese Art: A Guide to Motifs and Visual Imagery* (North Clarendon, VT: Tuttle Pub., 2008), 21.

original design consisted mainly of pine, bamboo and plum, which symbolize the superior moral creeds of educated literati. Other variations of the design include cypress, bamboo and plum blossom, which could also be categorized as “Three Friends” decoration. According to Wang:

The pine is evergreen, representing a long life spent in peace. The bamboo evokes the true gentleman who benefits from his open mind. The plum tree is unsullied and worthy of being a leader of flowers. Every winter, when all other plants wither and their leaves fall, only these three keep their integrity.¹

The original design was first adapted on Yuan Dynasty blue-and-white wares and continued to be employed in Ming and Qing dynasties. Here is a chart of the pattern on porcelains during the three dynasties, and we can see its changes through time.

Table 1. Images from Qingzheng Wang, *A Dictionary of Chinese Ceramics* (Singapore: Sun Tree Publ., 2002), 285.

Dynasties	“Three Friends” Pattern and Transformation (Time Order)				
Yuan					
Ming					
Qing					

¹ Qingzheng Wang, Kelun Chen, and Lillian Chin, *A Dictionary of Chinese Ceramics* (Singapore: Sun Tree Publ., 2002), 258.

We can see that, starting from the Ming Dynasty, the three friends were usually painted with rock, which as a group formed the scene of traditional Chinese garden. I have found a bowl with the similar pattern of the Bamboo bowl from a Japanese porcelain catalogue, which is dated to early Ming Dynasty. Therefore further research needed to be done in the future would be looking for the original vessel with the same kind of decoration.

Double Happiness

This kind of porcelain was decorated with a Chinese character of cobalt blue underglaze enamel. The Chinese character *hsi* for joy and happiness is written twice, which accounts for the designation of the name double happiness, or called *shuang hsi*. Three double happiness characters are spread evenly on the body of the porcelain, mainly eating bowls. Moreover, these characters appear with a background filled with intertwining shapes, which makes the porcelain more decorative. Most researchers interpret the intertwining patterns as floral vines with blossoms of peony, while there is also other kind of interpretation which sees the image as three abstract peacocks.¹

The double happiness pattern is associated with happy events, especially weddings. Since the *hsi* character for joy is shown twice, it means that good things come in pairs. The use of the Chinese characters as auspicious symbols has a long tradition in China, not only because the complex forms and variations of the characters are decorative

¹ For the latter interpretation, see Bai Zhang, *Zhongguo Chu Tu Cu Qi Quan Ji* 中国出土瓷器全集 [Complete Collection of Ceramic Art Unearthed in China] (Beijing: Ke Xue Chu Ban She, 2008), 77.

themselves, but also because “they are believed to bring auspiciousness by their presence alone.”¹

Celadon

Celadon, or greenware, is a unique kind of the five major kinds of Chinese porcelains from the Market Street Chinatown. Different from other porcelains, it has no designed hand-painted decorative patterns, which renders it on a relatively subordinate position to the more decorated Four Seasons or Bamboo wares in terms of academic research and analysis.

Nevertheless, the celadon ware is never an inconspicuous kind in the Chinese history of porcelain. On the contrary, it is the longest-lasting glaze in the history of Chinese ceramics and had a long time of prosperity in China. The term *celadon* is used to refer to a wide range of greenish porcelain glazes as well as porcelains with the color. The color of the green, which is the most valuable part of the ware, is resulted from iron and titanium oxides fired in a reducing atmosphere. Failure to maintain the reducing atmosphere gave rise to a yellow or brown color. The wares of superior quality were fired at 1300° C and had a porosity of under 0.5%.² Later in Song Dynasty (960-1279), more variations of the green glaze were developed by local kilns, especially the Longquan kiln in Zhejiang Province, including the powdered green, plum green glaze, etc. Although later after Song Dynasty with the advent of blue-and-white ware and painted wares, celadon gradually lost its leading role in Chinese ceramic production, new kinds of the

¹ Patricia Bjaaland Welch, *Chinese Art: A Guide to Motifs and Visual Imagery* (North Clarendon, VT: Tuttle Pub., 2008), 215.

² Li He, *Chinese Ceramics: The New Standard Guide* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1996), 335.

green glaze were continued to be invented during the Ming and Qing dynasties. And the best quality products of celadon are still popular in today's Chinese market.

Celadon's superior status in history of Chinese ceramics is not only because of the strictness and accuracy of technique required in production, but also because of the color of the glaze itself as a result of the technique applied. On one hand, the greenish color of the glaze is similar to heaven, especially the color of the clear sky after it rains. One kind of celadon during the Song Dynasty is called *tian qing*, or sky green, which had been the most valuable collection and gift of the court. The color of heaven also represents color of nature, which accords with the ancient Chinese people's respect for nature. On the other hand, the gentle and elegant greenish color of celadon looks like that of jade or jadeite. Jade has always been respected by the Chinese; it is the symbol for *jun zi*, which refers to a Chinese gentleman with the highest moral virtues and has been well-educated as a versatile elite. Therefore, the glaze color of celadon is of both aesthetic and cultural values, which caters not only to common people, but also to the educated literati, who were of higher social status in ancient China and had always been in the leading position of the custom and fashion of the whole society.

Many of the celadon porcelains in the collection have reign marks on the exterior of the bottom, most of which are too simplified to identify. The one in the picture reads Daoguang (1821-1850).

Sweet Pea



Figure 2. Daoguang Reign mark on celadon dish. MSCAP collection. Photo taken by author.

This design is also called Flower and Vine, Simple Flower, or Plant with Central Flower. Archaeologically-recovered forms of this decorative pattern are mainly spouted

urns with lids, with a few seal paste boxes. This kind of porcelain is of a very small amount in the Market Street Chinatown collection. The Sweet Pea urn is usually decorated with a motif of a flower amid scrolling vine in underglaze cobalt blue.

This kind of floral scrolls pattern appears widely on various kinds of porcelain forms in China, including pots, jars, serving dishes, bowls, urns, vases, etc. The design became popular after Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368). In Ming dynasty this design appears variously as scrolls of lotus, chrysanthemum, peony, *bao xiang hua* rosette, etc. Since the floral scrolls are endless and continuous, it stands for the meaning of incessant life and growth. With the auspicious flowers like peony, the pattern means wealth and honor generations after generations.

Conclusion: Significance of Chinese Porcelains to Immigrants in the Market Street Chinatown

In the Market Street Chinatown assemblages, the majority of the Chinese porcelains are these five kinds: Four Seasons, Bamboo, Double Happiness, Celadon, and Sweet Pea. Whether they were brought to California as personal belongings or were ordered in certain quantities by the Chinese merchants from local kilns in South China, there is one thing for sure: they were chosen for certain purpose by the Chinese. Apart from possible price influential and availability, the actual-existing decorative patterns on the porcelains made them special and significant to the Chinese. People saw them in their everyday life and got inspired by their auspicious meanings. This is the cultural and spiritual function of the porcelains.

One trend in research of overseas Chinese communities is to interpret overseas Chinese population as traditional, bounded groups that resisted “acculturation.” The

Chinese immigrants are thus seen as separated social groups without interaction or mobility. However, with recent studies of the Chinese and Euro-American artifacts in the Market Street Chinatown, we know that the Chinese were struggling to adapt themselves to the American lifestyle. And according to the study of Praetzellis and Praetzellis, the Chinese merchants in Sacramento operated on the boundary between the Chinese community and the American society by using artifacts from both sides.¹

In addition to the interaction with American society, this paper shows that the Chinese immigrants in California were also actively connected with their homeland. According to Madeline Hsu in her book *Dreaming of Gold, Dreaming of Home*, there was once a “transnational migrant circuit” between South China and the American Chinese communities, which included exchange of people, money, goods, as well as information. Through the trade companies, the goods from the local workshops were ordered and shipped to America in response to the demand for food and utensils. With this circulation of “transnationalism”, the overseas Chinese population was connected both to local American culture and their home society. In this case the Chinese porcelains were helping the Chinese immigrants recall their tradition and get cultural satisfaction. The symbolic meanings as the most significant part of the Chinese porcelains serve as a key marker of Chinese identity and belonging in the culture both “Chinese and American” created by the overseas Chinese immigrants.

¹ A. Praetzellis, M. Praetzellis, et al, “Artifacts as Symbols of Identity: An Example from Sacramento’s Gold Rush Era Chinese Community,” in *Living in Cities: Current Research in Urban Archaeology*, E. Staski. Tucson (Special Publication 5, Society for Historical Archaeology, 1987), 38-47

Directions for Further Research

Since the cultural study of Chinese porcelains has just started, this study itself is also not complete and needs supplement and modification. Further questions related to Chinese porcelains include but not limited to the following:

- a prominent focus of the decorative patterns on plants, other than human figures, animals, or landscapes
- highly abstracted decorative patterns: finding the “originals”
- the trade relations across the ocean and business and social role played by Chinese merchants
- comparison with contemporary porcelains with similar motifs used by people in Southeast coast of China
- price differential of different kinds of porcelains, etc.

A hindering factor for further research is the lack and unavailability of materials. Because of the fires most of the textual information of the Chinatown was gone. But we do have store ledgers and inventories that recorded the business activities, including the names for the porcelains and their prices, like the one of the Kwong Tai Wo Company in Sando and Felton’s study. And there is much to study of the objects themselves as well.

APPENDIX

Symbolic Meaning of Decorative Patterns of Chinese Porcelains from the Market Street
Chinatown

	Porcelain Marks	Decorative Patterns	Symbolic Meaning of Decorations	Overall Meaning
Four Seasons		Peony	Wealth and honor	“May you wealth and fortune throughout the year”
		Lotus	Purity and harmony; peace, union, continuity; prosperity	
		Chrysanthemum	Perseverance, longevity	
		Plum blossom	Perseverance, longevity; safety	
		Peach	Longevity	
		Endless knot	Longevity	
Bamboo	Workshop name	Bamboo	Perseverance, longevity; safety; integrity	“May you longevity and safety”, “gentleman”
		Rock	Longevity	
		Plum blossom	Perseverance, longevity; safety	
		Three circles	Not identified	
		Fungus	Longevity	
Double Happiness		Chinese character for double happiness	Wedding bliss	“May you happy wedding and double happiness”
		Swirling floral vines and peony	Wealth and honor	
Celadon	Reign mark	Pale green glaze	Chinese gentleman	“May you as cultured and honorable as gentleman”
Sweet Pea		Vines and peony	Continuous wealth and honor	“May you wealth and honor generation after generation”

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