



**Chinese celadon brush rest, 18th century
POA**

Chinese celadon brush rest, 18th century, in the form of a five-peaked mountain, the body slightly curved and the peaks arranged with the tallest in the centre, decorated in relief with a central lozenge (fangsheng) and other auspicious emblems, all covered with a thick celadon glaze, the base and a small strip to the foot left unglazed to reveal the stoneware body

Length: 9.5cm. (3. 3/4 in.)

Condition: Perfect

Notes:

During the Zhou Dynasty (1046 BC – 256 BC), mountains were central to religious worship and governance. At this time the 'Five Sacred Mountains' were believed to be the home of the supreme god (literally 'sky god') and as such were regarded as the intermediaries between the heavenly and earthly realms. It was customary for new emperors to visit the peaks in order to commune with the god and receive the heavenly mandate to rule. Towards the end of the Zhou the cult of the Immortals gained influence, along with the corresponding belief in penglai, a mythical mountainous paradise where the immortals were said to live. This belief, and the association of the mountains with lingzhi and the elixir of immortality was later incorporated into Daoism. Within Daoism, the pre-existing myth of the Five Sacred Mountains was adapted and the five peaks were identified with five geographic mountains in China each representing one of the cardinal directions of geomancy: Song Shan (Centre Great Mountain, Henan), Heng Shan (North Great Mountain, Shaanxi), Heng Shan (South Great Mountain, Hunan), Tai Shan (East Great Mountain, Shandong), and Hua Shan (West Great Mountain, Shaanxi). The auspicious motif of five mountain peaks was therefore popular among literati scholars, whose practice and ideals drew heavily upon Taoist beliefs and ideals. Brush rests are one of the traditional items associated with the scholar's desk: along with brush pots, water droppers and ink stones they would have been essential items for calligraphy but also, as seen with this piece, held great symbolic and spiritual value.

Material and Technique	Porcelain with celadon glaze
Origin	Chinese
Period	18th Century
Condition	Excellent
Dimensions	Length: 9.5cm. (3. 3/4 in.)

Antique ref: R251