



**A fine and rare set of mid nineteenth century Chinese Export silver gilt filigree tea glass holders by the maker known as 'Gothic K'.
£4,950.00**

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Designed as a lush forest incorporating trees, flowers and foliage the handles of restrained rococo design with foliate detail. The forest is inhabited with butterflies and exotic birds, probably representing the legendary Phoenix which has a special importance in Chinese culture as a symbol of harmony, prosperity and virtue.

These cup holders display the high quality of filigree work for which China was long famed and which was avidly collected in Europe.

During the late 18th and early 19th century much export silver had been primarily copies of western models. This gradually changed as taste in Europe was increasingly looking for the exotic and therefore more specifically Chinese decoration began to appear on items intended for the European market. Objects that were unknown in China were therefore copied and decorated with Chinese motifs and designs and these tea glass holders are fine examples of this shift.

The use of tea glasses was particularly popular in Russia and other Slavic countries from the late 18th century as tea consumption increased. The podstakannik is the traditional method of holding tea glasses, from simple metal cases with a handle they quickly developed from simple utensils to works of art. Examples for the elite and aristocracy were of silver and were later often adorned with enamel.

Filigree was also particularly popular in Russia and indeed the Hermitage holds one of the most extensive collections of Chinese 17th and 18th century examples in the world. These tea glass holders are a wonderful example of exoticism and opulence that would appeal most especially to such an audience in the mid-19th century.

The maker of these cups is identified by their use of a Gothic 'K' as a mark. While no name can be attached to them, it appears they were active in Canton from 1825-1875 and produced wares largely western in form for export.

Origin	Chinese
Condition	Excellent
Dimensions	Height: 8cm Width: 11cm
Diameter	Weight: 551grams

Antique ref: 10098