

紫 檀

ZITAN

The
Most Noble
Hardwood

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厥功詎可忘不是南疆選嘉
木何來熠熠紫色光我辭無
俚不足道願君視同頭目腦
髓常珍藏

寒舍主人珍藏家具裒輯成書
題名紫檀諸器咸備美不勝收

爰賦小詩以志忻羨

乙亥清明後十日 暢安王世襄書於

北京芳嘉園時年八十有一





虛齋寶繪充屋梁寒舍珍
玩盈軒堂從來君子尚謙挹
自言薄陋恆富康題名紫檀
修譜錄書衣雅麗楮墨良開
卷何所見滿目皆琳琅七尺天
然几三屏羅漢牀梅花過牆
盒虬螭陷地箱運斤契法度
下鑿小躬毫芒肅然懷哲匠

賀寒言主人《紫檀》問世

神工矩規
嘉木映輝
樸茂典雅
華夏之美

丙子年夏月

蘇富比亞洲主席林李翹以命徐震叔頌



Preface

A business trip to Hong Kong in mid-Summer 1979 was where the story began. When I strolled about the antique shops I was deeply attracted by two pieces of tzŭ-t'an furniture: a book cabinet of early Ch'ing dynasty and a throne carved with dragon motif belonging to the Ch'ien Lung period. Since most furniture available in Taiwan at that time were either of hua-li or hung-mu wood, this was the first time I ever saw the wood called tzŭ-t'an. Its exuberant beauty enchanted me like a spell. I found its grains extremely fine and close, its body very heavy and dense, and its design amazingly elegant and exquisite. A seed of interest began to grow in my heart and thenceforth I started collecting tzŭ-t'an items.

Ten years ago, I established My Humble House to deal with a wide range of precious antique objects and special efforts were made to introduce tzŭ-t'an items to the collectors. Since tzŭ-t'an products were still extremely rare in Taiwan, the public knew not much about this kind of wood. For instance, nowadays many people still think that hung-mu is equivalent to tzŭ-t'an, and many hung-mu items illustrated in Japanese catalogues are wrongly captioned as tzŭ-t'an. It is widely known that tzŭ-t'an surpassed hung-mu and hua-li in being the most precious of all woods. But since Taiwan people of two decades back had never seen tzŭ-t'an before, they mistook hung-mu for tzŭ-t'an and hua-li for hung-mu. Even now, the "hung-mu" furniture commonly sold in Taiwan are in fact hua-li products tinted with red lacquer. In Hong Kong, hung-mu is usually called suan-chih, literally meaning "sour-branch", a name probably deriving from the acidic flavour it gives when being sawed open. Now this name is also gaining popularity in Taiwan. Decades ago, antique tzŭ-t'an furniture was an absolute rarity in the market, the only known pieces were the set of tzŭ-t'an furniture in the National Palace Museum of Taipei, the collection in the Palace Museum of Beijing and some scattered examples in Hong Kong. They are even rarer in Japan, Europe and America. In recent years, a wide range of elaborately carved tzŭ-t'an furniture of contemporary workmanship, said to be made from tzŭ-t'an wood originated from India and Vietnam, is available in the market. However, these products differ from old tzŭ-t'an furniture in three ways. Firstly, they are mostly made by joining small timbers while the old ones are usually made from large timbers. Secondly, they are lighter in weight and the cow-hair grains are not as clear and vivid as those on the old ones. Lastly, unlike the old tzŭ-t'an wood which had to be stored for a period of time to increase its stability, the new ones are hastily made into furniture after being cut down and thus more liable to crack and deform. The thick lacquer that serves to hide such defects has unfortunately robbed the wood of its primitive beauty.

Though tzŭ-t'an is greatly treasured by the public, little people know enough of it. This catalogue is thus published in hope of sharing with the collectors, local and overseas, the connoisseurship of this precious wood. It will lead you to a fascinating world centuries back in the Ming and Ch'ing dynasties where this beautifully grained wood was spontaneously shaped and exquisitely carved into a whole range of magnificent furniture and scholarly items.

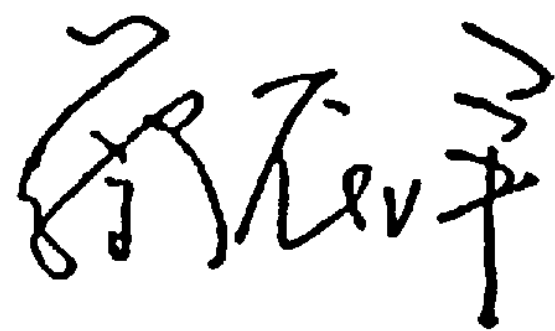
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序 文

一九七九年的仲夏，因公出差到香港，閒暇巡禮古董店家，被一件清早期的紫檀書畫櫃，和一張清乾隆時期的紫檀雕龍寶座深深吸引住。當時，台灣坊間皆是花梨、紅木傢俱，是我頭一次巧遇「紫檀」的驚艷。那細若牛毛的紋理，精緻典雅的造型，堅實密重的特質，令人嘆為觀止。從此，引發了我研究紫檀傢俱的濃厚興趣，也開啓了我收藏紫檀文物之門。

十年前，開設「寒舍」，除了將珍羅蒐集的古董介紹給收藏家們，也將「紫檀」推薦給古董愛好者。當時坊間極少有真正的紫檀器物，一般人對紫檀的認識也很模糊。例如，大多數的日本人直到現在，仍將「紅木」當作「紫檀」，可從日本的古董書籍上看到，一些紅木製成的花枱、花几，根本不是紫檀木，却都誤稱為紫檀傢俱。主要原因是，大眾都知道紫檀是最名貴的木材，其次依序是紅木、花梨木等。昔日台灣由於從未曾見過真正的紫檀木，因此就錯把「紅木」認做「紫檀」，錯認「花梨」為「紅木」了。在台灣直至今日，坊間所賣之紅木傢俱，即為花梨木所製，只是在木紋表面漆成紅色而假紅木傢俱之名。此外，在香港廣東人則將「紅木」稱為「酸枝」，顧名思義是木頭切開時有醋酸味，如今台灣也已有習慣稱紅木為酸枝了。事實上，早年除台北故宮博物院存有乙套紫檀傢俱（據聞是恭親王遺物）外，坊間僅在香港或北京故宮，可見到真正的紫檀古董傢俱，至於日本、歐美，則極為罕見。近年來市場出現紫檀傢俱新品，雕工繁複，椅櫃桌床皆備，據說木材來自印度或越南，與舊紫檀器物相比，有三點差異：一、新紫檀傢俱多以小材拼接，不若舊紫檀器物有獨板大材製成。二、新紫檀木之牛毛紋特徵，不若舊紫檀紋理生動明顯且比重輕。三、新紫檀為製作求速，不若舊紫檀在製作前，將木材存於一段時日，故木材穩定性不足，易裂變形，外表常掩飾以厚重漆色，缺少舊紫檀那份古樸之美。

由於一般大眾對「紫檀」嚮往與認知間，有所差距，今推介出版「紫檀」專書，即將吾收藏「紫檀」文物十餘年之心得與經驗，與海內外古董收藏同好分享指正。讓書中這些具有力學與律動線條的明代傢俱，令人讚歎不已的清代精緻雕工，加上「紫檀」質優和動人的紋理，能盪漾您的心弦，走入歷史的絢麗！



丙子年夏月 謹識

An Introduction to Tzu'-tan Wood

Tzŭ-t'an, a kind of wood also named tzŭ-yu, is mentioned in Ts'ui. Pao's Ku-chin-chu (Notes on ancient and modern matters) as early as the third century (late Eastern Han period). Since ancient times, Chinese people already considered tzŭ-t'an wood the most precious of all timbers. Since tzŭ-t'an trees grow extremely slowly, it takes centuries for a tree to mature into usable timber. Excessive lumbering during the Ming times had caused drastic dwindling of these resources and now fresh tzŭ-t'an wood is nowhere to be found no matter how high a price people are willing to pay. The rarity of this wood explains why tzŭ-t'an furniture is much fewer in number than that of other wood. Large examples are particularly hard to come by and therefore, exceedingly valuable.

According to Ch'en Jung's *The Classification of Chinese Woods*, there are around fifteen species of tzŭ-t'an wood, all belonging to the genus *Pterocarpus* of the Leguminosae family. They grow in small numbers mainly in the tropical regions of South Asia in India, Indo-China and the Chinese provinces of Yünnan, Kwangtung and Kwanghsi. They are known to be an evergreen arbor with a trunk that can be as tall as five or six chang (about 18 to 21 meters). The compound leaves are of butterfly shape and the fruits bear wings. The timber is reddish in colour, dense and heavy, it sinks in water, does not deform and would not decompose easily. It is the most close-grained, hardest and heaviest of all hardwoods. It is recorded in Yüen Ming Yüen wu-liao ch'ing-chung tz'e-li (*Weight specifications of construction materials for Yüen Ming Yüen*) that it weighs 70 catties per cubic ch'ih (about 42 kilogram per 0.05 cubic meter), much heavier than other timbers. Different species of tzŭ-t'an vary in grain pattern and colour. Apart from the most commonly seen black-purple, they also come in deep-purple, reddish-purple or even lacquer-black with grain pattern hardly discernible. As seen from unprocessed timber or processed planks, tzŭ-t'an wood with a diameter or width over one ch'ih is extremely rare. The annual rings shown in its cross-section serve to testify its extremely slow growth. This wood is not only luxurious and resplendent in appearance, it also exudes an air of solemnity and serenity which finds little parallel in all other timbers.

According to researches made by connoisseurs and art historians, tzŭ-t'an can be classified into three categories according to grain pattern and colour. They are the "gold-fleck tzŭ-t'an", "chicken-blood tzŭ-t'an" and "hua-li grained tzŭ-t'an". Gold-fleck tzŭ-t'an, the finest and densest among the three, is black-purple in colour, very close in grain and resembles animal horn in texture. A close observation of it would reveal an amazingly beautiful scene-its surface being faintly highlighted with hair-thinned flecks of a golden colour. Chicken blood tzŭ-t'an derives its name from the famous Ch'anghua soap-stone with chicken-blood colour suffusions. It is lighter in colour than gold-fleck tzŭ-t'an and its surface often carries orange-red strips of different widths. Hua-li grained tzŭ-t'an has long and twisted grains like cow's hair and therefore, also called "cow-hair tzŭ-t'an".

During the Ming dynasty, huge volumes had been written by artists, scholars, opera writers, poets, painters, collectors and connoisseurs to investigate into the style and aesthetic interest of the furniture of their epoch. Emphasis was put on "elegance", and "archaic elegance" was keenly pursued. The best pieces had to be "archaic" and "exquisite". Ming literati had a special love for ancient objects and their desired furniture had to be archaic not only in form, but also in spirit. From the finest examples of Ming furniture, we notice that all tables, chairs, stools, cabinets and beds share the same characteristics of being simple in form and devoid of unnecessary decoration to allow the full manifestation of the wood's natural beauty. The design of Ming furniture was directly affected by the aesthetic taste and antiquarian inclination of the literati. In other words, the succinct beauty of Ming furniture is endowed with the aesthetic appeal of the Ming literati. With its exceptional beauty and distinct quality, tzŭ-t'an was widely appreciated not only by the ordinary people, but also by the Ming Court.

Every year, the Ming Court would dispatch officials to the Southeast Asian archipelagos to search for the finest timbers. Seven great maritime expeditions had been made by Cheng He to promote trade in Southeast Asia and bring back as much tzŭ-t'an wood as possible to be stored in Beijing for future use. For this reason, all tzŭ-t'an trees in South and Southeast Asia, the only area on earth where tzŭ-t'an tree grew, were cut down and sent to Beijing, capital of the Ming Empire. The inventory was so large that it proved to be sufficient to fulfill the enormous demand of the Ming and the Ch'ing Court for six centuries. It was eventually used up during the ephemeral reign of the Hung Hsien Emperor in the beginning of this century.

During the Ming times, Europeans also held tzŭ-t'an objects in great esteem. Since most tzŭ-t'an items they came across in Europe were of small size, they had the wrong impression that all tzŭ-t'an timbers were very small. This misconception persisted until the Westerners came to Beijing in early Ch'ing period to visualize all sorts of huge tzŭ-t'an furniture. They found this extremely amazing and began to realize that the finest and best tzŭ-t'an was assembled in Beijing. They made many purchases and sent them back to their own countries. Nowadays, all tzŭ-t'an furniture in the Western world are originated from Beijing, and so are those remarkable pieces that come up with exorbitant prices in international auctions.

Since tzŭ-t'an is no ordinary hardwood, the crafting of which is governed by some rules that are quite distinct from the others. One of these rules is the banishing of carved decoration to allow the full manifestation of its natural beauty, a practice stemmed from the ancient aesthetic of "beautiful jade needs no carving". This is evidenced by the common employment of curvilinear shapes and round-sectioned members in most Ming furniture. If angular-sectioned members are used, often the corners have been rounded off to create a sense of archaic modesty and majestic wholeness. Contrary to this, another rule is to decorate the pieces with the most exquisite and elaborate carvings, taking full advantage of the extremely close grains and high plasticity of the wood. Motifs include patterns taken from archaic jades, bronzes and geometrical designs, usually carved out in relief form against a recessed ground. Since rococo style of French aristocratic origin was greatly favoured by the Ch'ing emperors and the affluent, tzŭ-t'an furniture of this period are often decorated with Western motifs such as scrolling tendrils, shells, roses and Western lotus.

The golden age traditional furniture, no matter when quantity or artistic value is concerned, refers to the period from the Chia Ching and Wan Li reigns of the Ming to the K'ang Hsi, Yung Cheng and Ch'ien Lung reigns of the Ch'ing dynasty. Tzŭ-t'an wood was always of first priority whenever furniture was intended to be made for the Ch'ing Court. Special officials were dispatched to supervise the selection of timber and crafting of furniture. They carried out their duty with extreme caution and scrutiny-timbers of different species would never be used together and each piece of furniture was best to be made from one single piece of timber. The timber had to be even in colour and should show no burl, no scar and no vestiges of bark. Unsatisfactory materials were abandoned to guarantee the best of quality. Structurally speaking, large members were preferred to small ones so as to avoid variation of grain and colour. Take some beds for instance, in order to make sure that the convex apron or the vigorously curved cabriole legs were uniform in grain and colour, they were often shaped from one single piece of timber. Of course, wastage was unavoidably great but the finished piece would look remarkably majestic, weighty and stable. Tzŭ-t'an is the most precious of all hardwood furniture, and in particular, those made from large timbers are absolute rarities.

Centres of artistic creations flourished throughout China during the K'ang Hsi period. They worked in concert and competed with the imperial workshops, prompting an artistic interflow between them and

epitomizing the quintessence of traditional art and craft. The Archives of the Imperial Household Workshops at Yang Hsin Tien, now kept in the China First Historical Archhive Library in Beijing, contains very detailed information of the imperial furniture. It mentions about different styles of tzū-t'an furniture including table with revolving top-board, desk with roundsectioned legs and stretchers and high table with removable legs being produced in the reign of Yung Cheng. A number of talented persons, comprising Chinese and Westerners, had contributed greatly to the design of these magnificent works of art. The most notable among them is Tang Ying who began his service in the Imperial Household Workshops at Yang Hsin Tien at age sixteen and helped to design a large number of imperial furniture in the next twenty years. This period is said to be the heyday of the Imperial Household Workshops. It was superintended by eminent officials with a sound knowledge in art and craft and an independent power to manipulate the business. It also owned the best team of craftsmen selected from all over the country to work out the most refined objects. After nearly a century's recuperation, the Ch'ing Empire reached the height of its power during the reign of Ch'ien Lung. The distinct thoughts and spirit of this period is vividly represented in the style of its furniture.

Furniture of the Ch'ien Lung period, imperial ones in particular, are known to be made from the finest material and the most superb craftsmanship. A rich variety of precious materials including gold, silver, jade, gemstone, coral, ivory, enamel and "hundred precious objects inlay" have been applied onto the tzū-t'an wood to creat beautiful motifs. It is recorded that Emperor Ch'ien Lung, an antiquarian and art connoisseur, was greatly in favour of tzū-t'an. He took part in the design, production, preservation and repairing of all imperial furniture. He also gave precise directives on the style, dimension and modification of each individual piece. Nearly every piece of imperial furniture made in his reign was produced under his close supervision. This was particularly true in the mid years of his ruling. It is recorded in the Archives that hardly a day past without receiving instructions from the emperor on furniture production. His aesthetic interest was to have a great influence on the form and style of imperial furniture. Every piece was embossed with his distinct thought, spirit and aesthetic appeal.

Ch'ing furniture are majestic looking and sturdily constructed. Their rectilinear outlines contrast sharply with the curvilinearity of Ming examples. A great variety of themes have been employed. Some pieces are largely plain and sturdy, highlighted only in parts with exquisite carvings. Innovative ideas have been boldly adopted to add special interest to traditional forms and styles, as seen from the k'ang table, triangular shaped table, barrel with open sides and cabinet with additional shelves. Ming and Ch'ing furniture differ slightly in design and decorative sytle, the former with more regard for the mood and the latter greater concern for the form. Nevertheless, both are held in high esteem, each representing the spirit and thoughts of the period they belong.

In the Chiangnan region centuries back from now, distinguished literati and eminent artists often came together to enjoy tea and wine. Emthusiastically and whole-heartedly, they discussed and exchanged views on the sutle relationship between tzū-t'an wood, furniture and themselves. With their wisdom and design talent, they played a significant role in the history of Chinese furniture. Under their influence, the quintessence of formative art was epitomized into a rich renertoire of simple and elegant furniture. Tzū-t'an furniture are not merely household items but also eminent works of art imbued with archaic modesty, majestic ease, intellectual wisdom and scholastic elegance. Through the superb skill of the craftsmen, the miraculous power of nature and the ingenuity of the human mind are perfectly merged and displayed. The quintessence of nature, as shown in a rich choice of scenes and objects, are extracted and refined into artistic images to be incorporated into the design of the furniture. As eminent works of art, ancient Tzū-t'an furniture invite spiritual comfort and peace of mind. They also add artistic inspirations and romantic touches to the life of their owner and beholder ,allow their heart to resonate with history and nature. The pleasure invoked by them is beyond words.

紫檀概論

紫檀，一名紫榆；早在公元三世紀，（即東漢晚期），在崔豹之《古今註》中已有提及，時稱“紫柎”，亦謂“紫檀”。我國自古即認為紫檀是所有木料中最名貴的木材。今原料久竭，任何高價亦無處可得，且紫檀木難長，非數百年不能成材，明代採伐殆盡，今時尚未復生，來源枯竭。由於過於名貴，故紫檀器物比其他木製作品更少，倘是大形傢俱，因材料難得，更視為珠璧。

查陳嵘的《中國樹木分類學》，得知紫檀屬（Pterocarpus）是豆科（Leguminosae）中的一屬，約有十五種。其主要產於南洋群島的熱帶地區，在印度支那、交趾，及我國雲南、兩廣等地亦有生產，但數量不多。其為常綠亞喬木，高五、六丈，葉為複葉花蝶形，果實有翼，其材色赤，質甚堅重，入水而沈，不變形，不易變質朽化。在各種硬木中，質地堅硬且緻密，份量最重。據《圓明園物料輕重則例》，紫檀每尺（按為立方尺）重七十斤，超過其他木材甚多。同一木材，色澤和紋理時有差異，除多為紫黑外，有的深紫，有的紫中帶紅，有的黝黑如漆，幾乎看不見紋理。從見到的紫檀原材及傢俱上的板材來看，直徑或板寬在一尺以上者絕少，依其緩慢的生長速度，與木材橫切面中緻密的年輪得而見之。它非但華美艷麗，且呈現靜穆沈古是任何木材所不能比擬的。

按文物收藏家與文物研究的專家學者所研究心得，紫檀木依其紋理與色澤之殊，歸納有三：為雞血紫檀、金絲紫檀和花梨紋紫檀。其中以金絲紫檀質地最為上乘，色紫黑，地細密，質如角般，比重較另兩者為大。仔細觀其表面木紋，隱隱浮現如金絲般的絲紋，十分動人。雞血紫檀，顧名思義，有近似昌化雞血石的潑彩痕，故而名之。其色澤比金絲紫檀略淺，表面時有一縷縷或寬或窄，色淺橘紅而非紅色的條帶。花梨紋紫檀，則又因其表面木紋，紋理長，呈一縷縷扭曲紋絲狀，即是牛毛紋，故其又有牛毛紋紫檀之稱。

在明代，已有衆多的人文藝術家、文學家、戲曲家、詩人、畫家、以及收藏家與鑒賞家等，著有大量關於傢俱的論作書籍，著眼探討當時傢俱的風格與審美，強調“雅”，宣揚和提倡傢俱的“古雅風”，即“古樸”和“精麗”兩個標準。然凡“古樸”、“古雅”、“奇古”與“古制”等等，皆亦為文人追求古人典雅風範的表現；不論是桌案、椅櫈或是廂櫥床榻，簡練地造型，不為裝飾而裝飾，充份呈現出木材本身自然美的質樸特點，從明式傢俱珍品中一一可得以印證；即文人倡導“古樸”與“古雅”的審美觀，有著直接的關係。亦可說，明代傢俱之簡練質樸風格，浸潤著明代文人的審美情趣，然而在當時一片蔚為風尚的浪潮中，擁有諸多優異特質，不僅世人喜愛，更深受皇室珍視的紫檀，佳木精工，上等木料如紫檀，受寵愛重視的程度可見一般。

明代皇室每年尚派官吏赴南洋群島採伐，如鄭和下西洋達七次之多，除與東南各國貿易往來外，出海的活動範圍，多在南洋一帶。採伐之木係備用而非現用，因此南洋群島所產之紫檀佳木，完全採伐取得淨盡之，以故全世界所產之紫檀，百分之百彙集於北京，直至清代所用之紫檀材料均為明時所採取者，清末宮中尚存明代紫檀原料，洪憲時始傳之全數用盡。

在明代，歐美人士視紫檀亦為珍物，因在國外僅可見小巧器物，不曾見大式器物，以為紫檀絕

無大木，而後在清代，西洋人初至北京，見有種種大式器物，無不驚慕，始知紫檀精英盡聚於北京，遂多方收買運送回其國，現今歐美之紫檀器物皆由北京運去，而今在國際拍賣上屢創斐然成績者皆為之。

紫檀豈為上等材料，其製作的手法和方式，也略殊於其他一般木製作品。一是不施雕飾，充分將紫檀木特有的天然質感，光素無瑕，與無瑕美玉不琢彷彿。常見於明式傢俱，以圓與圓弧為主體造型，即使是方截面，亦採「削圓」處理，憑添以「古樸」與「渾厚」的感覺。另一種則截然不同的依紫檀細密的質地和極高的可塑性，加以精雕細刻，製成有雕飾的傢俱。雕刻手法以起地浮雕為常見，圖案有古玉紋、古青銅器紋和幾何紋等。在清代，由於時尚法國洛可可式圖案，富西方貴族色彩，所以當時的紫檀傢俱也常採用舒卷的草葉、蚌殼、薔薇、蓮花等西洋圖案的雕飾。

傳統傢俱的黃金時代，無論從數量上來看，或是從藝術價值來評斷，尤指明嘉靖、萬曆到清康熙、雍正和乾隆期間之製品，用料選材上，清廷更將紫檀作為宮廷傢俱的首選用材，不但派官員至當地督辦，選材要甚為講究，用料清一色，各種木料互不摻用，甚至盡量採同一根木料製成；且木料須無癰無疤，無標皮，色澤均勻，不適用則寧可棄之不用而不將就。在製作結構上，為求外觀色澤紋理一致和堅固牢靠，往往僅用一木製成，而不用小材料拼接，甚至如有的床榻彭牙結構，因腿足曲率大，為求完美亦一木挖製而成，絕不拼接，用料較實在，但整件作品呈現的氣勢顯得寬大、厚實和穩重，紫檀已珍貴不已，以大料製作，更格外珍稀。

清康熙年間，全國已形成繁多美術中心，與紫禁城之皇室藝術，相互交流、競技與呼應，集歷代工藝、美術之大成。現存於北京的中國第一歷史檔案館中《養心殿造辦處各作成作活計清檔》，詳細的記載了當時宮廷傢俱的豐富資料，提及雍正年間曾製作之紫檀傢俱品種，如紫檀木轉板桌、紫檀木圓腿圓枱書桌、紫檀活腿高桌和紫檀如意式方桌等等，除此之外，雍正年間有不少藝術造詣的中外人士參與傢俱設計，其中尤為值得一提的是唐英，十六歲起供奉養心殿，供職二十年，其參與不少宮中傢俱的式樣設計。當時，「造辦處」既有掌握實權且精通藝術的領導者，又不乏造詣頗深的藝術家管理，加上全國挑選來之工匠高手埋頭實幹，人才濟濟，生機盎然。經康、雍兩代之休養生息，至乾隆年間，清帝國已臻於極盛，為「康乾盛世」之頂極，而此時之傢俱亦反映出當時獨特的思想、特徵和氣質。

清乾隆時期的傢俱，尤以宮廷傢俱，在用料與工藝上已不惜功力為達無以復加的境地，並創新著重與各種工藝品相結合，如金、銀、玉石、寶石、珊瑚、象牙、瑤瑯器、百寶鑲嵌等不同質地裝飾材料。據資料記載，乾隆皇帝對紫檀非常重視喜愛，即如同其醉心於所有古董、藝術品般，如出一轍，積極的參與了造辦處的傢俱設計、製作、修復、式樣、尺寸以至如何修改，皆有明確指示，宮中每件傢俱的製作幾乎都有其之干預參之，尤其是乾隆中期，檔案資料記載，乾隆皇帝幾乎每日皆有涉及傢俱製作的旨意，此時宮中傢俱的製作深受其審美觀點的影響，件件製成的傢俱都留下了其思想感覺和情趣的烙印。

清代傢俱渾厚，骨架堅實，方直造型多於明代曲圓設計，題材多變創新，有時整體光素堅實，而局部又加以細膩雕刻，品相創新，式樣殊於前人所設計的風格，如煖桌、三角桌、涼杌、櫥櫃多加擱板等等變化的設計為是。與明代傢俱相論，在設計裝飾風格上，兩者略有不同，明式尚意，受當時人文環境背景影響，而清式著重形式，呈現清代另一番風格思想，各富其美。

遙遠的古代，文人薈萃的江南，滿懷藝術熱情的人文藝術家，煮茶論酒，沈浸、醉心地品評和切磋紫檀與傢俱之間，且和文人之間，三者不解之緣，在中國的傢俱歷史上，以其智慧與藝術設計理念，成功的滙聚了造型藝術的精華，簡潔挺拔的神態律動，這些紫檀傢俱作品的價值，早已非祇是日常用具，而是一件件地藝術作品，個中參透著古樸典雅的文人氣質，和瀟灑自在的神情，與清麗雋永的書卷氣息；然工匠精湛技術更傳神地表達了，大自然造物的神奇之美與人文思想的慧黠，將各種自然物象具體與不具體的地提取精煉後，自然地融合於紫檀傢俱雅緻與品味不凡的造型設計之中。何等的清閑安逸，悠然自得之情，不言而寓，擁有與感受遠古的紫檀傢俱，倍增生活之藝術情懷與浪漫情境，予人一種對遠古與自然，無法言喻的藝術感動。

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