
PAGODA RED



CINNABAR BOOK CHEST

\$3,580

c. 1850 • Northern China, China • Northern Elmwood, Lacquer • Collection #PR0054

W: 34.25" D: 21.75" H: 34.0"

Though it seems unlikely that poison ivy could yield such beauty, traditional Chinese lacquer has long since been made from the toxic sap of a closely related plant. Virtually resistant to water, acid, and heat, lacquer has been used to coat Chinese furniture since the Neolithic period. Only two agents successfully bond with lacquer, charcoal, for a rich black, and cinnabar, for this quintessential shade of red. The lacquer was applied to this 19th-century cabinet by hand, layer by layer, draping the frame in red and creating a surface deep enough to incise decoration along the bottom. Continued...



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Finished with handcrafted brass hinge plates and a triple dagger lock, this low cabinet would have originally been used to store traditional scrolls and texts and exudes a warmth and beauty that recalls centuries of craftsmanship.



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