

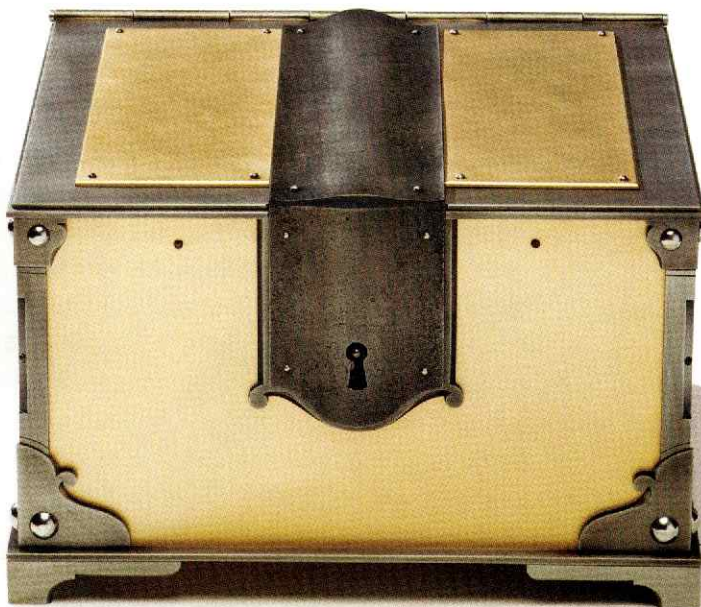
I sourced boxes for weeks. I scoured every auction house. I networked through a large list of private sellers and brokers. I considered hundreds of boxes designed throughout thousands of years made by dozens of cultures. Yet, I never found one box that seemed like it belonged. I concluded that my only option would be to commission our treasure boxes to be built. But who could do this? I had no clue.

As if my realization conjured its very own solution, the very next day, after deciding to have our boxes made, I came across a box that looked to be a masterpiece. It resides in the Smithsonian American Art Museum. The box even has a name. It's called Coffe. It was unlike anything I'd ever seen. Coffe is nearly two feet long. It is forged from iron, brass, and steel. It looks rather like a small fortress. In addition to its careful craftsmanship and bold beauty, Coffe is also a puzzle box. Coffe was made, of course, by Seth Gould.

When I saw that Coffe was a puzzle box, my mind immediately traveled back to Hakone. I wondered if Seth had visited there. Indeed, he had. Seth had also become fascinated by Japanese puzzle boxes. When he returned from Hakone to North Carolina, Seth decided to create a new spin on the traditional Japanese puzzle box.

Instead of wood, he would use metal. Instead of sliding panels, Seth would engineer a variety of dynamics to entice and challenge the box's would-be opener. Like every traditional Japanese puzzle box, he would ensure each working component was made by hand. It took Seth three years to build and engineer Coffe before it went on display at the Smithsonian.

It was obvious to me that Seth Gould was the person destined to build our treasure boxes. My first conversation with Seth lasted quite a while. I made sure he knew I'd grown up in North Carolina and that I had lots of family who lived not too far from him. I told Seth I thought his work was stunning and bold. I doled out compliments for sure, but I meant every one.



Pictured here is the largest of our five treasure boxes. It is also a puzzle box.