By examining the decorations on this small treasure chest (kap-kae-suri), we can infer that it was used in the women's quarters (an'chae) of an upper-class household. The doors are adorned with a pair of phoenixes—mythical birds said to be wise and compassionate, bearers of good fortune, and often symbols of feminine qualities. Delicate, cloudlike forms surround the birds, and elaborate strings of tail feathers flow out and around them.

On the bottom frame below the doors are four circles, symbols of yin-yang principles sometimes said to represent the whirling forces of the universe. The rest of the chest is decorated with floral and leaf designs, echoing shapes found on the two front doors.

To achieve these delicate decorations, craftsmen began by creating the chest out of wood. Next, they laid out the design motifs in brass wire and attached them to the wooden surface. They then covered the wood and brass with the malleable skin of a stingray, pressing it into place so that the wire designs would show. Finally, they applied dye to the ray skin to achieve the desired colors.

The last elements added to the chest were shiny metal hinges and handles, and front, joint, and corner plates. Such metal embellishments prevent shrinkage or expansion of the wood, camouflage flaws, and provide an additional layer of beauty to the chest. They are hallmarks of Korean furniture of the Chosŏn dynasty (1392–1910).