

A klutz like me *really* should not be allowed to hold this. Yet here I am in a book-lined office at [art dealers](#) Charles Ede in London, with a [Roman glass flask](#) in my hand. The flask, a small bruised-purple sphere rising to a thin neck, one handle in green glass, the other in blue, weighs almost nothing. Its glass is thinner than a lightbulb. I do not trust myself.

“It’s like the first time you hold a baby,” says Charis Tyndall, a director at the gallery. “You’re terrified and then you realise, actually, just hold it in the right way and it’ll be all right.”

Tyndall has handled plenty of Roman glass: Charles Ede is holding an exhibition of more than 100 pieces, which Tyndall has been acquiring over several years, from May 29. Some of the vessels will be filled with flower arrangements by Shane Connolly, demonstrating that they are both intact and useful.

Connolly is trying to evoke a sense of continuity with his floral choices. “Romans really prized wild strawberries,” he says. “I brought some from my garden [for the photo shoot]. And just the fact that those vessels would have seen those wild strawberries, 2,000 years ago, that’s what I found the most interesting.”



Three examples of Roman glass, dating from the first century AD or later © Charles Ede, London



A purple oil vessel, or amphoriskos, dating from the first century AD © Charles Ede, London