

THE FRENCH PORCELAIN SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER AUGUST

Lady Katherine Davson (1938–2020)



With great sadness, we have to tell you that our wonderful founder, Kate Davson, died of cancer on 26 July, at the age of 82. The daughter of Ludovic Foster and his wife Pamela Wilberforce, she was brought up near Pulborough in Sussex. She was educated at Downe House School, near Newbury, and attended a secretarial college before learning Italian in Perugia. Joining Sotheby's Works of Art Department in 1959, she developed her formidable knowledge of European porcelain, working under the legendary T. H. (Tim) Clarke and Jim Kiddell. She travelled widely for Sotheby's, and set up the Munich office. In 1973 she established the firm of Kate Foster Ltd, with premises in Ryder Street, St. James's. Later she shared a shop in the Halkin Arcade, Motcomb Street, Knightsbridge, with silver dealers Brand Inglis and Timothy Schroder. By the late-1970s she was one of London's pre-eminent dealers in European ceramics, with clients including many of the principal museums in the United States as well as private collectors around the world.

Kate was one of the original exhibitors and lecturers at Brian and Anna Haughton's International Ceramics Fair and Seminar, established in 1982. She founded the

French Porcelain Society in 1984, inspired by the collector Ulrich Fritzsche of Seattle. Her goal was to bring together collectors, museum curators, dealers, auction specialists and enthusiasts so they could enjoy each other's company, share their passion for French porcelain, and promote its study. She was to guide and support the Society throughout its existence, and provided an endowment to support curatorial research.

She was herself a very considerable scholar. Her first book, *Scent Bottles*, was published in 1966. She was the first to recognise and separate Charles Gouyn examples (or "Girl in a Swing" as it was then known) from the Chelsea factories. She was a longstanding member of the Gesellschaft der Keramikfreunde and a contributor to *Keramos*, writing in her excellent German, to the English Ceramic Circle Transactions, and also to our own FPS Journal. Earlier this year, she contributed an essay to the catalogue of Giordano Collection of Porcelain Scent Bottles, edited by Andreina D'Agliano. Kate was a great traveller, exploring collections and making contacts in East Germany, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union from the 1960s. A commanding figure with a deep voice, she could appear formidable but a whole generation of Sotheby's colleagues, collectors and curators treasured her friendship and owed an incalculable debt to her for the extraordinary generosity with which she shared her knowledge.

She married Christopher Davson (1927–2004) in 1975, and when she gave up her London shop in 1991, she continued to work from their home in Rye. She became Lady Davson in 1998, and she moved from Rye to Canterbury in 2014. Kate was a committed Christian, and a passionate believer in ecumenicism. She was proud to be the great-great-great grand-daughter of William Wilberforce, and was prominent in the bicentenary celebration of Britain's abolition of the Slave Trade in 2007. She had no children, but was a devoted step-mother and grandmother.

Oliver Fairclough

With many thanks for information to Kate's friends and family. A longer appreciation will be included in the forthcoming FPS Journal.

New Research

'Böttger in Lithuania. A Group of Re-discovered Redwares' *

By Aldona Snitkuvienė

Curator of the M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art, Kaunas, Lithuania

The story of the invention of the first hard-paste European porcelain in Meissen is well-known and needs no repetition here. As Augustus the Strong (r. 1670–1733) was not only Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, but also Grand Duke of Lithuania, it is fitting that examples of early Böttger redwares also are represented in the collections of two museums in Lithuania, in Vilnius and in Kaunas. For a long time, these pieces were not known to the international community; only recently they were "re-discovered" and are presented here to the international public.

Let us first have a look at the two Meissen redware pieces in the Lithuanian Art Museum in Vilnius.



Fig. 1. Covered vase, red stoneware, Meissen, Irminger workshop, 1713–15. Height 26.5 cm. (incl. cover); diameter of the base 9.7 cm. Lithuanian Art Museum, Vilnius, inv. TP 108 a/b.

Fig. 2. Bottle without cover, red stoneware, Meissen, Irminger workshop, 1713–15. Height (without cover) 9.5 cm.; the foot 6.7 x 7.5 cm. Lithuanian Art Museum, Vilnius, inv. TP 67.

One is a slender, baluster-shaped vase with a domed cover (**fig. 1**). The vase stands on a splayed foot, the body converts to a rounded shoulder, the neck has a spreading mouth with an everted rim. The high-domed cover has a flat rim and is surmounted by a finely shaped knob. Body and cover have an applied decoration of a twig of (rose) leaves, modelled by hand and dispersed over the surface in an asymmetrical way, standing out in relief. The surface is highly polished by the wheel. The cover is restored. Usually this type of redware with a relief decoration is attributed to the modeler Johann Jacob Irminger (1635–1724) and it seems acceptable to date this example to 1713–15 when Irminger was at the height of his production at Meissen (**1**). As a former jeweler and goldsmith, he was appointed by Augustus the Strong head of the modelling section and he largely influenced the early Meissen production. The so-called 'Irminger overlays' are typical of his style, often showing acanthus and other leaves or vegetal motifs (**2**).

The other piece of redware in the Lithuanian Art Museum is an octagonal bottle (or vase?) on a spreading foot, the main body of compressed baluster shape, the upper section structured by receding ridges, narrowing to the short neck with an everted mouth and low octagonal rim (**fig. 2**). The cover is missing. The surface is highly polished by the wheel and apart from the ridges, there is no further decoration. Most likely it was made in the Irminger workshop and can be dated c.1711–13 (**3**).

The provenance of these two objects in the Lithuanian Art Museum in Vilnius is not very informative: one was bought in 1982, the other in 1980 from an anonymous person and nothing is known about their earlier history.

In contrast, the provenance of the twelve Böttger or related redwares in the M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art in Kaunas is rather complex and could be unraveled only recently. It is a story of confiscations, recuperations and neglect during war times and the occupations of Lithuania in the 20th century (1940).

The earliest known owner that we could trace was Baron Leo Carl von der Ropp (1860–1940) who had a large mansion at Pakruojis in Šiauliai County in the south of Lithuania (**fig. 3**). Unfortunately, it is not known how these pieces came into his possession. It is clear, however, that in the 19th century already members of the Ropp family actively collected paintings, sculpture and applied art. The initiator of this collection was Theodor von der Ropp (1783–1852), who travelled across France, Italy, Spain and brought back many works of art by Italian, Dutch and French artists. The Böttger set most likely was acquired together with the other ceramics, furniture, clocks and bronzes sometime in the 19th century.



Fig. 3. Natalija Medem, Portrait of Leon Carl baron von der Ropp in his living room, undated (c.1920–30). Watercolor, 32 x 24cm. M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art, Kaunas, inv. Mt 1720.



Fig. 4. Registering the Ropp collection at the mansion in September 1940. Photograph, "Aušros" Museum, Šiauliai, inv. NF F-IF/1.

During the first Soviet occupation of Lithuania (1940–1) the large German community was forced to leave the country and Ropp moved to Berlin. After his death, the Authority for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, which was founded shortly after the occupation, issued an order to make an

inventory list of Ropp's movable assets that were still left at the mansion. In September 1940 a 46-page list was drawn-up (**fig. 4**), registering no less than 429 works of art of which 98 items got a special cultural status and should not go abroad. These were confiscated, taken from the heir, Julius Hermann Arthur von der Ropp (1896–1945) and stored in the Kaunas State Museum of Culture (now M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art). Among the works of art is mentioned a "Tea set of twelve made from chocolate porcelain in Chinese style made in the Boethger factory" (**4**).

In 1941 the Soviet occupation was replaced by the German occupation, which brought fresh concerns to custodians of objects of cultural and heritage importance. For instance, in 1944 retreating German soldiers blew up a power plant close to the museum, which caused considerable damage to the building and the exhibits (**5**). The Soviets invaded the country again and museum collections were unprotected, causing thefts and neglect. However, in Kaunas the Böttger set apparently was spared because an internal museum document of 1949 lists a "Böttger porcelain ware set, dark brown color (great rarity)" (**6**). The next year the Soviets made a start with the inventory of the Museum's collections, registering the twelve Böttger pieces as separate items without information on the Ropp provenance. Only after the Lithuanian independence in 1990, research on manorial art heritage became possible, resulting in the re-discovery of the Böttger redwares. They are part of the permanent exhibition (since 1990) at the Mykolas Žilinskas Art Gallery (a subdivision of the M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art) in Kaunas but no publication featuring these pieces was ever issued.

The twelve redwares in the M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art present an interesting group and will be discussed shortly here.



Fig. 5. Covered sugar box, red stoneware, Meissen, Irminger workshop, 1713–16. Measurements 11.3 x 8.5 cm; height (incl. cover) 7,5 cm. M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art, Kaunas, inv. Tt 28.



Fig. 6. Covered sugar box, red stoneware, Meissen, Irminger workshop, 1713–16. Measurements 12 x 9.3 cm.; height 9.2 cm. (including cover). M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art, Kaunas, inv. Tt 29.

There are two different sugar boxes, both perhaps modelled by Irminger and both to be dated c.1710–13. One is oblong, octagonal and complete with its cover (**fig. 5**). It is highly polished and makes a rather massive impression because of the receding ribbed sections that characterize the body and the cover with its rising sculpted knob. Several similar examples are preserved in the SKD Porzellansammlung, Dresden as part of the Zwinger collection (**7**). The other sugar box (**fig. 6**) is oval, stands on four low claw-legs and has a domed cover with a faceted knob. It has a decoration of gadrooned motifs around the lower part of the body and along the rim of the cover. It, too, is highly polished. This type is less common, but is also represented in the SKD Porzellansammlung in Dresden (**8**). Interestingly, Szelegejd in her catalogue of the Wilanow collection in Warsaw, discussing an unpolished sugar box of this shape, refers to a note dated 1711, made-up at the Meissen factory, mentioning a plaster mould shaped as "a gadrooned sugar bowl with 4 legs", which could well indicate this type (**9**).



Fig. 7. Covered teapot, red stoneware, Meissen, 1713–15 or perhaps Plaue an der Havel. Measurements 13.7 x 8.4 cm., height with handle 18.2 cm. M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art, Kaunas, inv. Tt 36.



Fig. 8. Covered teapot, red stoneware, Meissen, Irminger workshop, 1713–15. Measurements 10.8 x 7.9 cm., height (incl. cover) 8.2 cm. M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art, Kaunas, inv. Tt 30.

A tea service needs a teapot and the set in Kaunas has two different ones. Rather unusual is the teapot with an overhead handle (**fig. 7**). It stands on a circular footring, has a compressed-rounded body, a straight spout and a tall overhead square handle, indented at the corners, the straight top

slightly curving downwards. The low-domed cover with an everted rim has lost its knob. The lower part is decorated with a border of long flower petals in relief. The tea pot is highly polished by the wheel. Inclusive the handle it is 18.2 cm high. It probably imitates Chinese Yixing teapots with a similar relief decoration of chrysanthemum petals, although Chinese pots of that type are not known to have an overhead handle. Similar Böttger teapots could not be found in the literature and this piece therefore seems to be either an interesting addition to the known corpus of Meissen redware shapes or possibly an example of the stoneware of Plaue an der Havel of around 1713–15.

The other teapot is more common. It is octagonal, the straight sides converging to the wide mouth, with a slightly bent spout and a large loop handle with curved tail-end. The low-domed cover with flat rim overlaps the low, straight edge (**fig. 8**). The pot is polished on the wheel. The sides have been engraved each with a design of arabesques in Berain-style (*'Bandelwerk'*); the lower part, receding to the base, has been cut into small ribs, as is the cover and the top of the handle. Unfortunately, the teapot was damaged, now missing the end of the spout and the knob, which was replaced by a gilt silver one, attached to the handle by a gilt silver chain. Related tea pots can be found in the collections in Dresden and Warsaw (**10**).



Fig. 9. Coffee-pot, red stoneware, Plaue-on-the-Havel (?), c.1715. Measurements 13.7 x 15.8 cm., height (incl. cover) 18.5 cm. M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art, Kaunas, inv. Tt 32.



Fig. 9a. Detail of the Plaue coffee-pot with the base and the three cut roundels.

Maybe the most intriguing piece in the Kaunas redware collection is a coffee-pot. It has the classical German bulbous body with a wide neck, a large triangular spout at the rim and a rectangular handle. It has a high-domed cover with a flat rim and a pointed knob with a faceted rim (**fig. 9**). It has no footring and stands on the flat base. It is polished but bears no further decoration, apart from three cut small roundels on the lower part of the body. In many ways this coffee-pot differs from the known Böttger coffee-pots. It does not stand on a foot and even has no footring; the shape is not refined and is, in fact, rather plump; the cover does not enhance the outline of the pot and although polished, the surface is uneven. It does not reflect the Meissen attention to detail, it lacks 'sharpness' and even the paste itself seems to be slightly different and less hard. It clearly is not a Meissen product and my suggestion is to regard it as an example of the production of the factory in Plaue an der Havel, competing with Meissen and promoted by the Brandenburg nobleman Friedrich von Görne (1670–1745). The factory opened in 1713, but production of red stoneware ceased already in 1718. Therefore, it seems plausible to date this coffee-pot to c.1715. Plaue redwares are rare, documentation is scant and if this coffee-pot is from that factory indeed, it is an important addition to the forty or so pieces known (**11**).



Fig. 10. Bowl, red stoneware, Meissen, Irminger workshop (?), 1710–19. Diameter 18.3 cm., height 7.9 cm. M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art, Kaunas, inv. Tt 31.

Part of the tea set is a deep bowl on a high foot, with spreading sides and an everted rim (**fig. 10**). Like the other pieces, it is highly polished. It has no further decoration and might have been after a model by Irminger, although the shape was already well-known in Chinese porcelain. Filled with hot water, it served as a rinsing- or slop bowl, cleaning the tea cup when another brand of tea was tasted. Or it could be used for pouring a cup of hot tea or coffee in it when the drink had to cool a bit. Curiously, such bowls seem to be relatively rare (**12**).



Fig. 11. Tea-cup and saucer, red stoneware, Meissen, Böttger, 1710–20. Cup: diameter 6.8 cm., height 4.8 cm. Saucer: diameter 12.5 cm., height 2.5 cm. M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art, Kaunas, inv. Tt 35 a/b.



Fig. 12. Tea-cup and saucer (2 sets), red stoneware, Meissen, Böttger, 1710–20. Cup: diameter 8.1 cm., height 4.4 cm. Saucer: diameter 12.2 cm., height 3 cm. M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art, Kaunas, inv. Tt – 33 a/b and Tt 34 a/b.

Finally, there are three sets of tea-cups with matching saucers, together constituting half of the redwares in Kaunas. Two types are present, both of a simple shape, highly polished and plain. The

first type is exemplified by a cup on a relatively high foot, with steep sides and a slightly everted rim. The saucer stands on a footring, has wide spreading sides and also has an everted rim. Both cup and saucer have a faceted edge, cut by the wheel (**13**) (**fig. 11**). The other type (two sets) shows a lower cup with wider spreading sides and a similar saucer, without faceted rims (**fig. 12**). In general, redware cups and saucers likely were rather common and may be dated to 1710–20, the long time span due to a continuing production at Meissen (**14**).

To conclude, the two museums in Lithuania have interesting examples of Böttger redwares. The M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art in Kaunas in particular has a small but important collection of twelve Meissen red stonewares and even a Plaue red coffee-pot. There is also the possibility that some other pieces in the group may be from Plaue, notably the teapot with raised handle. These twelve pieces were registered together as one tea set when they were confiscated in 1940, but in fact they form a haphazard confluence of pieces, missing, for instance, a tea caddy and more cups and saucers. Nonetheless, the survival of what was once considered a coherent set, used in a well-to-do household, is remarkable because usually we only have documentation on isolated pieces, without their companions. Furthermore, the teapot with overhead handle and the Plaue coffee-pot are important items to establish a more complete survey of early eighteenth-century redware shapes.

Notes

* This article is intended to draw attention to a hitherto not well known, small but important collection of Böttger redwares. It does not give exhaustive references to the types discussed, but compares them mainly with redwares in the porcelain collection (*Porzellansammlung*) of the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (SKD), preserved in the Zwinger Palace, Dresden. Besides, the collection of redwares in the Wilanow Palace Museum in Warsaw was used as a reference. I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Christiaan J. A. Jörg, the Netherlands, for stimulating me to write this article and for editing it.

1. Johann Jacob Irminger became jeweler at the Dresden court in 1687. At an early stage he seems to have cooperated with Böttger for the shapes and designs of redwares, stimulated by Augustus the Strong. However, it took until 1712 before he was formally appointed head of the modelling section at the Meissen factory but his influence can be seen since 1710; see *Johann Friedrich Böttger zum 300. Geburtstag*, exhibition catalogue Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Dresden 1982, p. 83.

2. A related Irminger vase is in the SKD Porzellansammlung, Dresden, see Ulrich Pietsch, Anette Loesch & Eva Ströber, *China.Japan.Meissen. The Dresden Porcelain Collection*, Munich/Berlin 2006, p. 82 (inv. P.E. 795).

3. The Museum of Applied Arts (MAK) in Vienna has two related bottles (or vases) with cover, see W. Neuwirth, *Böttgersteinzeug, Yixing und andere rote Ware*, Wien 1982, p. 70, cats. 4-5 (inv. Ke 6204).

4. The full list of the 427 works of art from the manor is preserved in the Heritage Library at the Cultural Heritage Centre, Vilnius, Fund 17, descriptive list 2, file 52, pp. 99-138. The tea set is described on pp. 124-125 and the composing parts of the set got the numbers 289-291, 292a, 292b, 293-296 (12 pieces). The 98 objects of cultural importance that could not go abroad and were stored in the Kaunas State Museum of Culture are mentioned on p. 137 by their number in the list only and here, too, the Böttger set is mentioned again with the same numbers.
5. Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, Dept. of Manuscripts, fund 264-1412, pages 4 and 13.
6. Transference document, dated 17/12/1949, M. K. Čiurlionis Museum of Art, Kaunas (the former Kaunas State Museum of Culture), nos. 214 a-h (12 pieces).
7. See, for instance, *Böttger* 1982 (o.c., note 1), cat. I/65, (inv. P.E. 1710).
8. A partly polished example in the SKD Porzellansammlung, Dresden, attributed to Irminger, is published in *Böttger* 1982 (o.c., note 1), cat. I/18, (inv. PE 1771).
9. Barbara Szelegejd, *Red and Black Stoneware and their Imitations in the Wilanow Collection*, The Wilanow Palace Museum, Warsaw 2013, pp. 155-158, (inv. WIL 288), with extensive documentation and references. Interestingly, she quotes a note from 1719 in which these objects are mentioned as "butter boxes" (p. 157).
10. This teapot seems to be a simplified version of the pots with a dragon-head spout and exuberant handle but basically of the same shape; see *Böttger* 1982 (o.c., note 1) for such a luxurious item in the SKD Porzellansammlung, Dresden with a similar cut *bandelwerk* decoration on the sides (inv. P.E. 791). Comparable with the Kaunas teapot are three examples in the Wilanow Museum (inv. WIL 293; 340; 2352) but those have different decorations on the sides, see Szelegejd 2013 (o.c., note 9), pp. 237-250.
11. For a short historical survey of the Plaue factory, see R. Sonnemann and E. Wächtler, eds., *Johann Friedrich Böttger. Die Erfindung des europäischen Porzellans*, Leipzig 1982, p. 254. A related coffee pot without cover, on a low foot, faceted and polished, is in the SKD Porzellansammlung, Dresden (inv. PE 1666) and was identified in this publication as Plaue, see ill. 121. For a more recent, extensive overview of the Plaue history and production, see Szelegejd 2013 (o.c., note 9), pp. 301-304.
12. A rather warped bowl in the collection of the Meissen factory (inv. 5950) is regarded as a test piece from c. 1709, see *Böttger* 1982 (o.c., note 1), p. 79.
13. For the cup and saucer with faceted rims no references were found.

14. A tea-cup in the SKD Porzellansammlung, Dresden, has a slightly different profile and a wider foot, see *Böttger* 1982 (o.c., note 1), cat. I/13 (inv. P.E. 1740). For two teacups and saucers in the Wilanow Museum (inv. WIL344/1-2 and 345/1-2), see *Szelegejd* (o.c., note 9), pp. 137-143 and 278-287 with extensive comments and references. For a cup and saucer in the Museum of Applied Art in Vienna, see *Neuwirth* (o.c., note 3), p. 74, cat. 7 (inv. Ke 4219).

A Sèvres Cabaret Service (Déjeuner Mosaïque Florentine), 1813

By Zenia Malmer

Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, New York City



Fig. 1. Group shot showing full breakfast set. Photo: Matt Flynn © Smithsonian Institution.

Manufactured by Sèvres in 1813, this hard paste porcelain breakfast or cabaret service is a feast for the eyes. The teapot, sugar bowl, milk jug, and cups and saucers are exquisitely painted with bands of geometric motifs, bird and butterfly medallions, and floral tiles accentuated by a trompe-l'oeil background imitating semi-precious stones as well as generous amounts of gold. The oval tray, arguably the showstopper of the ensemble, features a still life at its centre with a variety of seashells and corals. A loose string of pearls appears to underline this visual cacophony.



Fig. 2. Individual shot of oval tray. Photo: Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum.

Sources suggest that the design of this breakfast service was the brainchild of Alexandre Brongniart, the director of Sèvres from 1800 to 1847, and his father, the architect Alexandre-Théodore Brongniart (1739–1813) who both demonstrated a deep interest in the natural world. The encyclopaedic nature of the flora and fauna depicted has its roots in the Age of Enlightenment (Siècle des Lumières) during which a systematic understanding of nature, among other disciplines, was advanced through visual products like publications and engravings. Tea, the hot beverage that was served with this breakfast set was considered the height of good taste, with its consumption rising exponentially in Enlightenment Europe (1).

A transcription of a document from the French national archives reveals that Pierre Huart (sometimes spelled “Huart”), who was active at Sèvres from 1811 to 1847, painted this service. The centrepiece of the tray is attributed to Charles-Louis Constans, a French porcelain decorator and lithographer who was active in Paris and Sèvres between 1804 and 1840 (2). This same document offers some insight into possible first ownership of the service. Wedged into a dense list recounting gifts that Empress Marie-Josephine and Napoléon I handed out on 1st January 1814 to celebrate the New Year is the somewhat perfunctory phrase, “La Comtesse de MONTESQUIOU, un déjeuner de sept pièces sur plateau. Genre mosaïque florentine, par Huart, avec boîte, 2,550 fr.” (3). Despite its pithiness, this small piece of evidence is an accurate description of the style of this breakfast set and its components, which strongly suggests that Countess Montesquiou, Head Governess to the Emperor and Empress’s firstborn (Napoleon II) from 1811 to 1815 (Gouvernante des Enfants de France) could have been one of the first proprietors of this service.

At an as-of-yet-unknown point in time, this breakfast set was procured by French rare books specialist Edmond F. Bonaventure who was born in Alsace, France. After serving in the Franco-

Prussian War, Bonaventure moved to North America where he resided until his death in 1918. The breakfast service was acquired at a public sale of Bonaventure's extensive collection of paintings, drawings, fans, clocks, furniture, and porcelain in New York City by Mr. and Mrs. Charles V. Hickox, residents of South Carolina, in 1936 before being generously gifted to the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum by their daughter Katrina H. Becker in 1981 (4).



Fig. 3. Screenshot of lot description in American Art Association sales catalogue. American Art Association, Anderson Galleries Inc. sales catalogue, lot 459, 8-9 May 1936.

In 2018, the cabaret service was put on display in *'Tablescapes: Designs for Dining'*, an exhibition organized at Cooper Hewitt that offered an episodic take on the history of dining (5). Juxtaposed with a magnificent nineteenth-century *surtout de table* as well as modern and contemporary artefacts from the Cooper Hewitt museum's collection, it demonstrated the essential role that material culture played in the implementation of 'gastrodiplomacy' in early nineteenth-century France (6).

When I started cataloguing the pre-1900 European porcelain collection at Cooper Hewitt in September 2019, one of the first tasks that I undertook was to identify the relationship between objects to determine pairs and sets, a crucial aspect of the porcelain collection that had not been underscored. This porcelain set was accessioned with its original leather box, but its components were separated according to media that require different conservation needs. Although the box was stored a mere three stacks away from its porcelain components, it fell into obscurity, only to be rediscovered this year with a bit of sleuthing on my part. Head of Product Design and Decorative Arts, Yao-Fen You, was able to re-assemble the porcelain set with its box after a long pandemic-induced hiatus that prevented us from entering the storage facility. Fortunately, I was able to witness

this happy reunion vicariously and virtually. Coming into close contact with this porcelain technical tour-de-force is a treat, but dare I say that nothing beats the feeling of satisfaction you get from reuniting a complete porcelain set with its original box.



Fig. 4. Breakfast set inside box. Photo: Matt Flynn © Smithsonian Institution.

Not much attention is usually given to these leather boxes, although they can contain valuable information. The cover of the box that the breakfast service was accessioned with, for example, features a gold-embossed French Imperial coat-of-arms used during the First Empire (1804–1815); a crucial detail that can help us trace its provenance.



Fig. 5. Box cover showing Imperial Coat-of-Arms. Photo: Yao-Fen You, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, 2020.

It has been over two hundred years since this breakfast service was manufactured, yet it is safe to say that the passing of time hasn't dampened any of its lustre.

Notes

1. Yao-Fen You, *Coffee, Tea, and Chocolate: Consuming the World*, (Yale University Press, 2016), p.11.

2. Object file 1981-38-1/9, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum.

3. Alphonse Maze-Sencier, *Les Fournisseurs de Napoléon Ier et des Deux Impératrices D'Après Des Documents Inédits*, (Paris, 1893), p.240.

4. This sale took place on 8th and 9th May 1936 at the American Art Association, Anderson Galleries Inc. in New York City.

5. For more information, please visit: <https://www.cooperhewitt.org/channel/tablescapes/>

6. Gastrodiplomacy (gastronomical diplomacy) is an extension of public and political diplomacy, in which dining is used as a concerted public relations tool to raise the profile of a nation's brand identity on an international stage. As a design historian, I explore the historical application of

Extraordinary Objects for Extraordinary Times

The Meissen Monkey Band at Waddesdon Manor

By Susan Brooke

The State Bedroom at Waddesdon Manor is home to The Meissen Monkey Band. At the moment the Band is playing unseen and unheard towards the hoped-for end of its isolation! The Band is part of an automaton or musical clock. The dial is surrounded by a gilt bronze *bocage* mounted with Vincennes porcelain flowers. The pierced gilt-bronze base contains the music box: a platform for the thirteen colourful porcelain members of the Band. Modelled from 1747 by Johann Joachim Kändler and Johann-Peter Reinecke, the set of mischievous monkey musicians numbered twenty-five and were previously thought to be caricatures of the Dresden Royal Chapel Orchestra. However, *The Allegory of the Monkeys* by Teniers, and Watteau's *Monkey Sculptor*, are now considered to be early sources of inspiration and the monkeys are also shown to have been modelled after designs provided by Christopher Huet (1700–1759), known for his room decorations in the French *singerie* style which featured scenes of monkeys dressed in human clothing aping human activities, often in a mocking manner. In December, 1753, Madame de Pompadour purchased nineteen examples from the Paris dealer, Lazare Duvaux. The whole piece is an example of one of the novel artefacts commissioned by the *marchands-merciers*, whereby objects from various craftsmen and sources were combined in order to cater for an ever-sophisticated clientele whose taste for luxurious objects and novelty increased as the 18th century unfolded. The orchestra was widely copied; a set is known in Mennecy porcelain and as early as 1756 the Meissen monkey musicians had already been copied by the Chelsea



factory.

© The Rothschild Collection,
The National Trust, Waddesdon Manor

Susan Brooke



Minton tiles at the V&A's Café

By Jeff Ruda



I've failed to choose a favorite ceramic, but I'm sure that my favorite museum restaurant is the one at the V&A—the very first museum café. The Grill Room, now called the Poynter Room, is tiled from designs by Sir Edward John Poynter. The room is a cynosure of Aesthetic Movement historicism, with a blue-and-white nod to the surging fashion for Chinese and Japanese porcelain.

The commission came in November 1865 and the tiles were installed by the end of 1869. The tiles were Minton blanks, painted at the South Kensington Art School and fired by Minton in Stoke. There were also spare sets and individual duplicates. This duplicate tile with a fantastic early-sixteenth-century ship, 29 cm square, comes from Minton's Art Pottery Studio, Kensington Gore, which operated from 1871 to 1875. I can't say that it is my very favorite 'extraordinary object'; but it means a lot to me for both its quality and its associations. I bought it from an auction in Austin, Texas, with no idea how it got there. However, it came with a note from R. & H. Myers, antique tile dealers in Bath.

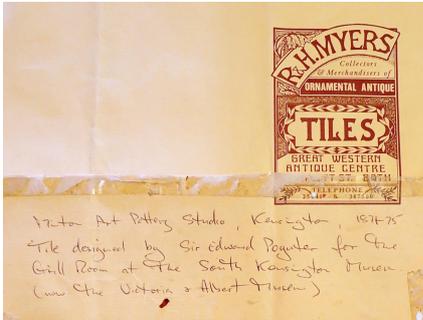
The original dado tile appears at lower left in the Grill Room photo from [the V&A's website](#). The V&A has Poynter's drawing of the subject, and a contemporary painted-over photograph that may have been a model for replicas. This duplicate tile is marked for Minton, Hollins,



& Co. which by then was a separate company, because Minton China Works still had blanks from the time when the Hollins factory was its tile-making associate. (Thanks to Rebecca Wallis for some information.)

© The Victoria & Albert Museum, London

Jeff Ruda, San Francisco



„LEAVES / BLÄTTER“

By Christian Lechelt

Thinking of so many extraordinary ceramic objects it is not easy to say which is THE one. As the director of Fürstenberg castle, the museum of Germany's second oldest, still operating porcelain manufactory, I focus on its works from 1747 until the present. Inspiring our visitors to develop a new interest and, best case, passion for porcelain is our main target. An important aspect of this politic is the creation of moments of amazement. To achieve this goal I try to excel the visitor's expectation with awesome displays and exhibitions which turn the eye on neglected, new or unprecedented subjects. One of those subjects is the conjunction of porcelain with modern art. In 2019 German sculptor Ulli Böhmelmann created a stunning room installation, called „LEAVES / BLÄTTER“, which consisted of more than 500 individually leaf-shaped, wafer-thin elements seemingly flying and dancing through the exhibition space. The porcelain leaves were handmade at the museum's visitor's workshop over six months, so our visitors were introduced to the emerging art work from the very beginning. Thus, the process of making and the finished work gave an idea of the



specific qualities and aesthetics of porcelain. For me it was a terrific time in my career and I remember being evermore overwhelmed from day to day as the installation took shape. The beauty of „LEAVES / BLÄTTER“ was beyond comparison.'

Christian Lechelt, Fürstenberg, Germany, Editor of Keramos

Photo credits: Stephan Brendgen



Rococo KPM wall lights at The Met

By Daniela Kumpf



These two wall lights (wandleuchter), Königliche Porzellan-Manufaktur (KPM), Berlin, c.1765–8, are the only known examples of this type apart from a smaller and less virtuoso pair in Charlottenburg Palace in Berlin. Today, they are on display in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York ([2002.437.1, .2](#)).



The distinctive character of the so-called “Frederician Rococo” has always fascinated me. But especially the products of this era, because they incorporate the forms of nature into art even more clearly than Rococo in other places. This directly reflects the personal taste of Frederick the Great, who loved garden art more than anything and sometimes dictated to the porcelain painters which flowers they had to paint. The ornamentation of his time therefore seems very organic: virtuoso carved chairs are reminiscent of twisted branches, boiseries in the form of trellises are covered with flower garlands and even marble fireplace surrounds seem to have grown out of the ground in their daring curves. The lightness and naturalness of Prussian Rococo is the epitome of elegance.

The two sconces made of gilded bronze and decorated with fantastic porcelain flowers by the Berlin porcelain



manufacturer KPM bring all these aspects together. The creator of the model of the finely chased bronzes, Pierre Geoffroy, had followed the call of the Prussian king from Paris to Berlin and headed the bronze workshop of the KPM, which manufactured fittings and mountings, but also chandelier frames for the manufacture. As an artist at a royal company, he had access to all construction sites of the castles and was well informed about the demanding taste of his king. Therefore, the sconces have the high quality of French works without imitating them directly. This also applies to the porcelain flowers that seem to grow from the branches.

Whenever I am in NY, I pay them a visit. I enjoy their positive charisma, as this testimony of German enlightenment can assert itself stylishly in any language

Daniela Kumpf, Germany, Founding FPS member

A Meissen gold ground stand with a 'Kauffahrtei' scene

By Enrico D'Andrea

This item is surprisingly similar to the tea, coffee and chocolate service with chinoiserie decoration now in the Dresden Porcelain Collection. It was a precious gift of August III to Elisabeth Farnese, Queen of Spain, on the occasion of the marriage of his daughter, Maria Amalia, and her son, Charles of Bourbon, King of Naples and Sicily in 1738.

There is a similarity in the design, the lavish gilding and the lack of a coat-of-arms on the centre of the saucers.

Important commissions at the Meissen factory often resulted in new designs made exclusively for the recipient, most of whom were members of the European aristocracy or political elite.

A saucer (1) possibly from the same service as this stand has been compared to the Pisani-Corner service



(2), probably made for Vincenzo Pisani and Lugrezia Corner, who married in 1745, by which time the design would have been considered old-fashioned. The stand's dimensions are 14.5 cm x 14.5 cm x 3 cm.

From the Meissen factory records we know that the Queen of Spain, Elisabeth Farnese, was assigned a further 12-piece service painted with the coat-of-arms of Sicily and landscapes, which was included in the same shipment that arrived in Madrid in November 1738. This service is still believed to be missing.



Notes

1. Bonhams London, Fine European Ceramics, 23 May 2012, lot 103.

2. A teabowl and saucer from the Pisani-Corner service was in the Hoffmeister Collection, Hamburg (D. Hoffmeister, Meissener Porzellan des 18. Jahrhunderts: Sammlung Hoffmeister, vol. II (1999), no.335; sold at Bonhams London, 26 May 2010, lot 81).

Exhibitions

'Raphael Ware. I colori del Rinascimento'

Galleria Nazionale delle Marche | Palazzo Ducale di Urbino

Extended until 27 September 2020

Curated by Timothy Wilson and Claudio Paolinelli



Hercules and the Hydra by Xanto, Urbino, c.1530, Private Collection, Italy

From the 1600s onwards, Italian maiolica from the Cinquecento became a true passion for European collectors, in particular those pieces decorated with figurative scenes that were considered part of the corpus of Italian Renaissance paintings in their own right. It is because of their strong association with scenes after the great artist Raphael Sanzio that such pieces are known as 'Raphael ware'.

This exhibition gathers together 157 refined examples of maiolica from the Italian Renaissance from the greatest private collections around the world. It aims at bringing attention to this seminal period in Italian artistic tradition.

Following the renaissance taste for figurative decoration, maiolica painters from the end of the Quattrocento to the beginning of the Cinquecento started to cover every surface available on their ceramic pieces with *istorie* or scenes with varied subjects. Compositions varied from original creations by the ceramic artists to interpretations derived from the *art maggiori* or high art that arrived to their workshops on the shape of xylographies and engravings.

Istoriato ceramics elevates the knowledge of renaissance figurative culture and, associated to a wide variety of subjects or *storie* represented, offers the modern public priceless glimpses into the life and culture from this period. These ceramic objects, in spite of being destined to domestic use, are not necessarily relegated to the private sphere; they are exchanged as gifts and displayed in the spaces of public representation of the higher classes. Their acknowledged value did not stop them from being used, especially in countryside villas where the notion of *otium* derived from Antiquity

was emulated through music and literary conversation, echoing the scenes depicted on maiolica pieces.

The duchy of Urbino, Castelduarte, Gubbio and Pesaro became famous for their *istoriato* maiolica. Urbino was transformed by duke Federico into a Renaissance capital in the second half of the Quattrocento. Federico summoned celebrated artists and built the Palazzo Ducale in a city that was destined cement its art-historical pedigree by being the place of birth of Raphael Sanzio. It is tempting to suggest that these conditions fostered also the appearance of the most important artists dedicated to the production of Italian maiolica: Nicola da Urbino, Francesco Xanto Avelli and Francesco Durantino.

The exhibition occupies the second floor of Urbino's Palazzo Ducale, in the luminous Loggia del Pasquino, where objects can be enjoyed under natural light, conditions which immensely benefit the appreciation of the rich original colours in maiolica ware.

For more information, please visit the exhibition's [website](#).

'Royal Blue - William and Mary's Finest Delftware'

Kunstmuseum Den Haag
Until November 22, 2020
Curated by Suzanne Lambooy



We are happy to announce that the exhibition 'Royal Blue - William and Mary's Finest Delftware' at The Hague's Kunstmuseum has successfully reopened. Many of you may remember the Living Room Lecture given by FPS member and curator Suzanne Lambooy based on the research behind the preparation for this exhibition.



The show focuses on the period 1689–1702, heyday of Delftware that coincided with the reign of British monarchs William III and Mary II Stuart. Mary commissioned special pieces from De Grieksche A pottery for her own collection, becoming a true ambassador for Delftware.

For more information, please visit the [Kunstmuseum's](#) website.



'Savor: a Revolution in Food Culture'

Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art

Until January 3, 2021

Curated by Meredith Chilton

Food and dining were transformed in eighteenth-century Europe by profound changes that resonate to this day. What many of us eat, the way food is cooked, and how we dine continue to be influenced by radical changes that took place in France between 1650 and 1789, the start of the French Revolution. *Savor* explores the details and events behind this transformation. Rare objects, from early cookbooks and gardening manuals to tureens in the forms of cauliflowers and chickens, reveal fascinating histories and stories about advances in horticulture, surprisingly modern philosophies on healthy eating, and a shift to more informal dining.

Savor: A Revolution in Food Culture is organized by the Gardiner Museum, Toronto, and curated by Meredith Chilton, Curator Emerita at the Gardiner Museum. This presentation of the exhibition is a collaboration between the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art and the Gardiner Museum.

The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated cookbook, *The King's Peas: Delectable Recipes and Their Stories from the Age of Enlightenment*.

For more information, visit [Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art](https://www.wadsworthatheneum.org/).



'La Fabrique de l'Extravagance

Porcelaines de Meissen et de Chantilly'

September 2020 – January 2021

Domaine de Chantilly

Curated by Mathieu Deldicque



Seated Pagoda, porcelaine de Chantilly. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Porcelain was considered white gold in the eighteenth century, avidly sought by enlightened princes. Among these, Augustus II the Strong, Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, and Louis-Henri de Bourbon, prince Condé and first minister to Louis XV, dedicated their fortunes to founding two prestigious porcelain manufactures at Meissen and Chantilly, respectively. For the first time, a large exhibition intends to shed light the dialogue between the production of these two centres, essential to understand the development of eighteenth-century decorative arts.

Organised at the centre of the château's *Grands Appartements*, dating from the eighteenth century, and displaying a mesmerising scenography by Peter Marino, this exhibition offers the public the possibility to admire the technical virtuosity and stylistic sumptuousness employed at Meissen and Chantilly. Since their origins, these two manufactories got inspiration from the princely collections of their founders. Augustus the Strong and Louis-Henri de Bourbon-Condé shared an enthusiasm for far-eastern porcelain, it is thus not surprising that Meissen and Chantilly imitated it with great precision, especially in the Kakiemon style, although adapting it to European shapes. The exhibition also explores the fascination for representing animals in porcelain that culminated with Augustus's

porcelain menagerie in Dresden.



Peter Marino, celebrated New-York architect, proposes an exhibition design that emulates exuberance of princely interior decorations. In addition to surprising the visitor, the exhibition aims to make this captivating subject available to every public.

For more information, please visit the exhibition's [website](#).

'Vivre à l'antique: archaeology, design and a new vision of antiquity, 1765–1810'

Château de Rambouillet (Centre des Monuments Nationaux)
March – June 2021
Curated by Renaud Serrette & Gabriel Wick



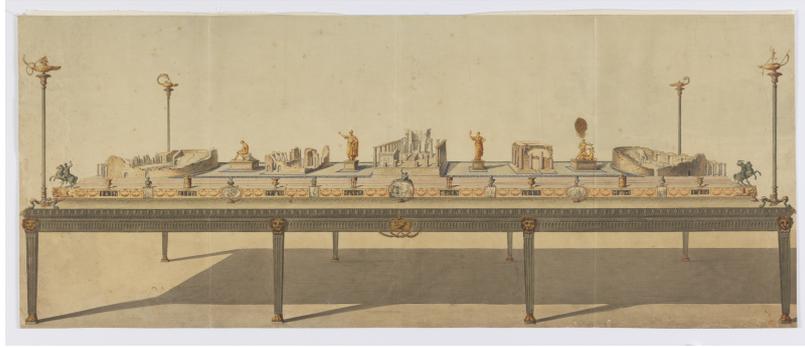
Service pour la laiterie de Rambouillet, Gobelet à deux anses et soucoupe

© RMN – Grand Palais (Sèvres, Cité de la céramique) / Martine Beck-Coppola

In 1785, Louis XVI's director of Royal Buildings and Manufactures, the comte d'Angiviller initiated the construction of the royal dairy of Rambouillet. Its design and furnishings brought together some of the greatest talents of the age – the landscape painter Hubert Robert, the sculptor Pierre Julien, the furniture-maker Georges Jacob and the artist and designer Jean Jacques Lagrenée. Much more than a garden *fabrique*, the dairy was to be a complete and immersive evocation of an antique or *Etruscan* sacred setting.

In Spring-Summer 2021 the exhibition *Vivre à l'Antique* will see a number of these furnishing and ceramics return to the dairy for the first time since the Revolution. In the château's state apartments, the accompanying exhibition provides context and background for Angiviller's project. It considers how the knowledge artifacts and motifs that emerged from the archaeological excavations around Naples as well as the engravings, models and drawings that artists and aristocratic travellers brought from Italy, transformed design and artistic production in France.

Curated by Renaud Serrette and Gabriel Wick, the exhibition brings together artworks and artifacts from the National Archaeological Museum at Saint-Germain-en-Laye, the National Ceramics Museum at Sèvres, the Ecole des Beaux-Arts Paris as well as the châteaux of Versailles and Fontainebleau and a number of private collections. It showcases works including Louis Le Mason's 1779 panorama of Rome (the first of its kind, intended to decorate Rambouillet), cork models by Antoni Chichi and Augusto Rosa, prints by Piranesi, and canvases by Hubert Robert.



Workshop of Giuseppe Valadier, Drawing, Surtout de Table (Centerpiece) with the Temple of Isis in Pompeii, c.1800.

Pen and ink, brush and watercolor on paper; 41.2 x 101.8 cm

Museum purchase through gift of various donors and from Eleanor G. Hewitt Fund; 1938-88-4150 Cooper-Hewitt,
Smithsonian

A catalogue will be published by *Editions du Patrimoine* in its *Regards...* series.

Please consult the château's web-site, www.chateau-rambouillet.fr for more up to date information.

New FPS Administrator



We are delighted to welcome Sarah Kirkham as the new FPS Administrator. Sarah worked at Sotheby's for 22 years and for 12 of those years in the Ceramics Department as a departmental assistant. She now works for the curator of a private collection. Please join us in wishing her a warm welcome!

Sarah will be replacing Rachel Wood, who is starting a new job at the University of East London. We would like to thank Rachel for her outstanding work and wish her the best of luck for the future.

Living Room Lectures

Every other Sunday at 18:00PM (UK time) from Sunday 6 September

Dear Members,

Another four months have passed during which we have enjoyed our weekly Living Room Lectures with outstanding contributions from great scholars and museum professionals. We would like to thank our speakers for their generosity sharing their time, research and expertise with us. Our membership has seen a remarkable increase in numbers since the lectures started and we believe it is proof that such an attractive programme has infused new life into the FPS. To all of you who make this possible, THANK YOU!



Moving forwards, we are planning on establishing our Living Room Lectures as part of our ongoing educational programme. On Saturday 8th August had our last lecture before a summer break. We will come back with a fortnightly programme every Sunday at 18:00pm (UK time) starting with Johan Creten on Sunday 6 September. More details about our speakers will be shared with you soon.



Publications

'Living with Architecture as Art. The Peter May Collection of Architectural Drawings, Models and Artefacts'

FPS member Maureen Cassidy-Geiger is preparing a catalogue of over 700 architectural drawings collected by New York investor and philanthropist Mr. Peter May. Showcasing drawings, models and artefacts dating from 1691 to the mid 20th century, the collection includes a few interior designs and views which incorporate displays of ceramics which may be of interest to the membership. The lavish two-volume publication, *Living with Architecture as Art* (Paul Holberton Publishing), will appear in October 2020.



Images:

Above: Alfred Tardif, Early 20th century design for the home of Sir Otto Beit (1865–1930), 49 Belgrave Square.

Below: Albert Procter, *View of an Interior*, 1887



'Mostre a Firenze 1911–1942

(Exhibitions in Florence 1911–1942)'



Mostre a Firenze 1911-1942

Nuove indagini per un itinerario
tra arte e cultura

a cura di
Cristiano Giometti

Edizioni ETS

FPS member Giovanni De Girolamo has contributed to the publication *'Mostre a Firenze 1911–1942 (Exhibitions in Florence 1911–1942)'* edited by Cristiano Giometti. Consisting of 21 essays, De Girolamo's essay, "Exhibition of ancient-Ginori porcelain on occasion of the bicentenary of the Doccia Manufactory" (pp. 159-168) includes unpublished material.

To celebrate the bicentenary of the Doccia porcelain manufactory, in 1935 was organized an exhibition of ancient and modern wares in Palazzo Vecchio, Florence. Arranged in chronological order, the exhibition curator Orazio Pucci included not only tableware and vases, but also porcelain versions of statuettes, from the



manufactory's origins up to Gio Ponti. Unpublished photos of the event and a video created by the Istituto Luce show young women in 18th- and 19th-century costumes who simulated rites and rhythms of distant ages. During the central years of the fascist regime, the exhibition was also seen as an opportunity to celebrate the so-called "made in Italy" production.



You can learn more about this publication [here](#).

Publication OFFER

'The Tastemakers: British Dealers and the Anglo-Gallic Interior,

1785-1865' by Dr Diana Davis

If you haven't had the chance to purchase your copy of Diana Davis's insightful account of the art market in nineteenth-century Britain, this is your chance to do so with an additional 20% discount.

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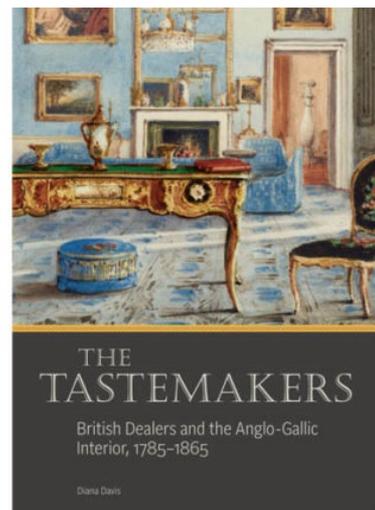
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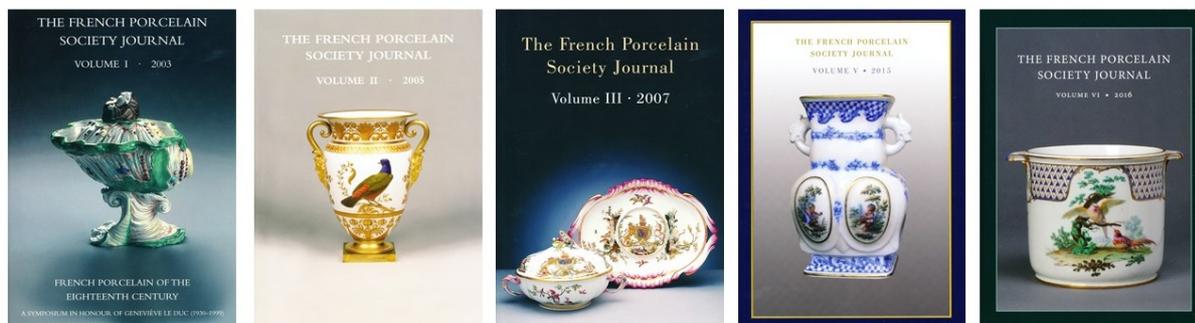
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SPECIAL OFFER: Past issues of FPS Journals



We are delighted to offer members copies of back issues of the FPS journal for the price of postage. The issues we still have in stock are volumes 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6. You need only cover postage costs which are detailed below. The postal costs of individual journals are listed in Table A and for a set in Table B. For example, if ordering from the UK, the set of five volumes (Table B) would cost only £10 and if ordering a set from the USA, £53.50.

For more information please visit our [website](#).

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Obituary

Johannes Lafrenz



It is with great sadness that the FPS has lost our member Johannes Lafrenz who sadly passed away suddenly in late January this year. Johannes was a very keen member of the Society, attending the trips when he could and very much enjoying the summer gatherings.

Johannes collected Vincennes and Sèvres porcelain ranging from early ground colours in 1753 to early 19th Century pieces. He will be dearly missed by all.

Thomas Baxter, London

Edited by Félix Zorzo

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