

Everyday Rococo: Madame de Pompadour and the Arts

The Lydia and Manfred Gorvy Lecture Theatre, Victoria and Albert Museum

1–2 July 2022

Day One: Friday, 1 July

- 10:00 Museum Opens
- 10:20 Welcome
- Introduction by Dame Rosalind Savill (moderator of Day One)
- 10:35 *The crisis of 1745 – new thoughts on Madame de Pompadour, the Orry brothers and the Vincennes porcelain factory*
John Whitehead
Independent Scholar
- 11:20 Tea and Coffee Break
- 11:50 *Asia at Home: Madame de Pompadour's Mounted Chinese Porcelain*
Dr Kristel Smentek
Associate Professor of Art History, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- 12:35 *Pompadour sculpsit: Gems, Prints, and Authorship*
Dr Susan Wager
Assistant Professor of Art and Art History, University of New Hampshire
- 13:20 Lunch (independent)
- 14:20 *Madame de Pompadour and the Goddess of Appearances*
Dr Aileen Ribeiro
Professor Emeritus, Courtauld Institute of Art
- 15:05 Short Break
- 15:15 *Madame de Pompadour's Collection of Meissen porcelain*
Joana Mylek
PhD Candidate, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich
- 15:45 *A Rococo Rupture – or Madame de Pompadour's Taste in Furniture*
Bertrand Rondot
Conservateur en chef, Château de Versailles
- 16:30 Discussion
- 16:45 End of Day One
- 18:00 Drinks at the Savile Club (generously sponsored by Christie's and Bonhams)
- 19:30 Dinner at the Savile Club (reservation only)

Day Two: Saturday, 2 July

- 10:00 Museum Opens
- 10:20 Start, opening remarks
Moderated by Dr Helen Jacobsen
- 10:25 *Madame de Pompadour's Sèvres Porcelain for Everyday Use*
Dame Rosalind Savill
Former Director of the Wallace Collection
- 11:15 *Pampered and Adored: Madame de Pompadour's Pets*
Dr Mia Jackson
Curator of Decorative Arts, Waddesdon Manor
- 11:45 Tea and Coffee Break
- 12:15 *Madame de Pompadour as a Patron of Architecture: Some Reflections*
Alexandre Gady
Professor of the History of Art, Sorbonne Université
- 13:00 Lunch (independent)
- 14:00 *Madame de Pompadour's Library*
Rachel Jacobs
Curator of Books and Manuscripts, Waddesdon Manor
- 14:30 *The Language of Gifts: Madame de Pompadour's Hierarchy of Giving and Receiving*
Alden Gordon
Paul E. Raether Distinguished Professor of Fine Arts, Trinity College, Hartford, CT.
- 15:15 Discussion
- 15:45 Closing Remarks
- 16:00 End of Symposium

Organised by the *Everyday Rococo: Madame de Pompadour and the Arts* committee: Mia Jackson, Helen Jacobsen, Caroline McCaffrey-Howarth, Nette Megens, Rosalind Savill, Sophie von der Goltz, John Whitehead and Félix Zorzo, with the assistance of the rest of the French Porcelain Society committee.

To book tickets, please visit:

<https://www.thefrenchporcelainsociety.com/news/fps-symposium-dinner-everyday-rococo-madame-de-pompadour-arts/>

To attend dinner at the Savile Club only, please visit:

<https://www.thefrenchporcelainsociety.com/product/fps-dinner-savile-club/>

For any further enquiries please contact fpsmailing@gmail.com

Speaker biographies and Paper synopses

John Whitehead
Independent Scholar



The crisis of 1745 – new thoughts on Madame de Pompadour, the Orry brothers and the Vincennes porcelain factory

Although there has been much written about the early history of the Vincennes-Sèvres porcelain factory there are still some aspects of its creation and its development which remain largely undocumented, and therefore obscure. Using some peripheral sources, this talk will aim to fill in some of these gaps and show how the encouragement of a porcelain factory formed part of the trade and industry strategy of the finance ministry under Philibert Orry and his successors.

John Whitehead FSA is a dealer, writer and lecturer specialising in French eighteenth-century interior decoration and works of art, with an emphasis on Sèvres porcelain. He is best known for his 1992 book, *The French Interior in the Eighteenth Century*. His two books on Sèvres porcelain of the eighteenth century, commissioned by the Sèvres factory and museum, were published in 2011. In addition he has written numerous articles for specialist periodicals on various aspects of French eighteenth-century art. John Whitehead has served as a member of the Council of the Furniture History Society and is currently a member of the Committee of the French Porcelain Society, with responsibility as co-editor of the Society's Journal. In 2010 he was made an Officier of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres.

Kristel Smentek

Associate Professor of Art History, Massachusetts Institute of Technology



Asia at Home: Madame de Pompadour's Mounted Chinese Porcelain

Between 1748 and 1758 Madame de Pompadour purchased over 150 pieces of mounted Asian porcelain from one Paris luxury dealer (Lazare Duvaux) alone. Focusing on extant mounted porcelains from her collection as well as documentation of their placement within her residences, this talk examines the demand for assemblages of Chinese ceramics and French gilt bronze and the resonances of these Sino-French objects within the homes of eighteenth-century French elites, Pompadour chief among them.

Kristel Smentek is Associate Professor of Art History in the Department of Architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA. Her research engages eighteenth-century European graphic and decorative arts in their transcultural contexts. She is the author of *Rococo Exotic: French Mounted Porcelains and the Allure of the East* (2007), which accompanied an exhibition of the same name at The Frick Collection, New York in 2007, *Mariette and the Science of the Connoisseur in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (2014, paperback 2017), and co-editor of *Dare to Know: Prints and Drawings in the Age of Enlightenment* (2022), and co-curator of the accompanying exhibition at the Harvard Art Museums opening in September 2022.

Susan Wager

Assistant Professor of Art and Art History, University of New Hampshire



Pompadour sculptit: Gems, Prints, and Authorship

By the eighteenth century in France, the ancient art of gem engraving had fallen almost completely into abandon — a fact some attributed to the lack of a significant princely patron. Madame de Pompadour stepped into this role: she purchased a lathe, installed the talented gem-carver Jacques Guay in her residence at Versailles, and commissioned dozens of cameos and intaglios by his hand. Meanwhile, she produced her own lavishly illustrated catalogue of Guay's work: the *Suite d'estampes gravées par madame la marquise de Pompadour d'après les pierres gravées de Guay, graveur du roy*. While Pompadour's revival of gem engraving has been attributed to a lust for bodily ornament, this talk explores her interest in cameos and intaglios as reproductive objects. The recent rediscovery of her *Suite* in its original form sheds new light on Pompadour's conception of the project and its intersection with changing ideas about authorship and the transmission of images.

Susan Wager is assistant professor in the Department of Art and Art History at the University of New Hampshire (USA). She holds a Ph.D. in art history from Columbia University, and her work has been supported by the Mellon Foundation, the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, and the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts. In 2015, Wager was curator of the exhibition “Madame de Pompadour, Patron and Printmaker” at the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore. She has published in *The Burlington Magazine* on her rediscovery of the original version of Pompadour's “Suite of Prints,” and in *Journal18* on Pompadour's tapestry-tableaux. Two publications on Vincennes biscuit porcelain are forthcoming later this year: an article on the *Enfants Boucher* and *Falconet* in *The Art Bulletin*, and an essay on Pompadour's *Amitié* figures in an edited volume from Bloomsbury Press. Her current book project studies relationship between François Boucher, Madame de Pompadour, and artistic reproduction.

Aileen Ribeiro

Professor Emeritus, Courtauld Institute of Art



Madame de Pompadour and the Goddess of Appearances

By the mid-eighteenth century, fashion in France (admired and imitated all over Europe) was the subject of much debate; its increasing contribution to the economy, the role it played in society, and particularly in women's lives, formed part of Enlightenment thought, what the historian Daniel Roche refers to as a new ‘*culture des apparences*.’ Above all, fashion is about *appearance*; it was, according to the poet Stéphane Mallarmé, the goddess of appearances.

In elite French society, in portraits of Madame de Pompadour, most notably by François Boucher, fashion became a series of descriptive visual performances, which at the same time suggested her power and influence at court. We do not have records of ordered clothing as exist for Marie-Antoinette later in the century, but we have a considerable number of portraits which depict Pompadour's fashion choices. She used Boucher to stage-manage her appearances and it may be the case that the artist had an input into the design of her dresses; it proved a formidable partnership in the creation of her image. We will look at Boucher's portraits of Madame de Pompadour, and at those by his contemporaries, and examine the costume she wears, and what meanings (if any) we might derive from her appearances.

Aileen Ribeiro was Head of the History of Dress Department at the Courtauld Institute from 1975 to 2009; appointed Professor in the History of Art at the University of London in 2000, she is now Professor Emeritus. She has published many books and articles on various aspects of the history of dress, particularly (but not exclusively) in relation to art; her most recent book *Clothing Art. The Visual Culture of Fashion 1600-1914* (Yale, 2017) won the *Apollo* Book of the Year Award in 2017. She has acted as costume consultant/contributor to many major art exhibitions, discussing clothing in the work of a wide range of artists, including Batoni, John Singleton Copley, Gustave Caillebotte, Gainsborough, Goya, Liotard, Renoir, Reynolds, Whistler and Winterhalter.

Joana Mylek

PhD Candidate, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich



Madame de Pompadour's Collection of Meissen porcelain

Among porcelain scholars and enthusiasts, Madame de Pompadour is probably known best as patron of the Royal French Porcelain Manufactory of Vincennes/Sèvres and as one of its main clients — only the king's porcelain collection surpassed her own. However, the account books of the *marchand-mercier* Lazare Duvaux and the post-mortem inventory of Madame de Pompadour's possessions reveal that she also collected Meissen porcelain. This paper aims to shed light on this mostly overlooked part of her collection and considers it in the broader context of Madame de Pompadour's politics.

Joana Mylek is preparing her doctoral thesis, entitled *The Art of Transformation: Vincennes/Sèvres Porcelain in the Eighteenth Century* at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich. She has held research fellowships at the Getty, Los Angeles, and has worked at the Kunsthalle in Munich.

Bertrand Rondot

Conservateur en chef, Château de Versailles



A Rococo Rupture – or Madame de Pompadour's Taste in Furniture

Several of the portraits of Madame de Pompadour show her with specific high quality pieces of furniture. This not only confirms her as a client of the finest *marchands-merciers* and *ébénistes*, willing to display such works of art as part of the image-making in representations of herself, but also as one of the pioneers of the new neo-classical taste of the late 1750s and early 1760s, to which she must have adhered extremely early, as we can tell from documents relating to her and her brother the marquis de Marigny.

Bertrand Rondot is Senior Curator of Furniture and Decorative Arts at the Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon, where he has worked since 2011. Before that, he was curator of the 17th- and 18th-centuries collections at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris. He has curated numerous exhibitions, including “Discovering the Secrets of Soft-Paste Porcelain at the Saint-Cloud Manufactory, ca. 1690–1766” (1999) and “Visitors to Versailles - From Louis XIV to the French Revolution” (2018).

Rosalind Savill

Former Director of the Wallace Collection



Madame de Pompadour's Sèvres Porcelain for Everyday Use

Today we see eighteenth-century porcelain as decorative, ornamental, lifeless even, but almost all of Madame de Pompadour's pieces were made for a contemporary or topical purpose, while she had surprisingly few wares simply for display. Whether brilliant and extravagant, or modest and unassuming, she brought her Sèvres porcelain to life.

Dame Rosalind Savill DBE, FBA, FSA, became Director of the Wallace Collection, London, in 1992 and retired in 2011. She has Visiting Professorships at the University of Buckingham and the University of the Arts, London. She won the European Woman of Achievement Award (Arts and Media) 2005, and was appointed an Officier of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, in 2014; she has been a member of the Conseil d'Administration at Sèvres Cité de la Céramique, is President of the French Porcelain Society, and on the Academic Committee of the Rothschild Foundation at Waddesdon Manor. She published *The Wallace Collection: Catalogue of Sèvres Porcelain* (3 vols, 1988), which won the National Art-Collection Fund prize for Scholarship in 1990 and *Everyday Rococo: Madame de Pompadour and Sèvres Porcelain* (2 vols, 2021), to mark Madame de Pompadour's 300th birthday.

Mia Jackson

Curator of Decorative Arts, Waddesdon Manor



Pampered and Adored: Madame de Pompadour's Pets

Madame de Pompadour had four dogs whose names are known to us: Bébé, Inès, Milady and Mimi, and they appear in her portraits as well as in their own painted and printed portraits. They wore velvet collars with gold bells and name tags. She also kept parrots, cockatoos, pheasants, finches, pigeons, chickens and a monkey. This paper will examine what we know of their lives and their portrayal in prints, porcelain and paintings.

Mia Jackson has been Curator of Decorative Arts at Waddesdon Manor since 2017. Her doctoral thesis entitled *André-Charles Boulle (1642-1732) and Paper: Prints and Drawings in the Workshop of an Ébéniste du Roi* was completed at Queen Mary University of London in 2016. She has previously worked in the Prints and Drawings Department at the British Museum, the Wallace Collection and English Heritage. She worked on the Riesener Project with the Wallace Collection and the Royal Collection, and has recently collaborated on a series of exhibitions on Alice de Rothschild with her colleagues at Waddesdon Manor.

Alexandre Gady

Professor of the History of Art, Sorbonne Université



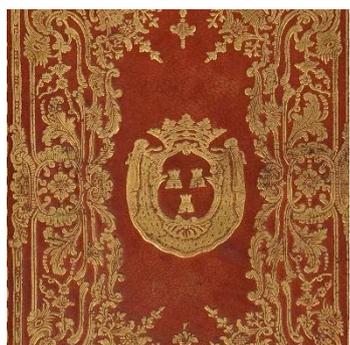
Madame de Pompadour as a Patron of Architecture: Some Reflections

Madame de Pompadour was a great consumer of architecture, from her châteaux to the royal building site of the Petit Trianon, via the Parisian palace of the Elysée. Should this aspect be complemented by a role in the Monarchy's monumental policy, when Louis XV revived the great building sites in the capital? Between taste and influence, the role of Mme de Pompadour will be examined.

Alexandre Gady is a professor of modern art history at Sorbonne University. He is a specialist in royal architecture and French urban planning of the 17th and 18th centuries, and more particularly in the history of Paris. He has devoted numerous books and dozens of exhibitions to these themes.

Rachel Jacobs

Curator of Books and Manuscripts, Waddesdon Manor



Madame de Pompadour's Library

Madame de Pompadour's impressive collection of over eleven thousand volumes, represented a 'true library of her time.' Her books reflect her love and patronage of the arts and literature, unsurprisingly rich in history and *Belles-Lettres* —poetry, theatre, and novels. The collection is not only known more publicly from the sale catalogue published after her death, but also from the many portraits of Madame de Pompadour pictured with her books. The paper will explore these portraits and what they can tell us about her as a reader and patron, while also providing an overview of the

library, with a more detailed look at some of her books, now in the Rothschild Collection at Waddesdon Manor.

Rachel Jacobs has been Curator of Books and Manuscripts at Waddesdon Manor since 2015, and an Assistant Curator at Waddesdon since 2011. She studied French Literature and History of Art at the University of Toronto, then an MA in Art Museum and Gallery Studies at the University of Leicester. She has curated exhibitions at Waddesdon Manor including, "Playing, Learning, Flirting: Printed Board Games from 18th-century France" (2012), "Glorious Years: French Calendars from Louis XIV to the Revolution" (2018), co-curated "Royal Spectacle: Eighteenth-Century Court Ceremony in Books, Prints and Drawings" (2014), and "Kate Malone: Inspired by Waddesdon" [with Adrian Sassoon] (2016). She wrote a guidebook for Lord Rothschild's residence at Eythrope (2020) and recently collaborated on a series of exhibitions on Alice de Rothschild with her colleagues at Waddesdon Manor (2022). Jacobs is currently based in Toronto, working part-time for the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum as Remote Senior Research Cataloguer on their Decloux collection of ornament prints, while continuing to work part-time remotely for Waddesdon Manor.

Alden Gordon

Paul E. Raether Distinguished Professor of Fine Arts, Trinity College, Hartford, CT.



The Language of Gifts: Madame de Pompadour's Hierarchy of Giving and Receiving

Madame de Pompadour developed a calibrated vocabulary of gifts and personal actions that she could escalate depending upon the situation, her purpose and the degree of personal attachment she had to the recipient. The talk will consider direct gifts, gifts as barter, third-party gifts, gifts of gratitude and conspiracy, compensatory gifts, gifts of genuine fondness and gifts within the family or to the King. The gamut includes works of art by her own hand, portraits, gems, miniatures, gold boxes, porcelain, tapestry,

textiles, horses, living plants, eatables, venal appointments, wedding catering and the privilege of receiving a note on special stationery.

Alden Gordon's work concentrates on the history of collecting in eighteenth-century France with a special emphasis on the Marquise de Pompadour and the Marquis de Marigny. He is currently at work on the biography of Marigny: *Art Patron in the Enlightenment: The Life and Career of the Marquis de Marigny*. His publications specifically about Pompadour and Marigny include *The Houses and Collections of the Marquis de Marigny* (Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute Press, 2003), 'The Dispersal of the Estate of Madame de Pompadour: New Documentary Evidence,' *The Burlington Magazine* (May, 2006), 'The Art Patronage of the Marquise de Pompadour and of the Marquis de Marigny, in Penelope Hunter-Stiebel and Philippe Le Leyzour, eds., *La Volupté du Goût: French Painting in the Age of Madame de Pompadour* (Portland Museum of Fine Arts, 2008), 'The Longest Enduring Pompadour Hoax: Sénac de Meilhan and the *Journal de Madame du Hausset*,' in Elise Goodman, ed., *Art and Culture in the Eighteenth Century: New Dimensions and Multiple Perspectives* (2001), 'Pompadour's Exchange of Gifts with the Duke of Newcastle, 1751,' (*The French Porcelain Society Journal*, 2015), and 'The Picture within the Picture: Boucher's 1750 *Portrait of Madame de Pompadour* Identified,' with Teri Hensick, in *Apollo* (February, 2002). A seasoned researcher in the French archives, Professor Gordon was recognized for his contribution to the knowledge of French culture in America with the title of Chevalier in the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (1999).