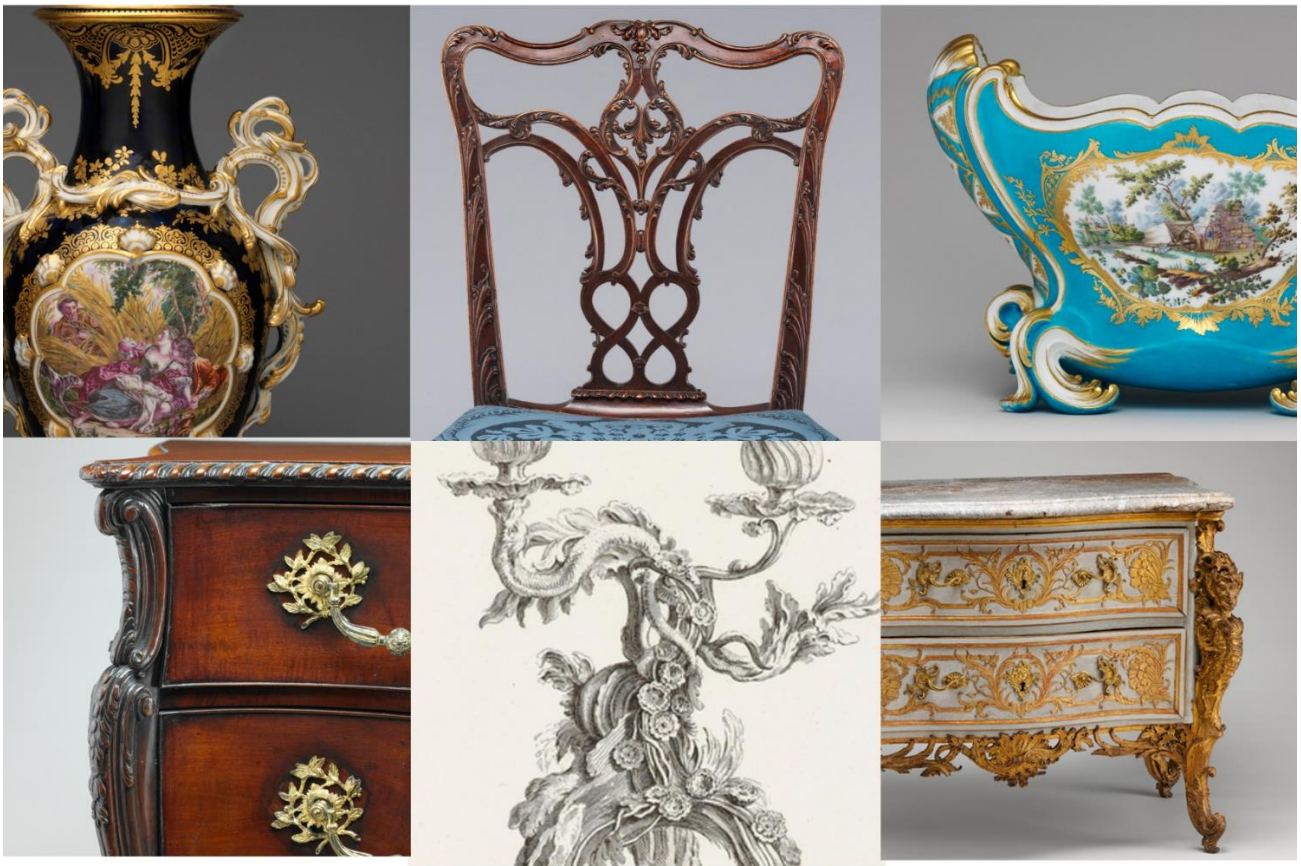


The
FURNITURE
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THE
FRENCH
PORCELAIN
SOCIETY

ROCOCO
ACROSS
BORDERS

DESIGNERS
&
MAKERS



FHS and FPS Joint Symposium, 24 & 25 March 2023

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

Day One – Friday, 24th March

- 10.00 Registration
10.20 Welcome and Introduction
Dame Rosalind Savill DBE, FSA, FBA President of the French Porcelain Society
10.30 Rococo Across Borders: Opening Remarks
- 10.35 Session One – A French Style and its Circulation**
Moderated by Helen Jacobsen
- 10.40 *Form versus Function: the Rococo Contradiction and its Application to French Eighteenth-Century Decorative Arts*
John Whitehead Independent Scholar
- 11.05 *Rocaille and Politics: The Diplomatic Gifts of Louis XV*
Marie-Laure Buku Pongo Assistant Curator of Decorative Arts, The Frick Collection, New York
- 11.30 Break**
- 11.55 *From Cathay to Paris: Trade with Asia, its Actors and its Influence on the Arts in Paris in the Eighteenth-Century*
Stéphane Castelluccio Directeur de recherche au CNRS, Centre André Chastel, Paris
- 12.20 *The Rococo Diaspora: Wandering Craftsmen, Objects, Patronage and Diplomacy*
Sarah D. Coffin Independent Curator, Former Senior Curator, Cooper Hewitt Museum, New York
- 12.45 Discussion
- 12.55 Lunch including ‘Object in Focus Sessions’ with V&A Collections and Curators**
Pre-booked ticket holders only
- 14.25 **Session Two: Virtuoso Rococo: England and the Netherlands**
Moderated by David Oakey
- 14.30 *‘A Peculiarity in the Lines’: Drawing and Carving ‘Rococo’ in mid-Eighteenth-Century England*
Jenny Saunt Curatorial Research Fellow, Victoria and Albert Museum, London
- 14.55 *Chelsea's Extreme Rococo: A Perspicuous Misunderstanding or a Calculated Risk*
Patricia Ferguson Independent Scholar
- 15.20 Break (Tea/Coffee in the Painting Galleries)**
- 15.50 *Designing or Making: On the Role of Craftsmen as Designers*
Reinier Baarsen Curator Emeritus of Decorative Arts, Rijksmuseum
- 16.15 *Rococo Silver in the Austrian Netherlands: A Virtuoso Kaleidoscope?*
Wim Nys, Head of Collections and Research, DIVA Museum, Antwerp
- 16.40 Discussion
16.50 Closing Remarks
17.00 End of Day One
18.00-19.30 Drinks Reception, Bonhams Knightsbridge, Montpelier Street, SW7 1HH
Pre-booked ticket holders only

Day Two – Saturday, 25th March

- 10.00 Registration
10.20 Welcome and Introduction
Christopher Rowell FSA Chairman of the Furniture History Society
- 10.30 Session Three: Inspiration and Emulation: Ireland, Germany and Russia**
Moderated by Caroline McCaffrey-Howarth
- 10.35 *The Prints of Carl Pier (b. 1717): Visions and Potentialities in Southern German Rococo Design*
Michael Yonan Professor of Art History, University of California
- 11.00 *Custom made for the King - Frederician Furniture in Berlin and Potsdam c. 1740-1775*
Henriette Graf Curator of Furniture, Stiftung Preußische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg
- 11.25 Break**
- 11.55 *The Englishness of Irish Rococo: The Dublin School of Stucco Workers*
Conor Lucey Associate Professor in Architectural History, University College Dublin
- 12.20 *Pineau le Russe: A French Sculptor in Service to the Tsars*
Turner Edwards Independent Scholar
- 12.45 Discussion
- 12.55 Lunch**
- 14.25 Session Four: Across the Seas: China, the Americas and back to France**
Moderated by Adriana Turpin
- 14.30 *Persistence, Resistance and Canadian Rococo Furniture*
Philippe Halbert Curator of American Decorative Arts, Wadsworth Athenaeum, Hartford
- 14.55 *Ornaments from the Western Ocean: Rococo as a Qing Imperial Style in the Decorative Arts*
Mei Mei Rado Assistant Professor, History of Textiles, Dress, and Decorative Arts, Bard Graduate Center, New York
- 15.20 Break (Tea/Coffee in the Painting Galleries)**
- 15.50 *The French Rococo Style in Colonial Latin America*
Dennis Carr Virginia Steele Scott Chief Curator of American Art, Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens, Los Angeles
- 16.15 *Colonial Fantasy and Rococo Regressions: Porcelain in the Time of Louis-Philippe*
Iris Moon Assistant Curator of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
- 16.40 Discussion
16.50 Closing Remarks
17.00 End of Day Two

Form versus Function: The Rococo Contradiction and its Application to French Eighteenth-Century Decorative Arts

John Whitehead

Independent Scholar



Perfume fountain. Porcelain. China, early Qianlong period (1736-95). Gilded bronze. Paris, c. 1743. © RMN-GP (Palace of Versailles) / Daniel Arnaudet

Evaluating success in the decorative arts during the rococo period is often linked to the fluency and compatibility of the relationship between sometimes fanciful theoretical designs and the actual hand-crafting of those designs into three-dimensional, usable objects. The rococo credentials of much French decorative art dating to the first half of the eighteenth century depend on whether they can be said to combine satisfactorily their fanciful freedom from the restrictions of classical proportions and use of natural motifs with their ultimate usability and practical equilibrium. We shall look at examples and designs to illustrate the varying ways the question is posed in different fields.



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. 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 and co-editor of the society's journal. In 2010 he was made an *officier* of the French *Ordre des Arts et des Lettres*.

Rocaille and Politics: The Diplomatic Gifts of Louis XV

Marie-Laure Buku Pongo

Assistant Curator of Decorative Arts, The Frick Collection, New York



Brazier offered as a diplomatic gift by Louis XV to the Ottoman ambassador in France, Mehmed Said Pasha, in 1742. Jean-Claude Duplessis. © Topkapi Palace Museum. inv. 4/2

‘A Madame la Comtesse Sedlinski : une tabatière d’or avec le portrait du Roi et entourage de diamans: 5100 livres.’ Note in the margin: ‘ Cette Dame avait alors la confiance du Cardinal de Bavière, Evêque de Liège.’

1753, *Registre des Présents du Roi*

Porcelain, jewellery, tapestries, carpets, clocks, watches, silver, gold boxes, snuffboxes, rifles, pistols, medals, books, paintings, furniture, Burgundy wine, Champagne and many other objects were used throughout the eighteenth century as diplomatic gifts. Used on various occasions to secure an alliance, gain more power or celebrate a peace treaty, these gifts were an integral part of the ceremonial and diplomatic practices during the ancien régime.

While the courts of Europe were the primary recipients, gifts were sent to the Ottoman empire, China, North Africa and even Northern America. They were also perceived as a tool to stimulate trade and spread *rocaille* beyond the borders of France.

Marie-Laure Buku Pongo is Assistant Curator of Decorative Arts at The Frick Collection in New York. She previously worked at the Palace of Versailles, assisting Bertrand Rondot, Chief Curator of Decorative Arts, with the exhibition *Versailles and the World for the Louvre Abu Dhabi*. In 2017, with Rondot and Daniëlle Kisluk-Grosheide of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, she helped prepare the touring exhibition *Visitors to Versailles: Travelers, Princes, Ambassadors (1682–1789)*. As Senior Assistant and Acting Head of Service in the Mission Ameublement at the Mobilier National, she advised and managed the furnishing of the Élysée Palace, the French Senate, the French Parliament and its embassies around the world. Buku Pongo will shortly complete her Ph.D. at the Sorbonne Université on ‘Diplomatic Gifts Offered by Louis XV: Works of Art and International Relations’.



From Cathay to Paris: Trade with Asia, its Actors and its Influence on the Arts in Paris in the Eighteenth-Century

Stéphane Castelluccio

Directeur de recherche au CNRS, Centre André Chastel, Paris

Asian creations, mainly Indian, Chinese and Japanese, reached Europe in unprecedented proportions from the middle of the seventeenth century thanks to the development of the India companies created in England, Holland and France. In Paris, the ‘marchands merciers’ played an essential role in the distribution of oriental products, having almost exclusive rights to their trade. They sold them as they were and then, gradually during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, completed and modified them to adapt them to the Western aesthetic. The fascination of imported fabrics, porcelains, lacquers and wallpapers had a major influence on the style, taste, imagination and techniques developed by craftsmen, artists, merchants and clients. This paper will first present the commercial circuits and their actors in the Paris of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It will then detail the different levels of influence, from the simple adoption of an ornamental vocabulary to technical research aimed at imitating these products, that so fascinated Europeans.



Vase (*vase chinois*), Sèvres Manufactory, decorated by Louis-François L'Écot, 1791, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman, 1971, 1971.206.23

Stéphane Castelluccio is Director of Research at the Centre André Chastel of the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) in the Institut national d'Histoire de l'art in Paris. A specialist in the history of the royal palaces, interior decoration, furniture, collections of fine arts, and the luxury trade in France during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Castelluccio has published numerous articles and fourteen books, the most recent being: *Le Goût pour les laques de Chine et du Japon aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (2019); *La Noblesse et ses domestiques au XVIIIe siècle* (2021), *Le Garde-Meuble de la Couronne et ses intendants du XVIe au XVIIIe siècle* (2022) and the scientific edition of the *Journal de la Cour, 1723-1785* (2022).

The Rococo Diaspora: Wandering Craftsmen, Objects, Patronage and Diplomacy

Sarah D. Coffin

Independent Curator, Former Senior Curator, Cooper Hewitt Museum, New York



Covered Tureen on Stand (*pot-à-oille*), 1735–38. Juste-Aurèle Meissonnier, silver, Cleveland Museum of Art, Leonard C. Hanna, Jr. Fund, 1977.182.

While the wedding and coronation of Louis XV saw the introduction of rococo design to France, it came primarily through the Torino-born and trained goldsmith and architect Juste-Aurèle Meissonnier's commissions from Louis XV and his father-in-law King Stanislas of Poland, later duc de Lorraine. Meissonnier's exposure to the Savoy taste in Torino and Stanislas's taste, may have provided a major impulse for the dissemination of rococo design to both Warsaw and Nancy. Other royal and wealthy individuals followed suit, from the crowns of Portugal and Spain to Frederick, Prince of Wales and Frederick the Great. The Duke of Kingston's tureens from a *surtout de table* designed by Meissonnier accompanied the ambassador and his wife to England and Russia. Italian

stuccoists in Austria, Germany, England and Ireland provided another source of this organic style. Modellers from the German states influenced rococo silver and ceramics in London. Rococo porcelain, silver and furniture and some of the great artisans who made them travelled with diplomats and collectors from one part of Europe to another. This paper will aim to show how, in addition to the printed sources, the routes and results of the migration of craftsmen and objects created new expressions of rococo design, as the style became appreciated from Europe to the American colonies during the eighteenth century.

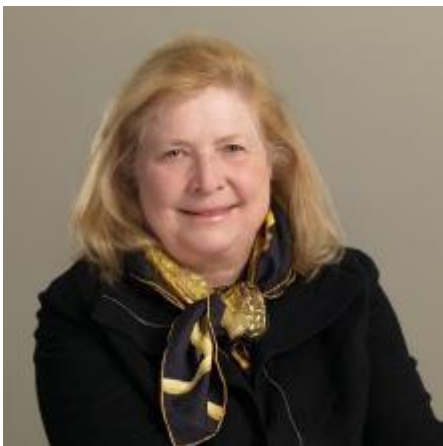


Photo: Matt Flynn

Sarah D. Coffin is an independent decorative arts and design historian, curator, consultant and lecturer. She was previously Senior Curator and Head of the Product Design and Decorative Arts Department at Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, New York where, in 2008 she co-curated and co-authored the exhibition and catalogue *Rococo: The Continuing Curve, 1730-2008*. In 2021 she co-authored *Hector Guimard: From Art Nouveau to Modernism*, the exhibition now on view at Cooper Hewitt and the Driehaus Museum in Chicago.

‘A Peculiarity in the Lines’:

Drawing and Carving ‘Rococo’ in mid-Eighteenth Century England

Jenny Saunt

Curatorial Research Fellow, Victoria and Albert Museum, London

This paper explores the design and production of carved works produced in England in the middle years of the eighteenth century. It looks at the ways in which the relationships between carving practice, drawing practice and how drawing was taught led to new ways of conceiving form and design. There is a temptation to consider design processes of this period as ‘solved’ by the profusion of extant drawings and prints that we have as our research resources today. This paper offers an alternative approach and sets out to read these visual sources against textual commentary of the time to re-create the craftsman’s voice: the missing piece of the story. By looking at the writings of Hogarth, Ince and Mayhew, Thomas Chippendale, George Bickham and Matthias Lock and reading these against a case study of mid-eighteenth-century carving, the new principles of carving and form that were transforming the practices and products of wood carving at that time can be re-animated. Not only were these craftsmen learning new ways of understanding and inventing three-dimensional form, they were also developing their capacity to design through a new method of work, a mode of design and making which came into being through the craftsmen’s engagement with this ‘peculiarity in the lines’.



Detail of carved and gilded table, c. 1750, V&A W.52-1949, currently on loan to Bath Preservation Trust, on display at their eighteenth-century house museum, No. 1, The Royal Crescent, Bath.

Jenny Saunt works at the V&A, in the Furniture and Woodwork section of the Performance, Furniture, Textiles and Fashion Department and specialises in furniture and interiors of the long eighteenth century as the Oliver Ford Curatorial Research Fellow. She sits on the Council of the Furniture History Society, is a trustee for the Strawberry Hill Collections Trust and co-convenor of the annual New Insights Conference at the Antiquaries Society, London, which focuses on the architecture and interiors of the early modern period in Great Britain. Her PhD at the Courtauld Institute and V&A/RCA Masters degree both focused on the design and production of decorative lime plasterwork in early-modern England.



Chelsea's Extreme Rococo: A Perspicuous Misunderstanding or a Calculated Risk

Patricia Ferguson

Independent Scholar



Perfume vase with fantasy bird, crimson ground, c. 1761. Chelsea Porcelain Manufactory (British, 1745–84, Gold Anchor Period, 1759–69). Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Gift of Irwin Untermyer, 1964, 64.101.510a, b.

Between 1759 and 1764, as a British victory in the war against France was increasingly assured, the Chelsea manufactory's proprietor, a former silversmith, Nicholas Sprimont (1716–71) produced ever more capricious vases in an extreme rococo, a style associated with the enemy, known as the 'Anti-Gallican spirit'. The patriotic Anti-Gallican Society, founded in 1745, aimed to improve Britain's economic competitiveness through enhanced design skills eliminating the aristocratic preference for French luxuries. The arms of the society appeared in 1758 in the dedication plate for an equally eccentric set of inexecutable 'modern' designs for woodworkers by the London carver Thomas Johnson (1714–78). Sprimont's new vases gave sculptural form to these design prints in the 'modern' or 'French' taste, sharing features found in similarly bizarre designs by John Linnell (1729–96) in *A new book of ornament useful for silver-smith's*, London, c. 1755–60. Rather than second-guessing Paris fashions, these vases responded to the creed that variety was evidence of virtuosity.



Patricia F. Ferguson was a Project Curator, 18th-century ceramics, in the Department of Britain, Europe and Prehistory, British Museum, London, from 2017 to 2020. Between 2006 and 2017, she was a consulting curator at the Victoria and Albert Museum in the Asian and Ceramic Departments, and from 2011 was Hon. Adviser on ceramics to the National Trust. Her publications include *Pots, Prints and Politics: Ceramics with an Agenda, from the 14th to the 20th Century* (2021); *Ceramics: 400 years of British Collecting in 100 Masterpieces* (2016); and *Garnitures: Vase Sets from National Trust Houses* (2016). She is currently researching Asian ceramics in The National Trust for Scotland.

Designing or Making: On the Role of Craftsmen as Designers

Reinier Baarsen

Curator Emeritus of Decorative Arts at the Rijksmuseum



Baijer drawing inv. no. RP-T-2017-3-7. Rijksmuseum

A rare series of designs for Louis XV marquetry furniture made in Paris by one Baijer raises questions about the role of craftsmen as designers. It seems likely that Baijer was a marquetry maker, who probably designed his own work. Was he also involved in the design of the furniture that was decorated with his marquetry? Who was responsible for designing the work of the famous Parisian *ébénistes* of the eighteenth century and of their less famous, often anonymous colleagues? Careful investigation of Baijer's drawings may point to some answers to these questions.

Reinier Baarsen is Curator Emeritus of decorative arts at the Rijksmuseum and professor emeritus in the history of European decorative arts at Leiden University. He worked for nearly forty years at the Rijksmuseum, where he retired at the end of 2022. He organized numerous exhibitions there, among them 'Rococo in Holland' in 2001, and 'Kwab. Ornament as art in the age of Rembrandt' in 2018. For the past ten years he has been actively collecting European design drawings for the Rijksmuseum and will continue to do so as a special assignment. The new collection is featured in the exhibition 'Process. Design Drawings from the Rijksmuseum 1500-1900', which is at the Fondation Custodia in Paris until 14 May 2023.



Rococo Silver in the Austrian Netherlands: A Virtuoso Kaleidoscope?

Wim Nys

Head of Collections and Research, DIVA Museum, Antwerp

The lack of an in-depth study on rococo silver in the Austrian Netherlands throws up many questions on the origin and the distribution of the rococo in a region with diverse production centres. How and when this new style was introduced? Which silversmiths were working *au dernier goût* and what was their source of inspiration? Also, is there a discrepancy between the rather traditional tablewares and imported trinkets or objects of vertu? Focusing on silversmiths in the Land van Waas, a region between Antwerp, Brussels and Ghent, and eighteenth-century ornament prints, this paper will investigate how the rococo style was introduced and applied.



Left: Holy water stoup, Antoine-Constant de Bettignies, Mons, 1765. Collection City of Antwerp, DIVA, S55/20, Right: Church of St. Laurent Lokeren, Altar ornament, Franciscus Nijs, Temse, 1765. Photos: Hugo Maertens.

A kaleidoscopic survey of the work of Jean-Henry Liénard, Petrus Simon Hoffinger and Jean-Baptiste Verberckt in Antwerp, Lambertus Millé in Brussels, Franciscus Nijs in Temse and Antoine-Constant de Bettignies in Mons on the one hand and the royal sculptor Jacques Verberckt, the architect-sculptor Jan Pieter van Bourscheit, the ornament prints of Germain, Meissonnier and Habermann, the engravers Heylbrouck and Fruijtiers and the ‘À la Mode de Paris’ shop in Antwerp on the other provides new insights into the development of rococo silver in the Austrian Netherlands.



Wim Nys is head of collections and research at DIVA, the Museum for Diamonds, Jewellery and Silver in Antwerp. He previously worked as curator and researcher for the Silver Museum Sterckshof of the Province of Antwerp. In 2015, he obtained his PhD at the University of Ghent with his thesis ‘Silversmiths in the Land van Waas 1688-1869. A prosopographical study’. In his research into the field of goldsmithing and jewellery he pays particular attention to handbooks and ornament prints as source of inspiration, models and collector’s items.

***The Prints of Carl Pier (b. 1717):
Visions and Potentialities in Southern German Rococo Design***

Michael Yonan

Professor of Art History, University of California, Davis



Carl Pier's series *Aufbauten aus Muschelwerken mit Kindern*, c. 1745.

This paper analyses the social connections of a little-known designer in southern Germany, Carl Pier (b. 1717) whose work survives in only two commissions, both in the German town of Ellwangen. His reputation rests on his prints, made in the 1740s, which are some of the most experimental and unusual produced in eighteenth-century Bavaria. This paper will examine why an artist in this region would make such images and reflect on the roles of rococo prints for designers and patrons in a specifically southern German context.

Michael Yonan has the Alan Templeton Endowed Chair in the History of European Art, 1600-1830 at the University of California, Davis where he has been Professor of Art History since 2020. His PhD from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2001 was entitled 'Embodying the Empress-Widow: Maria Theresa and the Arts at Schönbrunn, 1765-1780'. His many publications include *Messerschmidt's Character Heads: Maddening Sculpture and the Writing of Art History* (2021), *Empress Maria Theresa and the Politics of Habsburg Imperial Art* (2011), *Eighteenth-Century Art Worlds: Global and Local Geographies of Art* (2019), co-edited with Stacey Sloboda and *The Cultural Aesthetics of Eighteenth-Century Porcelain* (2010), co-edited with Alden Cavanaugh.



Custom Made for the King - Frederician Furniture in Berlin and Potsdam c. 1740-1775

Henriette Graf

Curator of Furniture, Stiftung Preußische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg



Desk custom made for Frederick II by Melchior Kambly, c. 1768.

To promote manufacturing and manufactures involved with interior decoration, Frederick II of Prussia (1712-86) embellished his palaces with luxurious chandeliers, silk wall hangings and textiles, huge wall mirrors and furniture tailor made for him. Some of the cabinetmakers had already supplied pieces of furniture to his parents, Queen Sophia Dorothea and Frederick William I for the Berlin Schloss and several palaces. When Frederick II succeeded to the throne in 1740 they were immediately employed by the court. Martin Böhme (act.1723-57) was among them as well as Johann Schilansky (act.1745- before 1763).

In 1746 Sanssouci Palace was built and furnished in Potsdam. Johann Heinrich Hülsman (c.1688 - 1760) was cabinetmaker to the king, making the library panelling and several chests of drawers. He continued to work in the Potsdam Stadtschloss. The most outstanding pieces were created by Johann Melchior Kambly (1718-84) who established the Prussian bronze manufactory in 1752 run by French

bronziers. Kambly created the first turtleshell furniture mounted with gilt bronze (a small *bureau plat* and a corner closet) for the writing *cabinet* in the Stadtschloss. In 1900 this furniture was sent to the World Exhibition in Paris in a display of the Collections of Works of Art established by Frederick the Great, now owned by Kaiser William II.

After the Seven Years' War (1756-1763) the New Palais was built in Sanssouci Park. The king's apartments were to be the most luxurious he had ever ordered, furnished with turtleshell commodes, pietra-dura tabletops, sculpted gilt and silvered pier tables and numerous suites of seat furniture. The furniture and interiors remained untouched by his successors, even Kaiser William II who lived there until November 1918 when he fled to Holland. Like his ancestors, he had presented as the dignified successor to Frederick II, validated ruler of Prussia and the German Reich.

Henriette Graf obtained her PhD in 1996 from the Paris-Lodron-University, Salzburg, Austria with a thesis entitled 'Die Reichen Zimmer of the Munich Residence. Studies in suites of rooms in the 18th century'. Since 2009 she has been Curator of Furniture at the Stiftung Preußische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg.



The Englishness of Irish Rococo: The Dublin School of Stucco Workers

Conor Lucey

Associate Professor in Architectural History, University College Dublin



Ceiling and cornice of front drawing room, 20
Dominick Street Lower, Dublin, c. 1758-60.
Photo: Conor Lucey

The historiography of decorative plasterwork in Ireland has long championed the so-called ‘Dublin School’ of stucco workers, or stucco-men, a largely anonymous troupe of plasterers active in the 1760s and early 1770s. Received wisdom suggests that their vocabulary of *rocaille*, acanthus tendrils and arabesque constitutes a vernacular response to a continental ornamental repertoire mediated through embodied knowledge and demonstrative practice: European craftsmen working in Ireland, from Paolo and Filippo Lafranchini in the 1730s to Barthelemij Cramillion in the 1750s, stimulated a unique and burgeoning local production. Moreover, in their *Insular Rococo* (1999), Timothy Mowl and Brian Earnshaw went so far as to suggest a vector of

artistic influence never before entertained in the British scholarship on interior design – the influence of Irish modes of decoration on English houses in a benign gesture of ‘cultural colonialism’ – although this book was subsequently criticised for its failure to substantiate its thesis with material or documentary evidence. This stands in marked contrast to the scholarship on Irish silver, furniture and related luxury goods, that acknowledges England, specifically London, as the principal centre of stylistic innovation. Missing from the collective scholarship is an understanding of the role and influence of published English designs on local Irish practices; designs by John Crunden, N. Wallis and others, names not often invoked in scholarship on the rococo in either England or Ireland, inspired an extraordinary and unequalled efflorescence of stucco decoration in Dublin’s terraced houses. Given that interiors in Ireland share with Britain what Peter Thornton has described as ‘a rococo veneer’ over an essentially Palladian architectural framework – as opposed to the more fully integrated interiors of their European counterparts – this paper will argue that the designs and productions of the Dublin School are properly a constituent of a British rococo taste.

Conor Lucey is Associate Professor in Architectural History at University College Dublin. He is an architectural and design historian with interests in a number of related fields, including urban domestic architecture of the eighteenth-century British Atlantic world; the contested relationship between architectural design and building production; and the decorative interior in Europe, 1660-1830. Essays on these topics have appeared in the *Journal of the Society of*

Architectural Historians, *The Burlington Magazine* and *Architectural History*, among other titles. His recent book, *Building Reputations: Architecture and the Artisan, 1750–1830* (Manchester University Press, 2018), was awarded the prestigious Alice Davis Hitchcock Medallion (2019) by the Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain for its ‘outstanding contribution to the study or knowledge of architectural history’. A new edited volume, entitled *House and Home in Georgian Ireland: Spaces and Cultures of Domestic Life* (Four Courts Press, 2022), offers new perspectives on how diverse needs and motivations shaped personal, cultural and social identities in and through domestic space.



Pineau le Russe: A French Sculptor in Service to the Tsars

Turner Edwards

Independent Scholar



Nicolas Pineau, Two designs for overdoor panels in the oak cabinet of Peter the Great at Peterhof Palace, c. 1720, red chalk, black chalk and pencil on paper, Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, 29124. Photo © Les Arts Décoratifs.

Russia's status in the eighteenth century as a space for foreign artists to exercise and develop their artistic practice and train local craftsmen is well established, with figures such as Bartolomeo Rastrelli (1700-71) pushing the *rocaille* to its very limits under the rule of Empress Elizabeth (1709-62). One of the very first batch of foreign artists to arrive in Russia during the reign of Peter the Great (1672-1725) was a group of over twenty French artists and artisans, headed by Jean-Baptiste Alexandre Le Blond (1679-1719). Among them was the sculptor, woodcarver and eventual architect Nicolas Pineau (1684-1754).

Considered to be one of the foremost representatives of rococo decoration in Paris in the 1730s to 1750s, Pineau's time in Russia (1716-28), which spanned over twelve years and three reigns, covered an important gestational period for the *rocaille*. Having left France shortly after the death of Louis XIV (1643-1715), Pineau brought with him an ornamental vocabulary that was decidedly indebted to the seventeenth century, and returned with an outlook on ornament and interior decoration that was nothing if not modern. This paper proposes a new reading of the ways in which *rocaille* and the rococo developed following different tracks during the first decades of the eighteenth century by drawing on the decorative schemes invented by Pineau in Saint Petersburg. There will also be a discussion of the working relationships between other Western and local craftsmen and how these ties were perpetuated throughout Pineau's career, even after his return to France.

Turner Edwards completed his undergraduate studies in Classics & French at Brasenose College, Oxford. He then moved to Paris and pursued studies in History of Art at the École Normale Supérieure and the Sorbonne, defending his Masters dissertation on the Horthemels sisters in 2019. Since 2020, he has been working at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs (Paris) on a research project devoted to Nicolas Pineau, draftsman and sculptor, under the direction of Dr Bénédicte Gady.



Persistence, Resistance, and Canadian Rococo Furniture

Philippe Halbert

Curator of American Decorative Arts at the Wadsworth Athenaeum, Hartford

In October 1806 the editor of the English-language *Quebec Mercury*, Thomas Cary, bemoaned increasing ethnic and linguistic tensions in Lower Canada, a province created in 1791 and encompassing much of present-day Quebec. ‘This province is already too much a French province for an English colony’, he opined before declaring that ‘to *unfrenchify* it, as much as possible [...] should be a primary object, particularly at these times.’ Cary’s words alluded to the looming threat of Napoleonic France but French-speaking *Canadiens* were more than capable of challenging British cultural hegemony themselves. A compelling facet of their resistance can be seen in the ‘frenchified’ furniture made by generations of Canadian cabinetmakers, carvers, and joiners who, like many of their patrons remained steadfast, if not resiliently conservative, in their adherence to French design precepts. The bold, exuberant curves of the rococo offered an especially powerful means by which to articulate and leverage French Canadian identity after the fall of New France in 1763 and well after the style had given way to neoclassicism. Craftsmen like Louis Quévillon (1749-1823) continued to supply the powerful Roman Catholic Church with altarpieces, case furniture for storing religious vestments, and reliquaries embellished with curves, shells, and floral motifs. Other Canadian interpretations of the rococo include forms such as serpentine or ‘crossbow’ front commodes of butternut, maple, and pine that by the 1780s paired a French rococo silhouette with a distinctive local variation on the Chippendale ball and claw. Extending from the Saint Lawrence Valley, across the Great Lakes and down the Mississippi River to Louisiana, the ‘Canadian rococo’ constitutes a dynamic, often surprising synthesis of high style, ‘frenchified’ taste, and vernacular traditions. This presentation will provide a trans-regional, trans-cultural reading of the rococo as it evolved within a comparatively understudied North American context. In the process, I seek to complicate our understanding of the rococo’s transmission, continued influence, and survival beyond the geographic

confines of metropolitan France.



Philippe Halbert is a graduate of the College of William and Mary and the Winterthur Program in American Material Culture. He received his PhD in the history of art from Yale University in 2022. His research focuses on material culture, self-fashioning and identity in the colonial Americas and early modern Europe, with emphasis on the French Atlantic world. Philippe is a co-founder of *Materializing Race: Objects and Identity in #VastEarlyAmerica*.



Rococo-style tabernacles in the church of Saint-Léon-le-Grand, located in the Mauricie region of Quebec, mid-1760s, by Jean-Baptiste Hardy (1731-after 1776) and his brother Pierre (1737-after 1772).

***‘Ornaments from the Western Ocean’:
Rococo as a Qing Imperial Style in the Decorative Arts***

Mei Mei Rado

Assistant Professor Bard Graduate Center, New York



Left: Porcelain Vase with overglaze painted enamel decoration, Qianlong reign mark, mid-18th century, The Palace Museum, Beijing; *Right:* Mantel Clock with music box, James Cox, English, 1765, The Palace Museum, Beijing.

In the eighteenth century a major outcome of the cultural exchanges between the imperial court of the Qing dynasty (1644-1912) and Europe was the assimilation of European styles, motifs and techniques in Qing court arts. Gauvin A. Bailey has thoroughly examined the rococo ornaments in the European architecture in the Summer Palace (Yuanming Yuan). This paper investigates a little studied topic: the adaptation of rococo vocabulary in eighteenth-century Qing imperial decorative arts across various media, ranging from porcelain bearing painted enamel designs, hardwood furniture, timepieces with intricate mechanism, and textiles including silks and woollen tapestries. Between the 1720s and the 1770s, many high-end objects produced by the Qing imperial workshops featured a new decorative scheme—simply referred to as ‘ornaments from the Western Ocean’ in court documents—which encompassed baroque- and *rocaille*-style sinuous lines, C and S scrolls, coiling leaves, and

shell motifs. Such designs were often mediated by Chinese aesthetics and combined with indigenous motifs. This unique eclectic style became a trademark of Qing imperial arts. Qing court documents show that prints hardly existed as a reference for such designs. Instead, actual objects from Europe frequently lent inspiration to new designs executed by artists serving in the Qing imperial workshops. My research suggests that European snuffboxes with metal mounts and English timepieces, which had a prominent presence at the Qing court, offered rich sources for the rococo decorations in Qing court porcelain, furniture and clocks, while rococo patterns in silks and tapestries were often directly copied from European textiles. Towards the end of Qing dynasty, Empress Dowager Cixi (1835-1908) revived the rococo style in her interior decoration to assert her matriarchal power and diplomatic attitude, infusing new meanings to this time-honoured Qing imperial style.

Mei Mei Rado is Assistant Professor at Bard Graduate Center in New York, specializing in textiles, dress, and decorative arts in China and France from the eighteenth to the early twentieth centuries. Previously she was Associate Curator of Costume and Textiles at Los Angeles County Museum of Art. She also held fellowship positions at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Dept. of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts) and the Palace Museum, Beijing (Dept. of Textiles). Dr Rado has lectured and published widely, and she has won prestigious grants, including those from the American Council of Learned Societies and the Society of Antiquaries of London. Her forthcoming book is titled *The Empire’s New Cloth: Western Textiles at the Eighteenth Century Qing Court*.



The French Rococo Style in Colonial Latin America

Dennis Carr

Virginia Steele Scott Chief Curator of American Art, Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens, Los Angeles



José Manuel de la Cerda, Desk-on-stand, Pátzcuaro, Michoacán, Mexico, 1760s, lacquered and polychromed wood with gold decoration. Photo © The Hispanic Society Museum and Library, New York.

With the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–14), the Spanish crown was brought under the control of the French House of Bourbon. This political change introduced new artistic styles and customs to Spain and Spain's overseas territories, including those in Latin America. While the earlier Baroque and Mudéjar styles predominated in Latin American architecture and furniture design during the eighteenth century, the rococo added new modes of ornamentation and expression, sometimes mixing with local stylistic treatments and the use of Indigenous artistic materials. The rococo style is found in both domestic and religious contexts across the Spanish empire, from Mexico to the Philippines to South America.

This talk focuses on individual artists in Latin America who worked in the rococo style in the decorative arts, in particular furniture. Among those are Domingo Gutiérrez, a Canary-Islands-born furniture maker and carver, who along with the painter Juan Pedro López, is credited with introducing the rococo style to Venezuela in the mid-eighteenth century. Also considered is the extraordinary eighteenth-century lacquer furniture of José Manuel de la Cerda, an Indigenous painter from the town of Pátzcuaro in the western state of Michoacán, Mexico. By combining the

style of imported Asian lacquerware with Indigenous painting materials and the vogue for European chinoiserie, de la Cerda's work visualizes Mexico's position as the nexus of the transpacific and transatlantic trade routes that connected Spain's global empire. His work also signals the increasing influence of French styles under the Bourbon court during a period of changing leadership of the viceroyalty of New Spain during the period of the Seven Years War.

Dennis Carr is the Virginia Steele Scott Chief Curator of American Art at the Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens. Prior to joining The Huntington in January 2020, he was the Carolyn and Peter Lynch Curator of American Decorative Arts and Sculpture at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston for 13 years. There, he worked to expand and diversify the collection of American, Latin American, and Native American art and was a co-curator of the award-winning, 53-gallery Art of the Americas Wing in 2010. He has also contributed to publications, such as *Common Wealth: Art by African Americans in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* and *Art and Industry in Early America: Rhode Island Furniture, 1650-1830*, which won the Charles F. Montgomery Book Prize and the Historic New England Book Prize.



Photo: Olga Vanegas

Colonial Fantasy and Rococo Regressions: Porcelain in the Time of Louis-Philippe

Iris Moon

Assistant Curator of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

This paper takes as its subject a Sèvres partial coffee service in the Metropolitan Museum of Art and what it might tell us about the potential political meanings of the rococo revival during the precarious reign of Louis-Philippe (r. 1830-48), the bourgeois king of post-revolutionary France. Building on the work of Katie Scott and Melissa Hyde in *Rococo Echo*, the paper proposes to think of the rococo not along a progressive linear trajectory of development, flourishing, and decline, but instead contemplate the ways in which the style in the nineteenth century



Coffee set, 1836, Sèvres porcelain manufactory, pictorial decoration by Jean Charles Develly, gilding by Pierre Riton. Purchase, The Charles E. Sampson Memorial Fund and Gift of Irwin Untermyer, by exchange, 1986.281.4. Photo © Metropolitan Museum of Art.

might better be characterised by a structure of returns, recursions, and in the case of this paper, regressions. Manufactured at Sèvres in 1836 and sent to Queen Marie-Amélie, the partial service features original compositions by the factory painter Charles Develly of *Culture et récolte de cacao*. Set in a lush, tropical landscape, the scenes depicted in the reserves of the tray and vessels are reminiscent of the travels that the naturalist Alexander von Humboldt undertook from around 1799 to 1804 to South America in an effort to discover new scientific species and specimens. However, closer observation of each painting shows a careful staging of colonial encounters in the ‘New World’ in the compositional framework of rococo paintings. This regression to ancien régime pictorial idioms of fantasy and what Adrienne Childs has described as ‘colonial reverie’ carried with it a political agenda, deeply tied to France’s colonial territorial ambitions under Louis-Philippe.



Iris Moon is Assistant Curator in charge of European ceramics and glass in the European Sculpture and Decorative Arts Department at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. She is the author of *Luxury after the Terror* (2022) and co-editor with Richard Taws of *Time, Media, and Visuality in Post-Revolutionary France* (2021). A new book on Wedgwood is forthcoming (2023) with MIT Press. She teaches at The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art.

Object in Focus Sessions

The organisers would like to thank the curators and conservators at the Victoria and Albert Museum, who offered to host the below *Object in Focus* sessions, during the lunch-break on Friday 24th March:

Furniture: Dana Melchar, Sarah Medlam, Jenny Saunt

Silver: Alice Minter

Porcelain: Simon Spier

Moderators

Helen Jacobsen is Executive Director of The Attingham Trust. Formerly Senior Curator and Curator of French Decorative Arts at the Wallace Collection, she has curated exhibitions and published on French eighteenth-century furniture and collecting history. She is a member of the Committee of the French Porcelain Society and of the Grants Committee of the Furniture History Society.

Caroline McCaffrey-Howarth is an art historian and curator specialising in the visual and material cultures of early modern Europe. She is Lecturer in French and British History of Art c.1650-1900 at the University of Edinburgh. Caroline was previously Curator of 1600-1800 Ceramics & Glass at the V&A Museum and Lecturer in History of Design for the RCA/V&A. She is currently writing two books, one on the art collector and philanthropist *Lady Charlotte Schreiber* for Lund Humphries (2024), and a forthcoming monograph entitled *Sèvres-mania: The Craft of Ceramics Connoisseurship* for Bloomsbury Academic (2025). Caroline is a Trustee of the French Porcelain Society, the English Ceramics Circle and the Furniture History Society.

David Oakey is the curator of a private art collection and is co-chair of the Furniture History Society Events Committee. He previously worked in the Decorative Arts Section of the Royal Collection Trust for seven years, and as a researcher in the commercial art world.

Adriana Turpin is head of research IESA Arts&Culture, Paris and the collaborative MA in Managing Art and Cultural Heritage in Global Markets. She is the Chairman of the FHS Grants Committee and Project Manager for British and Irish Furniture Makers Online.

Organising Committee

Beatrice Goddard, Diana Davis, Patricia Ferguson, Sophie von der Goltz, Caroline McCaffrey-Howarth, David Oakey, Adriana Turpin, Natalie Voorheis and Martin Williams

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