

The Furniture History Society

Newsletter 227

August 2022



In this issue: The Dresden court lacquerer, Christian Reinow, and a *trompe-l'oeil* cabinet-on-stand for the Princess of Wales in 1721 | FHS News | FHS Events Calendar | FHS Events | ECD News | Discoveries and Research Developments | Book Reviews | Reports on FHS Events | Tributes | Other News | Grants | Publications

The Dresden court lacquerer, Christian Reinow, and a *trompe-l'oeil* cabinet-on-stand for the Princess of Wales in 1721: a new discovery within a new acquisition by the SLUB

For Jóhannes

The State University Library (SLUB) in Dresden, Germany, recently acquired a bound volume of 123 pages of letters from Christoph August von Wackerbarth (1662-1734) to his adopted son, Joseph Anton Gabaleon von Wackerbarth-Salmour (1685-1761), in 1721. The senior Wackerbarth was a cabinet minister, field marshal, architect and advisor to Augustus the Strong. His stepson, the Turin-born Wackerbarth-Salmour, was, likewise, a roving Saxon minister, and diplomat to the Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, and to his son and successor, Augustus III. In 1731, he became *Oberhofmeister* (Chief Steward) to Crown Prince Friedrich Christian (1722-63), accompanying him to Italy in 1738-40, and to Munich in exile during the Seven Years War, where he died.¹ Akin to a surrogate father to the disabled young prince, Wackerbarth-Salmour never married and left no heirs.

An inventory of his estate was compiled between September 1761 and October 1762; it spans the *recto* and *verso* of 133 pages and was written in German, with select wording or passages in French. The inventory enumerates the furnishings of his multi-storey apartment in the Crown Prince's residence in Dresden, the Taschenberg Palais, with various listings of the porcelains (Asian and Meissen, some of them showpieces and collector's items, others merely useful wares); paintings; sculptures; drawings; pastels; prints; precious items, including snuffboxes and two tortoiseshell chess sets; devotional items; wooden furniture and storage boxes; firearms; hundreds of printed books and folios of prints; architectural models and drawings; maps; a harpsichord in a black-lacquer chinoiserie case; three sedan chairs; mirrors for room decoration; clocks; his wardrobe of clothing; and the wine cellar. There are also countless folders of loose papers, some of them handwritten

and others described as sets of drawings, some for his own residences (Zabeltitz, for example) or the Crown Prince's, and a diploma from the Academia dell'Arcadia. There were, moreover, numerous bound volumes of correspondence, some of it dating to 1708 and subsequent decades, some described as his father's letters or letters to or from other named recipients. Some of the volumes were organized by year and others alphabetically. According to archival documents in the Dresden State Museums, namely two inventories dated 1742 and 1765, a few of Wackerbarth-Salmour's antiquities entered the Royal Collection, even during his lifetime.² Yet the whereabouts of his library and personal papers, and the rest of his property, has not been researched. Notwithstanding, the bulk of his official correspondence and state papers are found in the state archives in Dresden, it appears that the astonishing collection of personal correspondence recorded in the inventory did not transfer to the state. It is, therefore, tantalizing to find that what was listed in the inventory as: *Ein Paquet dergl. [Lettres] pour les années 1721. Tome III* was recently acquired by the SLUB.³ This acquisition raises the possibility that the remainder of the private papers, and, perhaps, his personal library too, have survived. The title page to the volume reads: *Lettres de son Excellence Monseigneur Le General Comte de Wackerbart À Monsieur Joseph Comte de Wackerbart son fils Pour L'annee 1721. Tome III.*

According to the letters, Wackerbarth senior was living in Dresden in 1721 and Wackerbarth-Salmour was based in Vienna at the time. Some of the correspondence

references portraits by the artist Johann Georg de Hamilton (1672-1737) and his family: fruit trees for Prince Eugene of Savoy; Balthasar Permoser's apotheosis of Prince Eugene and its delivery to Vienna⁴; in addition to: a search for a truffle hunter; purchases of Tokay wine; the acquisition of fresh flowers, melons, doves and medals from Italy; carnival in Dresden; the Leipzig fair; the building of a chinoiserie palace at Pillnitz; Wackerbarth family properties in Vienna and elsewhere; the Vienna lottery of that year; imported sea salt; the aging and various maladies of Wackerbarth senior; and other matters. The tone throughout is intimate, father to son.

Of interest to the FHS, is the back-and-forth correspondence about a commission by Dowager Empress Wilhelmine Amalie (1643-1742) for a pair of cabinets-on-stands from the Dresden court lacquerer, Christian Reinow (1685-1749). On January 3, Wackerbarth writes from Dresden:

Quant à la commission touchant certaine caissette élaborée avec des pierres de rapport, dont Msr: le Chevalier de Dittrichstein vous a chargé de la part de l'Imperatrice Amalie, je m'en informerai, et vous aurez plus d'éclaircissement la dessus par le premier ordinaire; bien loin que cela me donnera de l'embarras, je serai bien aise de pouvoir vous procurer par la l'estime d'une Dame d'un rang si élevé.⁵

A letter from January 20th indicates the intended recipient of this commission was to be *la Princesse de Galles*, meaning Caroline, Princess of Wales (1683-1737), consort of the future George II, who gave birth to a son in 1721. In this letter, Wackerbarth provides his son with the answers to four questions posed by

Wilhelmine Amalie, who asked if the hardstone-work was like that on a gift from her granddaughter, Maria Josepha (1699-1757) (who married the Crown Prince of Saxony and future Augustus III in 1719) to the reigning Empress Elisabeth Christine (1691-1750); if the maker had another such piece ready for sale; if not, how long would it take to produce such an item; and the cost:

Maintenant que j'ai toute l'information necessaire pour pouvoir repondre aux demandes que vous m'avez faites, touchant le present que l'Imperatrice Amalie cherche pour la Princess de Galles, j'y repondrai point par point, ainsi que je l'ai trouvé dans votre lettre. Vos questions sont

- 1. Si une certaine cassette elaborée avec des pierres de rapport dont notre Princesse Royale a fait present à l'Imperatrice Regnant, à été faite a Dresden ou achetée par rencontre.*
- 2. Si l'ouvrier etant à Dresden en avoit peut etre une autre à vendre.*
- 3. Ou bien s'il n'en avoit point de prete il pourroit en livrer une bientôt et combien de tems il lui faudroit pour cela, et*
- 4. Le prix qu'il en voudra.⁶*

Wackerbarth clarified that the gift from Maria Josepha to the consort of Charles VI, referred to as a *caissette* (a small chest), was made in Dresden but the hardstones were in fact painted imitations of what might be called *pietre dure*, and that the maker also provided a pier table and *gueridons* in the same style, which were also sent to Vienna⁷; that the maker was still in Dresden and though he did not have a completed example of a similar piece, he had two cabinets underway which would

be ready by Easter, for which he supplied a watercolour design that is bound into the volume; and the cost would be 1000 *écus* [in German, *Thalers*] each or 2000 for the pair, as indicated by the invoice that likewise survives and was signed by Reinow:

ad 1) La cassette en question a été faite ici à Dresden, ce pendant elle n'est pas de pierres de rapport; mais imitée avec tant d'art, qu'on le pourroit prendre pour des pierres de rapport, et comme avec des couleurs vernissées on le peut rendre plus parfait, qu'on ne le trouve souvent dans les pierres memes, cela fait la beauté de ces sortes d'ouvrages. Le meme ouvrier, qui a fait la cassette en question, a aussi fait pour la Princesse Royale une table et deux queridons de la meme façon, laquelle Elle a envoyé aussi à Vienne, si j'en suis bien informe.

ad 2) Cet ouvrier est à Dresden comme je vous l'ai deja dit, mais il n'a actuellement de pareil ouvrage rien d'achevé.

ad 3) J'ai deja dit qu'il n'a rien d'achevé, mais il travaille deja depuis plus d'un an et demi à 2. Bureaux assez beaux, d'assez bon gout, et meme autant qu'il se pratique en pareils ouvrages assez magnifiques. Ces 2. bureaux pourront etre achevés à Pâques prochain si on l'ordonne. J'en ai fait tirer en dessein, que je joins ici, tous les tiroirs seront achevés de la meme façon que celui d'enhaut dans le dessein, il n'a point pu achever les autres parce que je ne lui ai point laissé le tems. Vous verrez aussi d'un coté du dit dessein de quelle maniere les portes seront faites.

ad 4) Le prix qu'il en demande est 1000. ecus la piece et par consequent 2000. Pour les deux.⁸

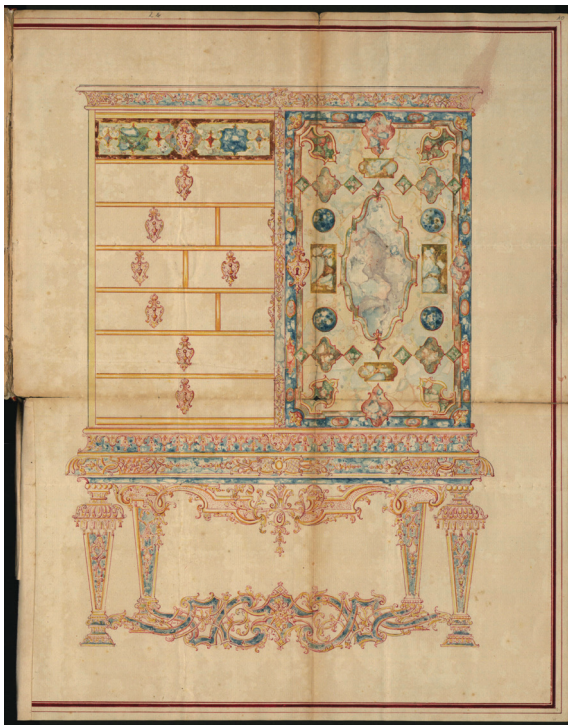
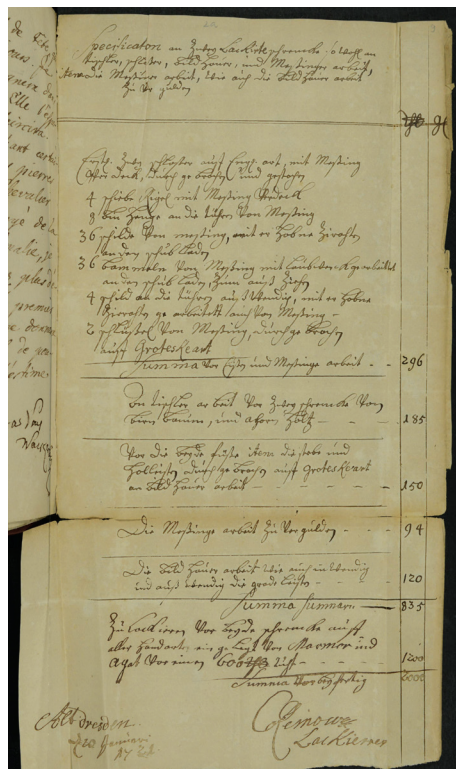


Fig. 1: Christian Reinow (workshop), Design for a cabinet-on-stand with *trompe-l'œil* decoration representing hardstones, bound into *Lettres de son Excellence Monseigneur Le General Comte de Wackerbart À Monsieur Joseph Comte de Wackerbart son fils Pour L'annee 1721. Tome III, p. 10, 41.3 x 32.5 cm. SLUB, Mscr. Dresd.App. 3387*

The watercolor design provided by Reinow is larger than the bound letters and has been folded to fit into the binding (Fig. 1). It shows a cabinet-on-stand in the international style of the moment, featuring *trompe-l'œil* panels of hardstones. One door is open to reveal drawers of various sizes; Wackerbarth explains that the drawing may appear unfinished but the decoration on one drawer or one door is intended by the artist/maker to demonstrate the overall appearance of the interior and exterior surfaces. The itemized invoice is also folded into the volume and refers to the model as *auf Engl. Art*, 'in the English style' (Fig. 2).⁹

Fig. 2: Invoice for a pair of cabinets-on-stands, the document signed and dated Dresden, January 20, 1721, by the court lacquerer Christian Reinow, *op. cit*, p. 9, 33.5 x 17 cm.



Wackerbarth concludes by stating:

Si maintenant S.M.Imple. souhaite qu'on les acheve, je n'attendrai la dessus qu'a etre informé de sa volonté pour l'ordonner, et au cas que son dessein est de les envoyer à la Princesse de Galles, Ils pourront etre empaquetés ici et envoyés sur l'Elbe jusqu'à Hambourg, d'ou ils pourront etre transportés par mer jusqu'à Londres, ce qui ne seroit que d'autant mieux, vuqu'ils ne seront pas si aisement endommagés que par un transport par terre d'ici à Vienne, et puis de la en Angleterre; et afin qu'il n'y arrive point de mal en les de pâque tant ; je les adresserai à Msr. le Coq qui comme Vous le savez est de la part du Roi Notre Maitre à la Cour de la Gr: Bretagne.¹⁰

In Meissen porcelain circles, Christian Reinow is known as the court lacquerer and artist, who was called upon to 'colour' the surfaces of the animals and birds of the great porcelain menagerie created for Augustus the Strong's Japanese Palace, ca. 1727-33. He was tasked with painting the glazed sculptures in unfired lacquer colours in an effort to satisfy the King's demand for animals and birds 'in their natural coulours and sizes.'¹¹ Following the death of the King in 1733, the Japanese Palace project was abandoned and the over-painting eventually flaked off or was otherwise removed, leaving most of the monumental figures in the white, as we know them today.¹² One exception is the rhinoceros, modeled after Dürer, in the Porzellansammlung, which has its Reinow-painted surface intact. Reinow provided some of the lacquering and *trompe-l'oeil* finishes for the interiors

of the Green Vaults and seems to have worked with sculptor Johann C.L. Lücke in 1736 and 1737, decorating the bases of his ivory carvings.¹³ For some reason, a handful of furniture pieces are attributed to Christian Reinow, such as the writing cabinet in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London (W62:1-1979), dated to the end of his life, which features Asian-style panels ('japanning') and *aventurine* framing.¹⁴

On Jan. 31, 1721, Wackerbarth writes to his son, at the end of a very long letter, *L'Imperatrice Amalie est la Maitresse de ne pas prendre les deux bureaux, dont je vous ai envoyé les desseins.*¹⁵ Thus, the commission for the pair of cabinets-on-stands for the Princess of Wales did not go ahead.

MAUREEN CASSIDY-GEIGER

Transcription of the Specification (Fig. 2)

Erstl. zwey schloßer auff Engl. art, mit Meßing Thlr.
 Ver Deck, Durch gebrochen und gestochen
 4 schiebe Rigel mit Meßing Verdeck
 8 Ein Hange an die tühren Von Meßing
 36 schilde Von meßing, mit er hobne Zirathen an den schubladen
 36 Bommeln Von Meßing mit Laubwerck gearbeitett
 an den schub Laden, zum auß Ziehen
 4 schild an die tühren außwendig, mit erhobne
 Zirrathen gearbeitett auch von Meßing –
 2 schlüssel von Meßing, durch gebrochen
auff Grotiske art
 Summa Vor Eisen und Meßinge arbeit 296

Vor Die Beyde füße item die stehe und Volleisten
durch gebrochen auff Grotteske art an Bild hauer arbeit 150

*Die Bildhauer arbeit wie auch in Wendig
und auß Wendig die grade Leisten* 120

Zu Lackieren Vor beyde schrencke auff aller hand arten ein gelegt von Marmor und Agat Vor einen 600 Thlr. licht	1200
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CReinow
Lackierr
Alt: dresden
d 20 Januari 1721

1 For his biography, see Paul Martin, *Graf Wackerbarth-Salmour* (Leipzig, 1912).

2 According to Sascha Kansteiner, curator in the Skulpturensammlung in Dresden, at least three items from the Wackerbarth-Salmour collection were listed in the 1765 inventory of the royal collection (HM 295, ZV 3579, ZV 3555) and other items were indicated in an earlier listing from 1742, suggesting Wackerbarth-Salmour donated some of the artworks he shipped home from Italy in 1739-40 to the king by 1742 and well before his death in 1761.

3 Sächsische Landesbibliothek-Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Dresden (SLUB), Mscr. Dresd.App.3387; <https://kalliopeverbund.info/DE-611-HS-3781806>. I am grateful to Jóhannes Agústsson for bringing this acquisition to my attention and to Thomas Stern and Jana Kocourek at the SLUB for showing it to me, and to Martin Schuster for correcting the German transcription; all transcriptions retain the inaccuracies of the originals. Wackerbarth-Salmour's Testament is found at the Sächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden, 10047, Amt Dresden, Nr. 3270.

4 Wackerbarth senior himself owned a sculpture by Permoser, the Crying Putto, ca. 1726, which was acquired by the Dresden State Museums in 1976 (ZV 3955).

5 Mscr.Dresd.App.3387, fol. 8v. 'Dittrichstein' refers to Walther Franz Xaver Anton, Prince Dietrichstein (1664-1738), who was privy counselor to Emperors Joseph I and Charles VI. Translation: As for the commission concerning a certain caissette [case] ornamented with stones as described, which the Chevalier Dittrichstein assigned to you on behalf of Empress Amalie, I will inform myself, and you will have more clarification about this matter in the first [next] dispatch; very far from causing me embarrassment, I will be very happy to be able to undertake this according to the esteem of a Lady of such high rank.

6 Mscr.Dresd.App.3387, fol. 12r. & v. Translation: Now that I have all the information necessary to be able to respond to the requests you have made of me, concerning the present which Empress Amalie is seeking for the Princess of Wales, I am responding to them point by point, as I found them in your letter. Your questions are

1. If a certain *caissette* ornamented with hardstones as described which our Royal Princess [Maria Josepha] presented to the reigning Empress, was made in Dresden or purchased there by chance.

2. If the workman being at Dresden might have another for sale.

3. Or if he had none of these that were ready he could deliver one soon or how much time he need to do so, and

4. The price he wants for this.

7 The dowager empress had a taste for exotic furnishings and collector's items, according to the Nachlass [Testament] taken after her death in 1742, where one finds evidence of items in tortoise shell, mother-of-pearl, ivory, Asian (or Asian-style) lacquer, *pietre dure*, and lapis lazuli; see Maureen Cassidy-Geiger, 'In der und ausser der Clausur. Kaiserinwitwe Wilhelmina Amalias Appartement im Kloster am Rennweg', in Helga Penz (ed.), *Das Kloster der Kaiserin. 300 Jahre Salesianerinnen in Wien* (2017), pp. 43-51. The referenced gifts to Vienna have not been located.

8 Mscr.Dresd.App.3387, fol. 12v. – 13v. Translation: ad 1) The piece in question was made here in Dresden, however it is not of the reported stones, but imitations done so artfully, that one could mistake them for hardstones, and as the lacquered colours make it more perfect, than would be found in the original stones themselves, this is the beauty of these sorts of works. The same craftsman, who made the caissette in question, also made for the Princess Royal (Maria Josepha) a table and two gueridons in the same fashion, which she also sent to Vienna, according to my sources.

ad 2) This craftsman is in Dresden as I have already stated, but he does not actually have any such work ready.

ad 3) I have already communicated that he has nothing ready, but he has already been working for more than a year and a half on two bureaux which are quite beautiful, in very good taste, and even as much as is possible in such rather magnificent works. These two bureaux can be completed by next Easter if the order is made. I had the design drawn, which I am attaching here, all the drawers will be finished in the same way as those shown in the design, though he could not render the others because there was not sufficient time.

You will also see on one side of the drawing, how the doors will be made.

ad 4) The price he asks is 1000. *écus* each and therefore 2000. for the two.

9 In principal, cabinets-on-stands and furniture in the English style were manufactured in Saxony in the 1720s; see Gisela Haase, *Dresdener Möbel des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig, 1993), though a new general

history is warranted.

10 Mscr.Dresd.App.3387, fol. 13v.-14. Translation: If her Imperial Majesty would now wish them to be completed, I will await to be informed of her desire to order them, and in the case that her desire is to send them to the Princess of Wales, they can be packed here and sent by the Elbe to Hamburg, whence they can be transported by sea to London, which would be the better way, seeing that they will not be so easily damaged as in transit by land from here [Dresden] to Vienna, and then from there to England; and so that no harm comes to them in the unpacking: I will address them to Mr. le Coq [Jacques Coq (1676-1766), Saxon envoy to Great Britain, 1718-28] who as you know is at the English court on behalf of our king.

11 The commission was such an enormous technological challenge for the Royal Manufactory, founded at Meissen not twenty years earlier, that the resulting models could barely withstand one firing, the glaze firing [that is, there was no biscuit firing], and emerged with unsightly cracks and discolorations.

12 For background, see Rainer Rückert, 'Christian Reinow und die großformatigen Tierfiguren aus Meißener Porzellan', *Jahrbuch der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Dresden*, 1989/1990, pp. 47-52; also Samuel Wittwer, *The Gallery of Meissen Animals* (Munich, 2004), pp. 93-99; the rhinoceros with its unfired painting is illustrated in fig. 75. Reinow's contemporary, Dresden (and Warsaw) court lacquerer Martin Schnell (ca. 1675-1740), is for some reason more well known to scholars today.

13 Dresden State Museums, Green Vaults II 246 and II 337.

14 Tristram Bainbridge, 'Imitating aventurine: an eighteenth-century technique of lacquer imitation', in Miko Vasques Dias (ed.), *Material imitation and imitation materials in furniture and conservation* (2016), pp. 207-211. Related cabinets are found in the Kunstgewerbemuseum in Dresden and Museum für Kunsthandwerk, Frankfurt.

15 Mscr.Dresd.App.3387, fol. 39.

Translation: The Empress is my mistress and she will not take the two cabinets, for which you have sent the design drawings.

16 Translation:

Specification to two lacquered cabinets of the work of a carpenter, locksmith, sculptor and brass worker, the brass work as well as the sculpture to be gilded
First two English-style locks, covered with brass, cut

through and pierced

4 sliding latches covered with brass

8 brass hinges

36 brass plates with raised ornaments, for the drawers

36 drawer pulls in brass with foliage

4 plates for outside the doors, with raised ornament, also of brass

2 brass keys, pierced in a grotesque style

Total for the iron and brass work: 296

For the carpentry to two cabinets of pear and maple woods 185

For sculpting the two stands with piercing in the grotesque style 150

For gilding the brass work 94

The sculptural work inside and outside 120

Final total 835

To lacquer both cabinets in various kinds of mounted marble and agate

600 each 1200

Final total for both 2000

CReinow

Lacquerer

Alt-Dresden

20 January 1721



Walter Crane. Season ticket, The Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, 1890. Given by Emslie John Horniman. ©Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

BIFMO

Call for Applicants

Decorative Arts Research Assistant

British & Irish Furniture Makers Online (BIFMO) is recruiting a part-time paid research assistant for six months, commencing January 2023, to transcribe exhibition entries from the first eleven Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society catalogues (1888-1916), to be published as searchable documents on the BIFMO website.

Candidates must demonstrate at least two years' experience working in the field of, or studying, 19th and early 20th

century decorative arts and have good IT skills, particularly Microsoft Excel. Interested parties should contact Clarissa Ward, clarissaward@hotmail.com, to receive the full job specification and application details. Please mark all emails: ACES PROJECT. Interviews to be held in October.

This project is generously funded by the Albert Dawson Educational Trust.

CLARISSA WARD
19th century Editor



Trunk opened

A Trunk with a Story to Tell

A reader in New South Wales contacted BIFMO in mid-January to enquire about an 'old timber trunk' she inherited from her great grandparents. I was able to provide her with brief details of the trunk's maker because the paper trade label bearing his name was still attached to the underside of the trunk's lid.

'The original owner of this trunk was Walter McCullough, born in Stepney in 1842. By 1880 he had established a business, making, repairing, selling, and shipping trunks and portmanteaus from his residence



Paper label



Washed up trunk

in Queen's Road, Bayswater. He also had an additional shop in Gloucester Road, South Kensington. A father of six, his three sons worked on and off for the family business over the years, continuing after their father's death until closing it in 1920.

Given that Lovelace manufactured 'AIR TIGHT ZINC LINED' chests 'for India and the Colonies', it comes as no surprise that one ended up in Australia. The original owner was Walter McCullough, a mechanic for Rolls Royce in Manchester at the turn of the 20th century. In creating a provenance of the trunk for BIFMO, I wrote to our Australian reader and asked about her great grandparents. Several months passed and no news, until early April: 'Sorry I haven't responded earlier. Unfortunately, since we last chatted my life has taken a bit of a turn. I live on a river and have been caught in the floods here in northern NSW. My house was completely inundated, and I lost about 90% of my possessions. The trunk was gone, and I was disappointed but relieved I had sent images to you already.

Lo and behold however on my walk today and 5 weeks after the flood I stumbled upon it...and the paper label is still intact. It's certainly got a story to tell!

Lovelace's zinc-lined air-tight chests certainly are well made and fit for purpose.

LAURIE LINDEY
Managing Editor

editors would be responsible for two issues each per year. This is an excellent opportunity for anyone who is interested in editorial work particularly in an art historical field. For more information, please contact Kate Hay; details are at the back of this *Newsletter*.

Membership Notice

A significant number of members have yet to pay their 2022-23 subscription which was due on 1st July. If you have received a message with your front delivery sheet, which included your address, it means that according to our records your subscription remains unpaid. The reverse of the delivery sheet will include a subscription renewal form, detailing how to pay.

Discount

Included with the *Newsletter* is a flyer advertising the book *The Story of British Tea Chests and Caddies* by Anne Stevens.

Members can obtain a 20% discount by using the code CADDIES15 when ordering.

FHS Newsletter – Call for Applicant

Second Editor

The FHS *Newsletter* is seeking a second editor. This publication, as you know, is issued four times a year in February, May, August and November. The role would have the full support of the present editor. It is envisaged that the present and new

FHS Events Calendar

** Here you can find **all currently scheduled** forthcoming FHS Events; please refer to subsequent pages for more information. Additional events may still be added.*

2022

15 SEPTEMBER	Visit to the Royal Oak Conservation Studio at Knole
23-25 SEPTEMBER	UK Study weekend to Cardiff (postponed from 2020)
14-16 OCTOBER	Overseas Study weekend to Tuscany
2-30 NOVEMBER	BIFMO online course: British furniture makers in their global worlds (5 lectures Wednesdays 4.30-7.00pm)
7 NOVEMBER	Annual Lecture
26 NOVEMBER	AGM and Talks

FHS Events

Online Events

We are continuing our popular programme of online lectures and events, though less frequently. Online events are arranged at shorter notice, so we are unable to advertise them all in the *Newsletter* owing to publication lead-in times. However, we will email links to free lectures and other online events to all members about a week in advance. If you would like to make a diary note of forthcoming online events, please keep checking the FHS website where there is an up-to-date list, and follow us on Instagram or Facebook (@furniturehistorysociety).

Online lectures are on Sunday evenings usually at 7.00 pm UK time, and our occasional seminar-format events are on mid-week evenings, usually Wednesdays.

Most online events are free to members, but there may be some for which we need to charge a small fee to cover our costs. Non-members can join for a small fee. BIFMO study courses will charge a fee for both members and non-members.

Recordings of many of our past lectures are freely available to members on the Events page of the FHS website. If you need a reminder of the login details please email Events Secretary Beatrice Goddard (events@furniturehistorysociety.org)

If you have any enquiries, or suggestions for future speakers or topics, please e-mail

events@furniturehistorysociety.org
or telephone 0777 5907390.

Future Society Events

Bookings

For places on visits please apply by email or letter to the Events Secretary, Beatrice Goddard providing separate cheques for each event or indicating that you wish to pay by card or online. The email address is events@furniturehistorysociety.org, or telephone 0777 5907390. For online payments you will be provided with a link to a payment page and an event reference. Where possible, joining instructions will be dispatched by e-mail, so please remember to provide your e-mail address if you have one.

Applications should only be made by members who intend to take part in the whole programme. No one can apply for more than one place unless they hold a joint membership, and each applicant should be identified by name. If you wish to be placed on the waiting list please provide a telephone number. Please note the closing dates for applications printed in the *Newsletter*. Applications made after the closing date will be accepted only if space is still available. Members are reminded that places are not allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, but that all applications are equally considered following the closing date.

Cancellations

Please note that no refunds will be given for cancellations for events costing £20.00 or less. In all other cases, cancellations will be accepted up to seven days before the date of a visit, but refunds will be subject to a £10.00 deduction for administrative costs. Please note that in the rare instances where members cannot pay until the day of a visit, they will still be charged the full amount for the day if cancelling less than seven days before the visit, or if they fail to attend. This is necessary as the Society has usually paid in advance for a certain number of members to participate in, for example, a tour/lunch. Separate arrangements are made for study weekends and foreign tours and terms are clearly stated on the printed details in each case.

Study Visit to The Royal Oak Foundation Conservation Studio at Knole

SEVENOAKS, KENT, TN15 0RP
(SAT NAV TN13 1HX)

THURSDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 2022

1.00 PM - 4.30 PM

This summer The Royal Oak Foundation Conservation Studio is conserving Hardwick Hall's 'Sea-Dog Table', using various analytical methods to further identify materials and changes that have occurred over the years. The table will then be exhibited in the US on loan to the exhibition *The Tudors: Art and Majesty in Renaissance England*. This exhibition will



Hardwick Hall's 'Sea-Dog Table' © National Trust Images



Fig. 8: St Fagans Castle

begin at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in September 2022 and then tour to the Cleveland Museum of Art and the Legion of Honor museum in San Francisco.

Our visit will be led by Dr Megan Wheeler, FHS Hon Secretary and Assistant National Curator for Furniture for the National Trust and Gerry Alabone, FHS member and Senior Furniture Conservator for the National Trust. After an introduction to the Conservation Studio, attendees will hear about the findings of the analyses that the Studio is undertaking before examination of the table itself. The visit will also include a short tour of the house.

COST: £40 (INCLUDES TEA/COFFEE)

LIMIT: 15

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS:

FRIDAY 19 AUGUST 2022

Autumn Study Trip to Cardiff

FRIDAY 23 SEPTEMBER TO

SUNDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 2022

This two-night, three-day Study Trip will focus on William Burges and on Welsh furniture.

Our visits include Cardiff Castle, remodelled in a spectacular Victorian Gothic style by William Burges for the 3rd Marquess of Bute, and Lord Bute's country retreat, Castell Coch, where Burges created a Victorian dream of the Middle Ages. Matthew Williams, former Curator at Cardiff Castle, will give an evening talk.

We will visit the nearby St Fagans National Museum of History, an open-air museum of buildings from across Wales,

and winner of the Art Fund Museum of the Year 2019. After an introduction by the furniture curator, we will tour the site, which includes farm-houses furnished with vernacular Welsh furniture, industrial ironworkers' cottages, and a school. There will be a chance to visit the Museum's recently-opened and excellent galleries of Welsh furniture and crafts.

Other visits will include Tredegar House, one of the most significant late seventeenth century houses in Britain, with its magnificent state rooms, and the small but important group of furniture commissioned by Sir Watkin Williams-Wynn held by the National Museum of Wales, introduced by Andrew Renton, Head of Design Collections at the Museum.

N.B.: Cardiff Castle and Castle Coch have steep spiral staircases and we will walk around St Fagans, which is a large open-air park.

To express interest please contact the Events Secretary at events@furniturehistorysociety.org

Study Weekend in Tuscany

FRIDAY 14 – SUNDAY 16 OCTOBER 2022.

Our Autumn study tour takes us to the Lucca area of Tuscany. We will be staying in the privately owned Villa Nottolini, near Lucca. The villa, with its frescoes and Neoclassical chapel, dates back to the fifteenth century and has been enlarged over the succeeding centuries. Plans for the weekend include: a visit to Lucca to see the Museo Nazionale di Palazzo Mansi, a baroque villa with an *enfilade* containing a unique parade of



Villa Nottolini, Tuscany

original tapestries; the Villa Torrigiani, with its seventeenth century frescoes by Scorzini and eighteenth century furniture original to the house; the late-Renaissance Villa Bernadini, Summer residence of Bernardino Bernardini; the Villa Reale di Marlia and also two private villas rarely seen by the general public.

To express interest please contact the Events Secretary on events@furniturehistorysociety.org



Marquetry top of one of a pair of tables made by Ince and Mayhew for the Earl of Caledon, 1785

FHS Annual Lecture

SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES, BURLINGTON
HOUSE, PICCADILLY,

LONDON W1J 0BE

MONDAY 7 NOVEMBER 2022

6 PM FOR 6.30 PM START

Sir Hugh Roberts, GCVO, FSA, Surveyor
Emeritus of The Queen's Works of Art and
former Director of The Royal Collection.

'Ince and Mayhew: Interpreting the Record'

The lecture marks the publication by Philip Wilson in 2022 of *Industry and Ingenuity: the Partnership of William Ince and John Mayhew* by Hugh Roberts and Charles Cator. This book is the culmination of many years of research by both authors. It brings together for the first time a corpus of well documented or firmly attributed work by one of the leading metropolitan cabinet-making firms of the eighteenth century, a firm which was as well-known and successful in its day as that of Thomas Chippendale.

By the time furniture history had become established as a serious area of study in the 20th century, much of the furniture produced by this long-lived business had lost its identity and no clear picture of the firm's output existed. The lecture will examine the process by which the authors have been able to retrieve evidence of some ninety-seven commissions, and to reconnect around three hundred pieces of furniture with patrons and documents.

Admission to the lecture is free for members, but attendance is by ticket only, which must be acquired in advance. Please apply to the Events Secretary by email or post. Numbers are limited to 90. We plan to live-stream the event for those who cannot attend in person.

FHS Annual General Meeting and Works in Progress Talks

THE EAST INDIA CLUB, 16 ST JAMES'S SQUARE, LONDON SW1Y 4LH

SATURDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2022

11.00 AM–1.00 PM

The Annual General Meeting for the year ending 30 June 2022 will be held at the East India Club. The AGM will start at 11.00 am (coffee from 10.30 am).

Talks will follow the business of the day. Speakers include:

Matthew Hirst, Curator at Woburn Abbey and Gardens. Woburn Abbey has been closed to visitors since the Autumn of 2019 ahead of a major refurbishment project. This generational investment will see a reordering of the visitor route, much interior restoration and a complete



Matthew Hirst at Woburn Abbey

representation of the collection. In addition, the unique and important Grotto Apartment built for the 4th Earl of Bedford in c. 1630 has been fully reinstated following an exhaustive research project. This has enabled the Mortlake 'Acts of the Apostles' tapestries to be returned to the room for which they were purchased for the first time in over 200 years. Matthew Hirst will give an update on works in progress and highlight some of the conservation projects that have been undertaken.

Hugo Burge a Director of Marchmont will talk about how it has become a home to makers and creators, celebrating creativity across the arts, crafts, business and social enterprise.

Admission to the AGM is free for members but all members wishing to attend should notify the Events Secretary at least 7 days in advance. Tickets for a sandwich lunch with a glass of wine at the price of £22 per head should be booked with the Events Secretary at least 7 days in advance. We plan to live-stream the event for those who cannot attend in person.

Advance Notice for 2023 Study Weekends

We are currently working on plans for a Spring study weekend to Scotland to include a visit to the Burrell Collection in Glasgow as well as an Autumn study weekend to Andalucía, Spain. Further information will be provided in future newsletters and on the website. If you wish to be put on an interest list to receive details please contact events@furniturehistorysociety.org.

2021 Early Career Development Research Symposium

Generously supported by a grant from the Oliver Ford Trust and dedicated to Sir Nicholas Goodison, the Furniture History Society hosted the sixth Research Symposium for emerging scholars in November 2021. Chaired by Adriana Turpin, the online conference explored the materiality of furniture and covered a broad range of chronological and geographical topics, from the Italian Renaissance to 20th century Berlin.

Seven speakers from the UK, Europe and the USA, all in the early stages of their careers, presented a brilliant selection of short papers to an enthusiastic audience from across the globe, the summaries of which follow:

Kiersten Thamm, PhD Candidate, University of Delaware: *Making Steel Furniture French: The O.T.U.A.'s Use of Chaises Sandows within Modern Publicity Practices*

Visitors to the French section of the 1931 Colonial Exposition in Paris encountered dozens of unusual chairs made from new steel technology. These chairs, called *Chaises Sandows*, comprised vulcanized rubber bungee cords stretched across seamless tubular steel frames. The sleek, simple pieces of furniture occupied a small cinema, an information centre, and a

model office, where the walls were covered in photo montages, maps, and graphs that explained the production and use of steel in French agriculture and advanced transportation technologies. The design for the *Chaises Sandows* and the entire pavilion originated with the French decorator René Herbst (1892-1981). The financing, administration, and direction of the pavilion originated with the publicity organ of the steel industry - the Technical Office for the Use of Steel. Since its founding in 1929, the O.T.U.A. used modern publicity practices to increase domestic demand for steel. It treated the middle-class population of the metropole as individual consumers and attempted to convince them that steel solved a series of prevalent social concerns. When examined with methods from art history, industrial history, advertising theory, and exhibition studies, these artifacts afford a comprehensive understanding of the O.T.U.A.'s use and interpretation of steel furniture within an imperial context. These spaces fused steel with a specific French national identity at a moment of heightened nationalism to create demand amongst middle-class consumers for new steel products. Herbst had turned the O.T.U.A.'s area of the French section at the Colonial Exposition into a complex piece of advertising; unraveling that advertisement demonstrates how a building material can come to embody something as complex as contested national identity.

Eloise Donnelly, University of Cambridge/The British Museum: *The Use of Metalwork in CR Ashbee's Magpie & Stump*

C.R. Ashbee (1863-1942) designed the Magpie & Stump house at 37 Cheyne Walk in 1893 as both a house for his family and the office of his architectural practice. Built on the site of an ancient inn, from which it took its name, the house functioned as a showcase for Ashbee's designs and the Guild of Handicraft's experiments in style, materials and techniques. Coverage of the building and its interiors in popular art and design journals such as *The Studio* and *Kunst und Kunsthandwerk* secured the house's reputation in Britain and abroad. The interiors remained largely unchanged until the house was sold in the 1960s, when it was sold to a developer and torn down to make way for a new apartment block. Shortly before the demolition in 1969, curators from the Victoria and Albert Museum salvaged a large number of the interior fittings, including door furniture, light fittings, a fireplace surround and the staircase and balustrade. These objects have mostly remained in storage until now, with many never accessioned or displayed.

Nele Luttmann, PhD candidate, Trinity College, Dublin: *Architecture in Wood: The Cabinetmaker's Trade and its Importance for the 18th Century Building Industry*

While researching for my PhD 'German Architects in Britain and Ireland 1700-1750', which among others revolves around Johann Gottlieb Borlach (b. 1691), possibly the principal draughtsman and

assistant to the well-known architect James Gibbs (1682-1754), I discovered that the former was trained as a joiner in early eighteenth-century Saxony before going to England. At first it seemed peculiar that a cabinetmaker found his way into the building industry, yet, a closer look at the training content of the early modern joinery apprenticeship in Germany yielded astonishing findings.

It appears that the study of architecture as well as draughtsmanship were essential elements of the craft training. Documents from the Brunswick joiner's guild, for example, prove that already during the initial phase of joinery training, the apprentices were taught the basics of architecture in the workshops of their masters. Particularly insightful are, moreover, the exam sketches, which the prospective joiners had to draw as part of the master craftsman examination after the period of journeying. For, in Saxony, the guilds required not only the manufacture of a large wardrobe (the so-called *Meisterstück*), but also the drawing of two elaborate sketches. From this requirement and the surviving exam sketches, it can be concluded that lessons in architectural drawing were a vital element of the joinery training. In addition to this, it was prescribed that the *Meisterstück* was to be made following architecture and the architectural orders. The Dresden guild recommended joiner Georg Caspar Erasmus's *Seülen-Buch* from 1667 and Vignola's *Regola delli cinque ordini d'architettura* from 1562 as theoretical principles and exemplars for the *Meisterstück*.

The early modern German craft apprenticeship with its focus on

architecture and drawing brought forth extremely skilled craftsmen prepared to design and create space following architectural norms. This training also provided the springboard to becoming highly respected building specialists. This is certainly true for Johann Gottlieb Borlach: during his joinery apprenticeship he was able to gain the architectural expertise he needed to later work in the building office of James Gibbs.

**Serena Newmark, PhD candidate,
Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore,
Milan: *The Guiciardini Table and a
Cabinet for the Cardinal Cesi in Rome***

During the 1520s and 1530s, the Olivetan monastery of San Michele in Bosco in Bologna was the centre of a fruitful workshop ruled by the lay brother fra Raffaele da Brescia (Brescia, c. 1479–Rome, 1539), who was the most brilliant disciple of the wood inlayer, fra Giovanni da Verona. Here fra Raffaele realized a quantity of works of art, intended not only for the internal monastic use of his own order, but also for early private and aristocratic interests, in a period when wooden marquetrys became required collectable pieces. This could be the case of the so-called ‘Guiciardini Table’ – named after his first owner, the politician and historian, Francesco Guiciardini, Governor of Bologna at the beginning of the 1530s – recently appeared in Sotheby’s ‘Italia 50th Anniversary exhibition’ (Milan, December 2018) – that has been long attributed by scholars to the Dominican inlayer, fra Damiano da Bergamo, contemporary with fra Raffaele and operating in Bologna in the same period, but that in this paper is supposed

to be a masterpiece by the Olivetan lay brother: the hypothesis is supported by the historical and documentary indications and by the technical and stylistic analysis of the work of art. Moreover, the archival investigation of the records referring to the Olivetan monastery of San Michele in Bosco, now kept in the Biblioteca dell’Archiginnasio of Bologna, has permitted to find evidences of another important and new piece of furniture by fra Raffaele, that is the ‘studiolo di monsignor protettore’ attested in a payment note of 1533. It could be interpreted as a cabinet carved and inlaid for the Cardinal Paolo Emilio Cesi, protector of the Order at that time, that is carefully identifiable in one of the wooden pieces of furniture described by Ulisse Aldrovandi in the cardinal’s palace in Rome in *Le Antichità de la città di Roma* (1556).

**Serena Newmark, PhD Candidate, Freie
Universität, Berlin: *John Martin Levien:
the cabinetmaker who brought New
Zealand hardwoods to Europe***

Johann Martin Levien was an extraordinarily innovative and international cabinetmaker working primarily in London in the mid nineteenth century.

Born in 1811 in Barth, Prussia, Levien trained as a cabinetmaker before setting sail for Brazil in 1837, hoping to become an exporter of South American woods. Finding opportunities limited, he left for New Zealand, where he established the first professional cabinetmaking business in the colony. A circular top table by Levien, c. 1841, of New Zealand *Totara* is in the collection of the Museum of New Zealand. A few years later, Levien

set sail for London with his new English bride and a selection of New Zealand timber specimens to be used for furniture construction.

A tabletop with detailed marquetry made of New Zealand woods by Levien was included in the New Zealand display in the Crystal Palace in 1851. Levien exhibited another tabletop of New Zealand woods at the Exhibition in Paris 1855 and a sideboard at the Great London Exhibition in 1862.

Levien did, however, not work exclusively in New Zealand woods. An 1866 invoice in the London Rothschild Family Archives indicates that Levien furnished a Rothschild residence with practical furniture made from oak and mahogany. A jewel cabinet in the Royal Collection Trust is made of European and Asian woods.

Levien maintained contact with his native Prussia and was hired by the Prussian government to create parquet floors for the Prussian Embassy in London. Documents located in the Prussian State Archives indicate that King Friedrich Wilhelm IV granted Levien the official title of *Tischlermeister*, or master cabinetmaker, in 1848.

Levien continuously updated his work to changing fashions and to suit individual client requests. Images of several of his major commissions are included in his 1861 pamphlet, *The Woods of New Zealand and the Adaptability to Art Furniture*.

Maude Willaerts, Victoria & Albert Museum: 'Are you going to use that box?': The influence of wooden packaging on furniture design from the early 1900s to the present day

Working on the Victoria and Albert Museum's new 'Design 1900-Now' galleries and acquiring Louise Brigham's book, *Box Furniture*, prompted my research into the manufacture of furniture made from, and inspired by, wooden packaging. This paper offers a survey of European and American furniture inspired by the materiality of wooden packaging from the early 1900s to this day. In doing so, it begins to embed contemporary objects into a historical context of re-use and recycling in furniture making, demonstrating that issues of sustainability and economy have permeated designers' and makers' concerns since long before the climate crisis. Additionally, looking at the ties between wooden packaging and DIY furniture-making reveals how upcycled, discarded materials act as an accessible vessel for socially-minded designers aiming to better people's skills.

Part one focuses on the work of Louise Brigham, Gerrit Rietveld and anonymous wartime makers, demonstrating the appeal of wooden packaging's sturdiness, and its availability and allure in times of scarcity. It goes on to explore Enzo Mari's crate-inspired *Autoprogettazione* furniture, which has enabled DIY'ers from 1974 to today to understand design through making.

Part two discusses the re-edition and commercialisation of Mari and Rietveld's designs, focusing on the commercial take-off of wooden-packaging-inspired furniture, and its concurrence with a discontent with post-war consumerism and a burgeoning awareness of ecological issues.

In the final section, Jasper Morrison's controversial £180 ready-made crate, IKEA's £5 storage crates and the recent

phenomenon of DIY'ers scavenging the streets for wine boxes to turn into bookshelves illustrate the ongoing fetishization of wooden packaging itself.

To conclude, this paper illustrates how wooden packaging - anonymous pieces of design coming from humble beginnings - reached the status of a fetishized commodity. Additionally, it demonstrates the infectious nature of wooden packaging as a source of inspiration for furniture design that has permeated all spheres of design.

**Luise Junghans, PhD candidate,
University of Leipzig: *How to make it look like Rococo? Material as part of reception of the 18th century in late 19th and early 20th century Berlin furniture production***

Berlin developed into a hotspot of the European furniture market in the course of the 19th century. In the second half of the century, the Prussian capital was as notorious for its *Berliner Schund* as it was appreciated for its prestigious furniture stores with their in-house production and exquisite inventory, which rivalled London and Paris.

Wertheim, A.S. Ball, the Hohenzollern Kunstgewerbehaus, Rainer & Keller and others were considered catalysts of modernism. Nevertheless, until well into the 1930s, a considerable part of the production was made up of historicizing period furniture.

The talk explored the question of what role the material played in the reception of historical furniture by examining the Berlin furniture store, Flatow & Priemer, and the wood sculptor Adolph Hoffmann, whose product range and

furniture production are intimately tied with eighteenth-century French styles and with the 'Frederician' Rococo. How was it staged in the context of the exhibition rooms? How was the original piece presented in contrast to its reproduction? Did a distinction between old and new exist at all?

Both Flatow & Priemer and Hoffmann distinguished themselves from the inferior mass production through their approach to the material. They also underlined their high quality standards by referencing the 18th century, whose artistic production embodied craftsmanship and rich material. Flatow & Priemer used the material as a means of distinction that was intended to convey exclusivity and present the bourgeois living space as a sophisticated and dignified ideal room. Hoffmann honed his skills with the profound knowledge of old techniques and styles. He demonstrated this artistry in the adequate treatment of the material, which defined itself as 'modern'. The materiality served less a distinction between historical and new furniture than the ideal of a harmonious spatial impression.

Discoveries and Research Developments

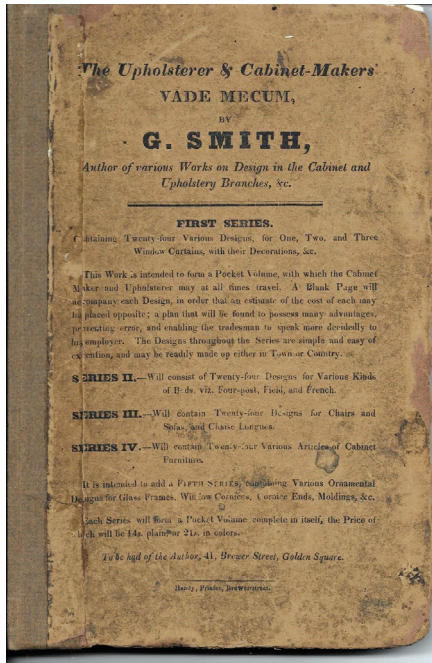


Fig. 1: George Smith's *Vade-Mecum*

A George Smith Find

George Smith is generally regarded as being a major influence on Regency furniture design despite having no entry in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. His known works are: *A Collection of Designs for Household Furniture and Interior Decoration* (1808), and *The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Guide* (1826). He also published: *A Collection of Ornamental Designs after the Antique* (1812). Fig. 1 shows the cover of a previously unnoticed book by him which recently surfaced in a bookshop in Columbia, Pennsylvania.

The text reads as follows:

The Upholsterer & Cabinet-Makers'
Vade Mecum
By
G. SMITH,
Author of various Works on Design in the
Cabinet and
Upholstery Branches, &c

FIRST SERIES

Containing Twenty-four Various Designs, for One, Two, and Three Window Curtains with their Decorations, &c.

This Work is intended to form a Pocket Volume, with which the Cabinet Maker and Upholsterer may at all times travel. A Blank Page will accompany each Design, in order that an estimate of the cost of each may be placed opposite; a plan that will be found to possess many advantages, preventing error, and enabling the tradesman to speak more decidedly to his employer. The Designs throughout the Series are simple and easy of execution, and may be readily made up either in Town or Country.

SERIES II. - Will consist of Twenty-four Designs for Various Kinds of Beds, viz. Four-post, Field, and French.

SERIES III. - Will contain Twenty-four Designs for Chairs and Sofas, and Chaise Longues.



Fig. 2: Plate of single window curtains

SERIES IV. - Will contain Twenty-four Various Articles of Cabinet Furniture.

It is intended to add a FIFTH SERIES, containing Various Ornamental Designs for Glass Frames, Window Cornices, Cornice Ends, Moldings, &c Each Series will form a Pocket Volume complete in itself, the Price of which will be 14s plain or 21s in colors.

To be had of the Author, 41, Brewer Street, Golden Square

Hardy, Printer, Brewer-street.

The book measures 21.5 by 14 cms. and contains 21 of the original 24 plates.

Typical examples of the plates are shown in Figs. 2 and 3. They differ from designs in *The Cabinet-maker and Upholsterer's Guide* but are similar in style. There is no text and the plates are unnumbered and uncoloured. They are printed on *recto* sheets, alternating with blank sheets, as described on the cover. There is no date but Smith's address is given as 41 Brewer Street, Golden Square. This is the address, which he is quoted as living at in 1826, as described in the *Dictionary of English Furniture Makers* (1986): 'Principal of the Drawing Academy', with earlier addresses quoted as being 69 Dean Street and 15 Princes Street.¹⁷ 41 Brewer Street was actually about 100 yards from Golden Square but no doubt Golden Square had a cachet which Brewer Street lacked. The late 1820s would seem a likely date for the publication and the *slab serif* and open face fonts used on the cover would be consistent with that date. When purchased the book was unbound and the cover and spine were fragmenting.

The concept of a *vade-mecum*, which *The Chambers Dictionary* defines as 'a useful handbook that one carries about with one for constant reference', is an interesting development of the book of furniture designs.¹⁸ Rather than having to consult a large tome in the craftsman's workshop, the customer could view possible designs on site in the volume which the upholsterer or cabinet-maker could slip out of his pocket.

How far Smith's projected series of publications went is an open question. I suspect that it never got beyond the first series, which would not be surprising in view of the hefty price of 14 shillings (or 21 shillings in colour). J. Stokes's *Complete*

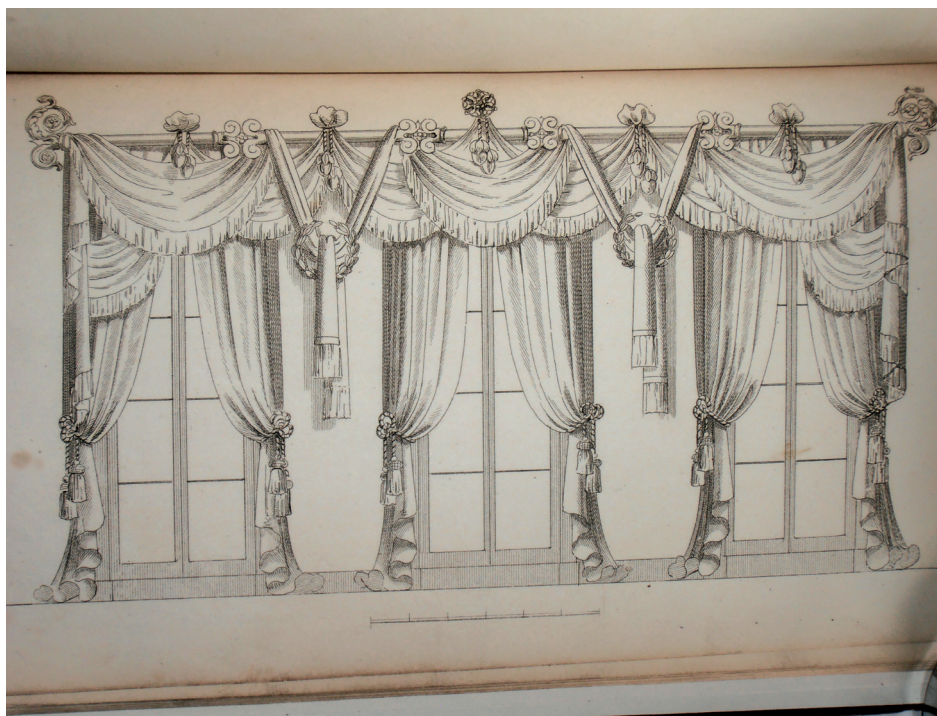


Fig. 3: Plate of double window curtains

Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Guide (1829), published around the same time in a similar format sold for 4 shillings and sixpence including coloured plates, so Smith's pricing certainly seems to have been on the optimistic side.

JOHN STABLER

Call for short articles on Discoveries and Research Developments

Have you discovered something you would like to share with the Society? We would like to publish short articles on discoveries made on Society visits, or other discoveries and developments relevant to furniture history. Please send suggestions to the Editor, details on the back of this *Newsletter*.

¹⁷ ed. G. Beard, C. Gilbert, *Dictionary of English Furniture Makers 1660-1840*, Leeds, 1986, p. 826.

¹⁸ *The Chambers Dictionary*, 13th edn, 2014, London, p. 1726

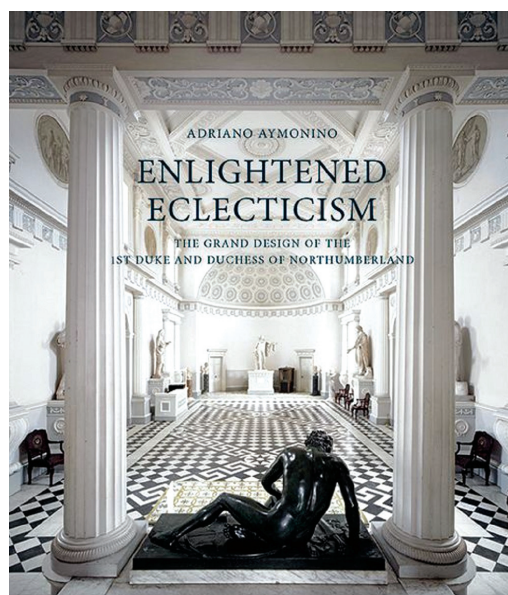
Book Reviews

Suggestions for reviews should be sent to Wolf Burchard at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 5th Avenue, New York, NY 10028, USA (email: Wolf.Burchard@metmuseum.org; telephone + 1 212 650 2208).

ADRIANO AYMONINO, *Enlightened Eclecticism: The Grand Design of the 1st Duke and Duchess of Northumberland* (Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art/ Yale University Press, 2021).

This meticulously researched and lavishly illustrated book by Adriano Aymonino is the first in-depth examination of the important contribution to the history of visual culture, patronage, and collecting made by Sir Hugh Smithson (1712-1786) and his wife Lady Elizabeth Seymour Percy (1716-1776) (from 1766, 1st Duke and Duchess of Northumberland, third creation). The focus is rebuilding, refurbishment and decoration of four residences: Stanwick Hall, Yorkshire; Syon House, Middlesex; Northumberland House, London and Alnwick Castle, Northumberland. Central to Aymonino's argument is how artistic and architectural patronage were deployed by this illustrious couple to express their social and political ambitions.

The first chapter introduces the couple's lives, patronage, and building campaigns in the context of taste and society in Georgian Britain. The juxtaposition of



artworks, furnishings, architectural and decorative treatments in each residence - commissioned in rococo, Palladian, neoclassical or gothic revivalist style - is then examined in four chronological chapters. The analyses draw extensively on archival sources (letters, diaries, design drawings, account books, photographs, inventories, and collecting notes) from the vast, yet relatively unstudied private archives of the Dukes of Northumberland. Aymonino's exhaustive research enhances rather than weighs down the lively narrative, and adds rich, contemporary detail.

Stanwick Hall, Yorkshire, was Sir Hugh's family seat, and his first major architectural project. Completed in the late

1730s in conjunction with Daniel Garrett (a *protégé* of Lord Burlington), its early and innovative combination of Palladian and rococo aesthetics was designed to reflect Sir Hugh's social position and his burgeoning political career. Although the house was demolished in 1923, pier glasses, console tables, and seat furniture survive at Alnwick Castle, and other interior elements can be viewed in museum period rooms as far afield as Ontario, Minneapolis, and Nassau.

Lavish town palace Northumberland House (demolished in 1874) was an important site for the large-scale entertaining aligned with Sir Hugh's positions at court, his political campaigning, and Lady Elizabeth's society *soirees*. It was also a showpiece for their support of technological innovation and local craftsmanship, but not all local craftsmen were to benefit. Thomas Chippendale's premises were adjacent to Northumberland House during preparation of the first edition of *The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director*, which was dedicated to Sir Hugh. Despite this accolade, British and Irish Furniture Makers Online (BIFMO) have identified only one payment from the couple to Chippendale, for 'a writing table' in 1763.

The room-by-room survey of Northumberland House is enriched by architectural drawings, references to unpublished furniture inventories, and the identification of artworks and collection objects (including Lady Elizabeth's extensive, eclectic personal *Musaeum*) that were integral to the spaces and their narratives. The sumptuous Glass Drawing Room designed by Robert Adam has

been recently reconstructed in virtual reality by the Corning Museum of Glass and can be viewed via the FHS website (online lecture, June 2021). Extensive refurbishments of Northumberland House were undertaken in the 1820s (outside the scope of this book), when Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes supplied new seat furniture, cabinets, and carpets, and repaired and updated some of the Adam furniture. A number of these important pieces survive in the collections of the Duke of Northumberland.

At Syon House, Robert Adam was commissioned to create a neo-classical *villa urbana*, a residence where Sir Hugh might present himself as 'a Roman senator, as well as an educated connoisseur of the antique'. Aymonino's deep knowledge of Adam's work is evident, as this chapter reveals important new iconographical attributions which link Adam's 'ornamental apparatus' with classical images and texts sourced from books and prints from Adam's and Sir Hugh's collections. The FHS visit to Syon in February 2020, hosted by Lady Caroline Percy, revealed just some of its many surviving furniture treasures, still extant in the largely original Adam interiors commissioned in the 1760s.

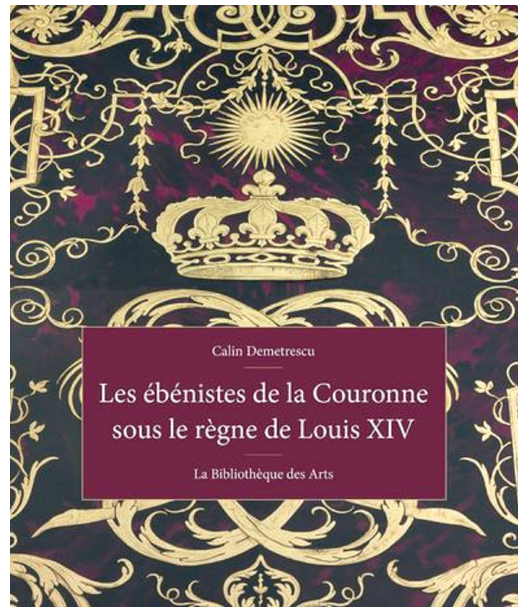
Woven through the chapters is an acknowledgment that Adam's neo-classical and gothic styles could exist concurrently, for the same patrons, with each style contributing to different social and political statements. In contrast to her husband, Lady Elizabeth's stylistic preferences were aligned with gothic and medievalist sensibilities, the picturesque and the sublime, and her aesthetic

inclinations inspired the improvements to her Percy ancestral home, Alnwick Castle. Here, James Paine (and later, Robert Adam) were commissioned to develop a gothic idiom - rich with heraldry - that celebrated the Percy's glorious age as 'Kings of the North' in the 14th and 15th centuries. Alnwick's exuberant gothic re-decoration elicited a mixed response from 18th-century visitors, and the interiors and furnishings were entirely replaced by the 4th Duke, Algernon Percy (1792-1865) in the Renaissance revival style.

The final chapter addresses how narratives of family power and prestige were tempered with propriety in the carefully considered grand funerary monument to Lady Elizabeth erected in Westminster Abbey. Also designed by Robert Adam, it combines neo-classical, early Georgian classical, Elizabethan, and Jacobean elements to demonstrate how 'familial self-glorification through great patronage' - what Aymonino describes as the couple's 'grand design' - was expressed, even after death.

Enlightened Eclecticism makes a significant contribution to the study of taste and cultural patronage in Georgian Britain. Aymonino's exhaustive examination of primary sources reveals important new insights, and the many previously unpublished images of objects, interiors, and design drawings make this book an essential source for any future research on the 1st Duke and Duchess of Northumberland, their residences, and their *milieu*.

LOUISE VOLL BOX



CALIN DEMETRESCU, *Les Ébénistes de la Couronne sous le règne de Louis XIV* (*The Cabinet-makers of the Crown under Louis XIV*) (published by La Bibliothèque des arts, Lausanne), 440 pages, 400 illustrations, 59 euros.

It is a joy when a book appears that can truly be described as seminal in the history of furniture, and Calin Demetrescu's *Les Ébénistes de la Couronne sous le règne de Louis XIV* is one such book. The result of two decades of archival research in the seemingly inexhaustible Archives Nationales, the book is an edited version of Demetrescu's thesis, which received the Prix Georges Nicole in 2010 from the Société d'Histoire de l'Art français. It is nearly 300,000 words long, so any short review can not hope to do it justice.

The book is divided into three parts - the first part explains the administrative monolith that was the 'Crown' under

Louis XIV, with explanations of the *Maison du roi*, the *Menus Plaisirs*, the *Batiments du roi* and the *Garde Meuble de la Couronne*. It traces the many familial links between *ébénistes* and other artists and artisans, and explains Demetrescu's theory of recurring motifs being key to attribution.

Names that were known chiefly in archival references are given new life by Demetrescu's careful and indefatigable reading of both those archives and of contemporary literature. Abundantly illustrated, often with images from sales catalogues, which many furniture historians will not have seen reproduced before, Demetrescu deftly manipulates this mass of material into a dense but coherent argument. He is the first to admit that the lone researcher in the archives cannot possibly have the access to the technology and resources that museum curators and conservators in a national museum can, and that informs his argument that his categories may change, that one elusive document could answer a question. He is open and honest about the limitations of a single-author book on such a vast subject.

That said, his mastery of international collections and sales means that his groupings of extant pieces of furniture and his marrying up of those pieces with documents which describe or shed light on them results in probably the most complete survey of 17th-century French furniture that has ever been published. His corpus of pieces is categorised according to many factors, most often based on visual analysis, but always underpinned where possible, with documentary evidence. The first part of the book concludes with a fifty page

chronological survey of furniture delivered to the Crown.

The second part of the book will also be invaluable to furniture historians, as he analyses the biographies, clientele and attributable production of the most important *ébénistes* of the reign - Boulle, Cucci, Gole and Oppenordt of course, but also Jean Armand, the Campes, the Gaudrons, the Poitou and the Sommers.

The first few pieces he attributed to Armand were proved right by the discovery of the signature 'Hermans' (the non-gallicised form of his name) on a coffer veneered in ivory and turtleshell, with characteristically bold *rinçaux*. The links with Gérard van Opstal, revealed by Demetrescu's rediscovery of Armand's post-mortem inventory, give credence to some of his attributions, which he modestly characterises as merely a challenge to the predominance of Gole as the go-to attribution for many pieces of Louis XIV furniture that are not attributed to Boulle.

His deft analysis of the work of Alexandre-Jean Oppenordt propels this artist back into his rightful place in the sun, and with at least 60 pages of the book dedicated to him, it constitutes an important re-evaluation of his work, including his numerous collaborations with André-Charles Boulle and his work with Jean Berain (hopefully for once and for all putting paid to Boulle's own marquetry being mis-described as 'Berainesque'). His newly reattributed *oeuvre* includes a pair of important *armoires* now at Versailles that Demetrescu convincingly argues were made for the duc de Bourgogne. The section on

Oppenordt and Boulle's collaborations is one of the most closely argued but revelatory pieces of writing on furniture I have ever stumbled my way through, and here and elsewhere Demetrescu makes important contributions to our knowledge about Boulle.

This book deserves to become a pillar of every furniture historian's library, not just the francophone Francophile. Its methodology is as interesting as its conclusions, and it represents excellent value for such a rich book.

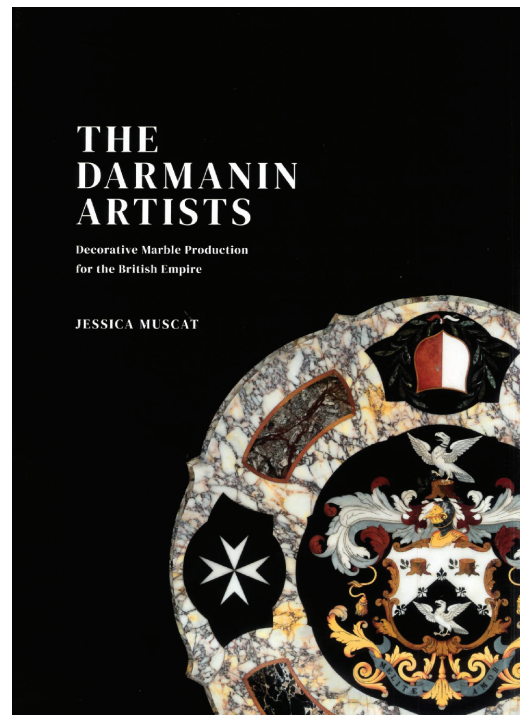
MIA JACKSON

JESSICA MUSCAT, *The Darmanin Artists: Decorative Marble Production for the British Empire*, (Kite Group, 2021). 320pages, ISBN 978-9918-23-033-4. 85 euros

The craft of *commessi di pietre dure* is one of the most fascinating among the Decorative Arts. So much so that the term *pietre dure* or *pietra dura* is used for any type of stone marquetry, whether they are made of hard stones, soft stones, or marbles. While the technique originated in Florentine workshops in the 16th century, a number of specialist *pietre dure* workshops had taken root across Italy by the 17th century, notably in Naples. The country became the evident leader for the craft and only a few workshops elsewhere maintained their reputation for posterity: the Castrucci workshop in Prague, Les Gobelins in Paris to name a few. Meanwhile, as collections were built and prices fetching records at auction, artefacts made of stone marquetry would be generally attributed to Italy by default. For instance, the Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Collection is one of the

most comprehensive collections of *pietre dure*, spanning from Castrucci panels to 1940s pictures by Mario Montelatici. It includes three tables made of marble marquetry in similar style, catalogued as 'Rome, mid-nineteenth century.' Yet, this attribution was revised dramatically when Kate Hay, a former V&A curator in the Furniture Department, uncovered the existence of the Darmanin & Sons firm, based in Malta, in the 19th century.

Kate Hay led phenomenal research, publishing her ground-breaking article in the *Furniture History Society Journal* in 2010. Afterwards she gave free access to her research files to Jessica Muscat who built upon this extraordinary discovery and produced a truly remarkable and compelling *catalogue raisonné* about the Darmanin firm. This book is



especially meaningful as it contributes to the international recognition of Malta Decorative Arts, which should be seen as the fourth pillar of artistic production in Malta, as explained by Mark Sagona in his introductory essay of the book. Sagona explained indeed, that there has been a conscious effort by the University of Malta to encourage, since the very late 1990s, 'several important studies, ranging from doctoral theses, to post-graduate and undergraduate dissertations', and this latest publication is a tremendous addition to this 'significant and ongoing academic research.'

Malta has a rich and complex artistic history intrinsically linked to its political situation: while the Knights of the order of St John (1530-1798) favoured the exuberant Baroque style and called for Italians to settle on the island, 19th century British rulers were quite different, placing Malta at the heart of its Mediterranean touristic and trade routes towards India and beyond. This had previously been addressed by Victor F. Denaro (1896-1982), the scholar who pioneered the study of antique Maltese silver, as he contextualised the production of silver to 'include seminal information on the role of goldsmiths from the Knights to the British periods.' In her book, Muscat highlights further the considerable British influence upon Maltese craftsmen, and how the Darmanin responded, gaining the favour of an impressive clientele from British royalty and upper society.

What makes this book extremely clever and enjoyable to read is that every chapter starts with a clear and concise contextual introduction: how the British introduced

their artistic ideas to Malta in chapter two - with this interesting quote: 'the British were astute colonizers'; the successive visits from the Royal Family to Malta before their interaction with the Darmanin in the chapter three; the context and importance of international exhibition in the fourth; and finally how Malta became an essential step of the British Grand Tour, explaining the numerous commissions from 'distinguished patrons'. The first chapter is a complete biography of the Darmanin firm: its generations of artists since the apprenticeship of Giuseppe with his uncle Carlo Durante in the early 1700s, its successive locations and partnerships, the cause of its closure in 1944, and the members who settled their own firm, such as Carlo Darmanin who also acquired the reputation of one of Malta's leading *papier-mâché* statuarists. This is the culmination of the author's investigation, piecing together business cards, letter headed paper, contracts, and photographs, in majority from Darmanin family private archives. A real achievement.

Muscat offers a remarkable account of the Malta firm and accomplished a mammoth effort in reattributing objects which so far had been wrongly identified. Thanks to well-documented illustrations, varying from auction records, drawings, in-situ photographs of various buildings to private and public worldwide collections, Muscat presents the incredible array of styles and techniques developed by the Darmanin, to make their firm 'relevant throughout the entire [19th] century' as she explained. It is evident that they were not only makers but developed their own

‘concept, composition and iconography according to the commission’. The Darmanins certainly excelled with their production of table tops, responding to British and international taste as they combined Malta’s emblems and traditional specimen tables, some of which were personalised with their patrons’ armorial. Adding substantially to those identified by Hay, Muscat records over 70 examples and has cleverly organised them by motif: The Antique Doves of Pliny, the Maltese horse and palm tree or Carthaginian warrior, floral and armorial motifs etc.

This book is an incredible milestone for the history of stone marquetry. It revolutionises our traditional attributions - which can now be revised with concrete, solid evidence - and reveals the undeniable importance of the Darmanin firm in 19th century stone production. This authoritative publication succeeds in reaching its primary goal: it offers a fresh perspective on the history of Decorative Arts in Malta that firmly places it in a much more respected and wider international scene than ever anticipated before.

ALICE MINTER

Publication Received

MARIO TAVELLA, ‘A set of ebony and ivory inlaid furniture for the Duke of Urbino’, *Burlington Magazine* 164 (2022), pp.546-557, 15 col. illus.

In the late 1590s Francesco Maria II della Rovere, Duke of Urbino, commissioned from Giorgio Tedesco and Giulio Lupi a set of four cabinets and a matching table veneered with ebony and engraved ivory. The cabinets included a *studiolo* or writing desk, now in the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino. The credenza that formed the base of the *studiolo* has recently come to light, allowing the original form and history of this outstanding set of furniture to be reconstructed in detail.

Reports on FHS Events



Exterior view of Restoration House

Study Day to Rochester, Kent

THURSDAY 7 APRIL 2022



Detail of chest, Rochester Cathedral

Visit and tour of Rochester Cathedral

We made our short walk from Restoration House to the Cathedral where we were greeted by two very welcoming guides at the north transept entrance, where we were split into 2 groups. Rochester Cathedral is the second oldest English Cathedral, dating from the seventh century; Canterbury dating from a century earlier was visited as part of a Kent study tour in 2019.

Our guide took us to view the site of the cloisters; sadly demolished in the reign of Henry VIII. Even the stone was taken away. In later years the building suffered from severe subsidence maybe in consequence of the cloisters no longer providing support. In the 19th century, a new Bath stone wall was erected to

hold this side of the Cathedral up; inside we were shown an amazing leaning Norman pillar which was clear evidence of how serious the problem had been. The ancient library was visible, but alas closed, however the wonderful carved stone doorway was a remarkable and unique example of the Norman stone mason's skill; one memorable feature was a series of childlike faces starting with rather miserable looking expressions, but gradually, as the faces rose on the left-hand side their faces began to grin and then finished with smiles!

We then viewed a wide English oak cupboard made for the storage of the collection of altar frontals; we considered it to date from the 19th-century 'Arts and Crafts' period and it has some fine crisply carved panels to the front. Oddly,

the Cathedral appeared to be devoid of old furniture. The 19th century choir stalls are of high quality and may well have dated from the time when Gilbert Scott seemed to have been let loose in the building. We were all rather amazed how long the decorative paint work behind the choir stalls had lasted; a point of interest, Rochester is the only medieval Cathedral to have solid walls behind the Choir Stalls, usually the space is open to the Choir isles; one wonders if this helped in some structural way. We finished the tour back in the North Transept and after a vote of thanks given by one of our members we set off to the French Hospital.

Visit to The French Hospital

The French Hospital *La Providence* was founded to provide alms houses to accommodate poor Huguenot families. Originally founded in London, it was moved to this rather splendid Georgian-style court yard in Rochester in the 20th century. Dr Tessa Murdoch, to whom we are grateful for instigating this visit, has compiled two extensive books after a great deal of research into the Huguenots and the many skills that they brought to England.

We were greeted by one of the residents, who imparted an interesting insight into the lives and work of his ancestors, who proved that the Huguenots were involved in many other fields of skilled manufacture than silk weaving. There was little furniture to see but there was a splendid late 18th century mahogany secretaire bookcase complete with a

shallow map drawer. Attendee, Lennox Cato, wondered if it showed indications that it might have been made in William Vile's workshop.

After a welcome cup of tea, we departed with some of our party then visiting the Guildhall to see the complete set of late 18th century cabinet-maker's tools and chest belonging to Benjamin Seaton, a Chatham-based furniture and cabinet-maker. Most of the over two hundred tools were purchased from the London firm of Christopher Gabriel and Sons.

ALAN READ

Visit to 'Inspiring Walt Disney: The Animation of French Decorative Arts' at The Wallace Collection

FRIDAY 22 APRIL 2022

We were welcomed by Dr Helen Jacobsen, formerly Senior Curator and Curator of French 18th-century Decorative Arts at the Wallace Collection, for a tour of the exhibition displayed earlier this year at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, which she co-curated with Dr Wolf Burchard.

Dr Jacobsen started the tour with a brief introduction on Walt Disney (1901-1966), who was very early on engaged with France and its culture, which remained a source of inspiration throughout his life. Five years after he first set foot in France, he founded, in 1923, an animation studio with his brother and together they pushed the boundaries of animation. Two of Disney's early short films are particularly underlined in the exhibition: *The Clock*

Tower vase with cover,
Sevres Manufactory,
c. 1762 © Courtesy of the
Huntington Art Museum,
San Marino, California



Store (1931) and *The China Shop* (1934), both featuring dancing porcelain couples reminiscent of the fashionable Höchst and Meissen rococo figures of the 18th century. The porcelain figural group 'Magic Lantern' shows the connection with the development of cinema, carrying a sense of excitement, motion and novelty.

Whilst the exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art was larger in size and included highlights from *Snow White* (1937) and *Sleeping Beauty* (1959), the exhibition at the Wallace Collection is smaller and focuses mainly on *Cinderella* (1950) and *Beauty and the Beast* (1991). The second room of the exhibition is in fact dedicated to *Cinderella*, a film based on a French tale by Charles Perrault (1628-1703). Some of the charming set designs by Mary Blair as well as twenty-four

drawings depicting Cinderella's iconic dress transformation, the latter equaling to only one second of the film, are displayed and highlight how these films are so much more than 'just' cartoons.

Dr Jacobsen then took us to the next rooms focusing on *Beauty and the Beast*, adapted from a French tale published in 1740 by Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot de Villeuneuve (1685-1755). Art and France are once again completely represented within the film: the three-dimensional oval ballroom, the stage for the Beast and Belle's romantic dance, is inspired by French classical architecture; the Beast's dying and transformation scene is inspired by Rodin and Michelangelo. She also brought to our attention two wonderful pairs of soft-paste porcelain *pots-pourris* each in the form of a European turreted

castle, the type of castle that was adopted as the famous Disney logo. Finally, the last room takes a closer look at three characters turned into objects in the film: Lumiere, Cogsworth and Mrs Potts.

This exhibition invites us to see Europe and 18th century Decorative Arts through the lens of Disney, and *vice versa*. The display of furniture by Boulle or BVRB I, and of porcelain figures, proving to be living pieces of narrative, alongside Disney's drawings, is illuminating and altogether encourages us to revisit the idea of animating an inanimate object, a prominent one, in the French decorative arts as much as in French literature of the 18th century.

ADÈLE BOURBONNE

Visit to Goodwood House

MONDAY 25 APRIL 2022

The phrase 'good things come to those who wait' was certainly relished when members of the Society finally visited Goodwood House, near Chichester, in April, eighteen months later than originally scheduled (20 September 2020).

The first house on the estate was bought by the 1st Duke of Richmond in the late 17th century for use as a hunting lodge. After alterations in the 18th century, the property was hugely extended by the 3rd Duke in 1800-06 to accommodate the family's vast collection of works of art and furniture, which had been rescued from their London home, Richmond House in



FHS Group, with curator James Peill, in front of Goodwood House

Whitehall, during a devastating fire in 1791. These included treasures he had acquired during his Ambassadorship to the French court (1765-1766).

The visit began in the Long Hall, part of the original Jacobean property. Among the furniture examined was a late 17th century cabinet-on-stand possibly by Gerrit Jenson. Other eye-catchers in the same room were four benches in the style of William Kent, c. 1740.

The Tapestry Drawing Room was the next delight. Designed By James Wyatt in the neo-classical style to house four Gobelins tapestries depicting *The Life of Don Quixote* presented to the 3rd Duke by Louis XV, the room also included some exceptionally fine French furniture of the same period. Memorable examples included a large suite of chairs in their original five-colour Lyons cut-silk velvet made by Delanois c. 1765.

The impressive Front Hall, added to the house in 1800, was enriched by a set of eight carved giltwood chairs, with eagle masks and plumed claw-and-ball feet belonging to the 2nd Duke. Possibly made by James Richards, they are similar to sets at Arundel and Houghton.

More furniture from the 2nd Duke's collection was displayed in the Music Room. Two gilded armchairs to designs by William Kent had an interesting history. Given to Chichester City Council by the 3rd Duke in 1785, they were retrieved by the estate after the Council tried to sell them at Sotheby's in 1996. We were also fortunate to be shown two remarkable mahogany commodes with coffer-type lids thought to be by William Hallett, c. 1735.

The Egyptian Dining Room remains an unforgettable Regency *tour de force*.

Created by the 3rd Duke between 1802 and his death in 1806, its design was inspired by contemporary French and English discoveries in Egypt. Furniture included side tables of c. 1805 in the manner of Thomas Hope and a set of twenty mahogany dining chairs with bronze crocodiles mounted in their backs.

As the tour of the house drew to a close, we saw the Yellow Drawing Room where the frames of pier glasses made for the room in the 1820s include carvings of the English rose, the Scottish thistle and the French *fleur-de-lys*, symbolizing three of the family's four Dukedoms, Richmond, Lennox and Aubigny, the Gordon one having not yet been obtained.

The visit was concluded by David Wurtzel thanking our guide, James Peill a fellow member of the FHS and the official curator of the house, for a memorable visit.

ROGER ROSEWELL

Report on Online event

25 MAY 2022: Online seminar 'New Perspectives: Furniture on Display at the Burrell Collection' with Laura Bauld, Project Curator, and Edward Johnson, Curator of Medieval and Renaissance Art. The recording is available on the website.

Tributes

Philip Astley-Jones (1946-2021) and Philip Hewat-Jaboor (1953-2022)

The Furniture History Society mourns the loss of two longstanding members, two Philips: Philip Astley-Jones and Philip Hewat-Jaboor. They met at Sotheby's in 1972 and struck up a friendship that would last almost 50 years. Both died within seven months of each other; so, to give emphasis to their close personal and professional relationship, it seems apt to relay their biographies together.

Philip Astley-Jones grew up in rural Shropshire and began his professional life under the stimulation of the richly furnished antique shop of Roger Warner in Burford, whose contents spanned everything from late Medieval furniture to 18th century costume. It is in that inspiring atmosphere that Philip trained his eye from 1965 to 1970. A vivid account of his apprenticeship under Warner's strict guidance can be found amongst the oral histories recorded by the Antique Dealer's Archives, on the website of the University of Leeds. A rather quirky habit Philip adopted from Warner and one by which he swore, was to smell the inside of a drawer to help confirm the authenticity of a piece of furniture.

In 1970, Astley-Jones's career took a decisive turn, when the then Chairman of Sotheby's, Peter Wilson (of whom Philip loved making an impression, even though



Philip Hewat-Jaboor (left) and Philip Astley-Jones (right) at Aston-le-Walls, late summer 2015

it was almost indistinguishable from his Queen Mother), took him out to lunch with the offer of having him set up the furniture department in Los Angeles. 'But I've just opened my own antiques shop', a 24-year old Astley-Jones explained. 'Well, close it. Close it' responded Wilson. Six weeks later, Philip was on a plane to California, which he took by storm. Only the other day, I met someone who knew him in those early LA days, and who emphatically exclaimed: 'Philip Astley-Jones was a legend!'

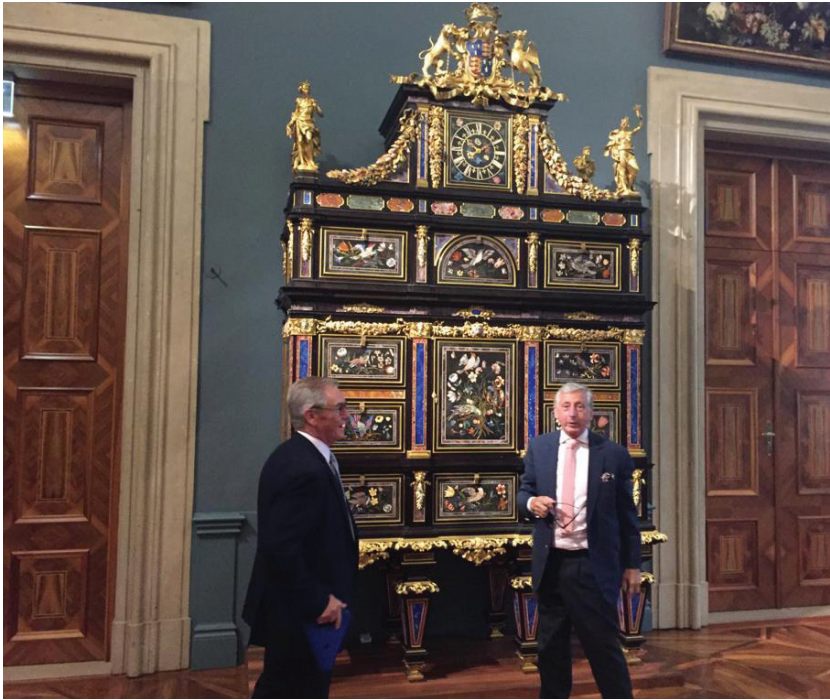
In Hollywood, Philip encountered some surprisingly serious furniture collections, put together by movie stars and studio owners in the immediate aftermath of World War II. However, he also came across endless examples of *faux* Louis furniture, quickly learning that diplomacy was going to be an essential tool if he wanted to succeed: early on, he had been thrown out of a potential client's house, after explaining to her that her cherished *fauteuil* had not been made for Marie-Antoinette but was likely the 1950's product of a local Californian workshop. After that unfortunate incident he avoided such situations by suggesting: 'for this object, you better contact our colleagues at Christie's', gradually attracting the fury of his counterpart at 'the other' auction house. After five years in Los Angeles, Philip transferred to Sotheby's Amsterdam for a brief stint, followed by Paris and Monte Carlo, where he was particularly involved in the large Rothschild sales of 1975.

Philip's generous character combined extraordinary energy and irreverence with kindness and a solid devotion to the enjoyment of life. In 1988, *Harpers and Queen* threw their spotlight on him in a feature about 'life enhancers', where one friend described Philip as 'indefatigable in his pursuit of a good time for everyone within his orbit.' He maintained this positive attitude throughout his life. Indeed, whenever the phone rang, especially at 8am in the morning, he'd gleamingly exclaim, 'it's a party!' And because people adored him so much, he got away with harsh, unveiled criticism, where others wouldn't: 'Wolf, that was the worst lecture you ever gave!'; and at

house parties, he was known repeatedly to take the liberty of rearranging his hosts' furniture without asking their permission.

The years at Sotheby's were glamorous and fun but took their toll. In 1976, Astley-Jones decided to leave the auction world and returned to his original plan of becoming an antique dealer, first based in Northleach in the Cotswolds and subsequently in Cambridge Street, Pimlico. In 1979, Philip Hewat-Jaboor, who had just acquired Hatfield's, the noted restorer of furniture and works of art, offered to go into partnership, proposing Astley-Jones should oversee the conservation workshop. 'But I don't know anything about restoring' said Astley-Jones. 'Yes, but you know what things should look like' replied Hewat-Jaboor.

Together, Astley-Jones and Hewat-Jaboor – affectionately known by their former Sotheby's colleagues as 'Ghastly Bones' and 'Gaga Jaboor' or 'Ghastly Groans' and 'Huge Bore' – ran Hatfield's for twenty years. The workshop had come with a long list of clients, ranging from Blenheim Palace to the Gettys. Their most prominent project, was the conservation of the monumental Badminton cabinet, commissioned in 1726 by a then nineteen-year-old 3rd Duke of Beaufort. The cabinet twice broke the record of the most expensive piece of furniture ever sold at auction, being first acquired by Mrs. Johnson, heiress to the baby powder empire, and later by the Prince of Liechtenstein. Astley-Jones travelled with the cabinet around fourteen times, as Christie's insurance demanded that he would accompany it wherever it went and was displayed.



Philip and Philip reunited with the Badminton Cabinet, Vienna 2016

In October 2016, Philip and Philip were reunited with the Badminton Cabinet during a Furniture History Society visit to Vienna and shared with extraordinary excitement the story of its restoration and sale. I had met both Philips on an FHS trip to St Petersburg in 2012. The two immediately became extremely important friends and mentors to me. On subsequent FHS outings to Hanover, Paris, Lisbon, and the aforementioned Vienna, the three of us became an inseparable trio, and both Hewat-Jaboor and I, like many other friends, were heartbroken when Astley-Jones died in August 2021.

Astley-Jones was quite the flirt and had an amazingly sparkly yet not shallow personality. A compulsive collector – ‘I had to have it!’ – he put together a wonderfully eclectic country gentleman’s collection and together with his partner of

41 years, Johnnie Lloyd Morgan, created a hugely atmospheric environment at the Old Rectory at Aston-le-Walls, published in *House & Garden* in 2001. Even on his deathbed, the afternoon before he



Philip Astley-Jones

died, Philip was browsing catalogues. A Renaissance cast bronze foot inkwell after the antique caught his attention. He explained to Johnnie he had to buy it. 'But Philip, how are you going to pay for it?' asked Johnnie. 'Get an overdraft!' Philip replied.

Philip Hewat-Jaboor was crushed by Philip Astley-Jones's death. The two had been like brothers. We agreed to write Astley-Jones's FHS obituary together, but then he himself died after a short illness. Once more, it was Peter Wilson who had spotted the talent of Hewat-Jaboor, and who had invited him to join the ranks of Sotheby's, where he became the youngest auctioneer in the history of the auction house. By 1980, Hewat-Jaboor had left Sotheby's both to run Hatfield's with Astley-Jones and to advise serious art collectors in Britain and in America.

Like Astley-Jones, Hewat-Jaboor grew up in Shropshire. At a young age, he was significantly influenced by his maternal grandfather, Sir Alfred Aykroyd, 2nd Bt, who began collecting Chinese ceramics in the 1950s. As a child, Philip was often sent to stay with him in the summer in Yorkshire. 'In the evenings', he had recently told an interviewer, his grandfather 'would get out of the cupboard a piece of porcelain and he then melted. He was no longer the slightly frightening patrician grandfather, and he became this great passionate collector.'

Philip rapidly developed a passion specifically for the Regency period. He was the mastermind behind two important exhibitions, whose multi-authored catalogues bear witness to his dedication to scholarship: *William Beckford*,

1760–1844: An Eye for the Magnificent (2001, Bard Graduate Center and Dulwich Picture Gallery) and *Thomas Hope: Regency Designer* (2008, Bard Graduate Center and Victoria and Albert Museum). His understanding of these two outstanding collectors was unparalleled and he was the living proof that even without a university degree, one can become a leading figure in the field of art history.

Philip was a keen traveller, his love of India gradually superseded by what can only be described as an obsession with Egypt. With unrelenting vim he sought out monuments and quarries, the more remote, the better. He will be remembered by many for his expertise in imperial porphyry – the beguiling, deep purple stone quarried in Egypt and revered by Roman emperors and early modern European monarchs alike. Not only did he put together an important collection of porphyry objects of his own, but his devotion to the alluring colour of the rare rock also extended to sartorial choices, cars, the ink in his fountain pen, commissions (such as from Stephen Cox, RA) and interior decoration, most notably his much-photographed entrance hall at Ennismore Gardens. Indeed, multiple tributes on social media have emphasised Philip's great sense of style and how he 'owned' the colour purple.

In 'The Aesthete' column of the *Financial Times*, Philip revealed in 2019: 'My style icon is my late uncle, Sir William Aykroyd, who ran Hardy Amies for a time and had an immaculate dress sense.' Philip's own impeccable attire and manners may have conjured the image of a somewhat intimidating individual set

in his ways, but behind the glamorous purple facade was a truly *gentle* man, a kind soul, probably the most open-minded person I ever met. He was quite the opposite of a snob – although he couldn't help but reprimand me whenever I would order a cappuccino after lunch: 'Where were you brought up?!' His quick wit and incorrigible sense of humour will be what his friends will miss the most, as well as his contagious laugh, which saw his impressive nose rhythmically swing from left to right – a gift for any caricaturist.

Passionate about cross-collecting, the blending of old and new, nature and culture, Philip and his partner of 30 years, the ingenious hatter Rod Keenan, brought into being an oasis on the island of Jersey. The gem of a library they built into the hill might almost qualify as a place of pilgrimage for art historians; and although in many ways a very private person, Philip was happy to share it with whomever showed an interest. His extraordinary generosity of spirit and his eagerness to engage with the next generation, made him the sounding board of numerous curators and historians of the decorative arts in the making – his mentorship made even more meaningful by the fact that he himself sought advice from the young, thereby demonstrating just how seriously he took his mentees. He had friends of all ages and while his rarefied lifestyle could have led to accusations for being out of touch, he was in fact keenly aware of the tribulations of professional life and the struggles young curators and scholars face, as they try to establish themselves. He helped where he could and was an ardent advocate of

numerous organisations, including the Bard Graduate Center, Art House Jersey, the Sir John Soane's Foundation and most especially the Furniture History Society with its Early Career Development group. To Philip, it was essential that, beyond their academic credentials, emerging museum professionals would be presented with opportunities to train their eye. He therefore arranged for young mentees to shadow the vetting committees at Masterpiece, thereby allowing them to learn from the connoisseurship of established experts.

It is thanks to Philip's chairmanship that Masterpiece has become the internationally renowned art fair it is today. For many it will be difficult to imagine it without his presence. One friend recently likened Philip's smoothly gliding through the aisles of the fair to a wizard worthy of the Harry Potter saga. It is at Masterpiece that the two Philips once again got to work together (and tease each other, which they often did), as Astley-Jones would join the fair's vetting committee for furniture and works of art.

Philip Astley-Jones died on 13 August 2021, aged 74; Philip Hewat-Jaboor on 31 March 2022, aged 68. Both are greatly missed.

WOLF BURCHARD

Other News



Walnut Arts and Crafts chest with mother of pearl and ebony inlay (c.1900), designed by Robert Weir Schultz. © The Bute Collection at Mount Stuart. Photo: Keith Hunter

Exhibition: Fantasy to Fabrication – 19th-Century Design at Mount Stuart

MOUNT STUART, ISLE OF BUTE,
SCOTLAND

25 MAY – 30 OCTOBER 2022

Mount Stuart is a Neo-Gothic mansion on the Scottish Isle of Bute, designed by Sir Robert Rowand Anderson in the 1870s. For over 150 years, the Bute family have been passionate patrons of 19th-century decorative arts.

Mount Stuart is celebrating the imagination, eclecticism, and craftsmanship of 19th-century design in its new exhibition, *Fantasy to Fabrication: 19th-Century Design at Mount Stuart*. It runs from 25 May until 30 October 2022. Showcasing spectacular examples of jewellery, furniture, watercolours, books, glass and stained glass, silver and other metalwork - this new exhibition will explore the Bute family legacy of commissioning and collecting Arts & Crafts and Gothic Revival masterpieces.

The exhibition is particularly unique as most of the objects on show will be reunited with their original sketches and drawings for the first time since their creation. Many of these treasures from the Bute Collection have never been on public display before, and are paired with several rarely seen objects on loan from national institutions.

Featuring the work of William Burges, Horatio Walter Lonsdale, Robert Weir Schultz, Sir Robert Lorimer, Christopher Dresser and William Morris, visitors will gain an insight into the creative process and close collaborative relationship between designer, maker, and client. The walnut furniture with mother-of-pearl and ebony inlay (c. 1900) - designed by Robert Weir Schultz and made in the Bute workshops in Cardiff by foreman wood carver Thomas John Sr. - is a definite highlight.

Grants

Calling All Scholars and Museum Professionals

The Furniture History Society welcomes grant applications for independent travel, research or for participation in the Society's study trips both overseas and in the United Kingdom. Scholars and museum professionals working in the fields of furniture history, furniture making, decorative arts, interior design and conservation who are in need of support for travel and research are encouraged to apply.

The Society makes grants to individuals and organisations from two funds which have been established thanks to the generosity of members of the Society. They are administered by the Society's Grants committee (Chair: Adriana Turpin) which meets quarterly to consider applications – either for independent travel for study or research, or for participation in the Society's study trips, both overseas and in the United Kingdom.

Tom Ingram Memorial Fund

Grants are awarded from the Ingram Fund towards travel and associated expenses for the purpose of study or research into the history of furniture. These grants are offered, whether or not the applicant is a member of the Society, where travel could

not be undertaken without funding from the Society; and only where the study or research is likely to further the Society's objectives. Applications towards the cost of the Society's own foreign and domestic trips and study weekends are particularly welcome from scholars and museum professionals. Successful applicants are required to acknowledge the assistance of the Ingram Fund in any resulting publications and will be required to make a short report on completion of the trip.

Oliver Ford Trust

The Oliver Ford Trust supports research by emerging scholars and junior museum professionals in the fields of furniture history, the decorative arts and interior design mainly by sponsoring places on the Society's study weekends or foreign tours. Recent awards have included grants to enable participation in the Society's Symposium at The Frick Collection in New York; a weekend visit to the TEFAF (The European Fine Art Foundation) fair; and international conferences.

Applications from individuals who are not members of the Society will be considered.

For further information or to download a grant application form, please go to the Grants page of the Society's website at www.furniturehistorysociety.org/grants/enquiries. Enquiries should be addressed to the Grants Secretary, Jill Bace, at grants@furniturehistorysociety.org or at



Fig. 26: European scholars at the Wonder of Wood conference, Winterthur

21 Keats Grove, Hampstead, London NW3 2RS.

Grants News

‘The Wonder of Wood’ conference at Winterthur Museum

Along with five other scholars and conservators from the UK and Europe, I was privileged to attend ‘The Wonder of Wood’ conference at Winterthur Museum,

Delaware. It is almost impossible to condense such a packed and wonderful few days into a short article, so what follows is simply a few highlights.

The conference programme presented an all-star line-up of speakers. It was fascinating to hear new research on well-known makers such as Gerrit Jensen and Jean-Henri Riesener, but I also enjoyed learning about unfamiliar American makers. The exquisite Anglo-Japanese marquetry



Fig. 27. Drawing Room from 901 Fifth Avenue, New York City (1923), in the Philadelphia Museum of Art

of Gilded Age cabinet-makers the Herter Brothers was a particular favourite.

However, it was the live demonstrations by Yannick Chastang, Steve Latta and Silas Kopf that really transformed my understanding: no theoretical knowledge of *première*- and *contre-partie* can match seeing it done in real time. The demonstrations were complemented by displays by contemporary makers in both traditional and modern forms.

Other highlights included having the run of the Philadelphia Museum of Art while it was closed to the public, and the beautiful setting of Winterthur Museum,

with 60 acres of gardens in full blossom, and 1000 acres of rolling parkland. On my last morning, I was extremely lucky to tour the house with Tara Gleason Chicirda, Curator of Furniture at Colonial Williamsburg, and benefit from her deep knowledge of American furniture.

I am immensely grateful to the Furniture History Society for sponsoring my attendance at such a memorable and stimulating conference. A huge thank you also to Brock Jobe of Winterthur, whose enthusiasm and kindness made it such a special event for all involved.

AMY LIM

"We have to think about the next generation" said Brock Jobe, organiser of the conference, and it was thoroughly refreshing to meet so many early career professionals and scholars from around the world, all with such widely varying backgrounds and interests, from Jeremy Tritchler an apprentice cabinet maker at Colonial Williamsburg, to Kirsten Frieze - a student pursuing an MA in the conservation and restoration of wooden objects at the University of Applied Sciences Potsdam, Germany and too many others to mention here. The conference brought together an amazing job of curating an incredible roster of speakers, conservators, historians, curators and artists; there were video assisted demonstrations from Yannick Chastang and Steve Latta, while the only thing to outshine Silas Kopf's marquetry demonstration was the marvelously iridescent technicolor blazer



he wore during the talk itself.

Some of my other favourite talks came from Alexandra Cade, Jurgen Huber and John Cross. Alexandra, during her talk, concentrated on two harpsichords held at the Sigal Music Museum and dating from 1758 and 1761, where the manuscripts depicted demonstrated the intimate musical understanding of some of the marqueteurs. As a further example she cited a commode at the Metropolitan Museum, attributed to John Mayhew', where the music is so accurately written it can be read directly off the commode itself.

Needless to say, I found it incredibly hard to narrow down my favourite talks as there were so many fascinating subjects discussed by such a talented group of speakers; The conference is now available to watch online and I urge you to watch it in its entirety. I left Delaware exhausted but with rejuvenated enthusiasm and in eager anticipation of the next conference.

I'd like to thank everyone at Winterthur, the incredibly generous donors who made the whole thing possible. Thank you also to the Furniture History Society who sponsored me and to everyone who attended the conference.

PHILIP BURROWS

Fig. 28: Inside the Winterthur lecture hall

Publications

As a leading publisher in the field of furniture history, the Society offers for sale a wide variety of publications to both members and non-members. Among the publications that are currently available are the following:

- *Index to the Dictionary of English Furniture Makers*, £20 (members £18)
- Pat Kirkham, *The London Furniture Trade 1700–1870*, £20
- Francis Bamford, *Dictionary of Edinburgh Furniture Makers 1660–1840*, £20
- Jacob Simon, *Thomas Johnson's The Life of the Author*, £7.95
- Judith Goodison, *Thomas Chippendale the Younger at Stourhead*, £6.95
- Simon Swynfen Jervis, *John Stafford of Bath and his Interior Decorations*, £6.95
- Simon Swynfen Jervis, *British and Irish Inventories*, £12 (members £10)
- Morrison H. Heckscher, 'Chippendale's Director: The Designs and Legacy of a Furniture Maker', *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (May 2018), £15
- *The Chippendale Society, Thomas Chippendale 1718–1779: A Celebration of British Craftsmanship and Design*, £5

Post and packaging for the above

UK £5.00; Europe £7.50;

Rest of the World £10.00

- Index volumes for *Furniture History*, vols I–X £5, XI–XV £5, XVI–XXV £5, XXVI–XXXV £5 **including post and packaging**
- The following back numbers of *Furniture History* are available for purchase: XI (1975)–XIX (1983), XXII (1986), XXV (1989)–LVI (2020).
- A full list of articles published in these editions may be found on the Journals page of the website.

Prices including post and packaging

UK £28.00; Europe £32.00;

Rest of the World £35.00

Prices have been revised due to significant increases in postage, particularly to Europe and North America. Please see the website for details.

To order these or any other FHS publication, contact the Society's Publications officer, Jill Bace, at publications@furniturehistorysociety.org or 21 Keats Grove, Hampstead, London NW3 2RS. On receipt of your order, she will send you an invoice. Upon receipt of payment (which may be made by cheque, debit or credit card), orders will be despatched by the Society's printers.

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FINANCE AND MEMBERSHIP OFFICER: Keith Nicholls, 37 Railway Road, Teddington TW11 8SD.
Tel. 0208 287 2098; email: finance@furniturehistorysociety.org

EVENTS SECRETARY: Beatrice Goddard, Westfield Cottage, 150 Bloomfield Road, Bath BA2 2AT.
Tel. 07775 907390; email: events@furniturehistorysociety.org

TOM INGRAM MEMORIAL FUND/FHS GRANTS SECRETARY: Jill Bace, 21 Keats Grove, Hampstead, London NW3 2RS. Email: grants@furniturehistorysociety.org

PUBLICATIONS SECRETARY: Jill Bace, 21 Keats Grove, Hampstead, London NW3 2RS.
Email: publications@furniturehistorysociety.org

Council members can be contacted through the Events or Membership Secretaries, whose details are shown above. Contributors can be contacted through the Newsletter Editor, who is Sharon Goodman, 26 Burntwood Lane, London SW17 0JZ. Tel. 07855 176779; email: sctgoodman@yahoo.co.uk

The views expressed in this *Newsletter* are those of the respective authors. They are accepted as honest and accurate expressions of opinion, but should not necessarily be considered to reflect that of the Society or its employees.

Registered UK Charity No. 251683.

Copy Deadline

The deadline for receiving material to be published in the next *Newsletter* is 8 September 2022.

Copy should be sent by email to Kate Hay, Editor, email: katehay86@gmail.com.

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COVER PICTURE: The Mazarin Chest, c. 1640, Japan, Probably Kōami workshop, Kyoto, formerly in the collection of William Beckford (1760-1844) © Victoria & Albert Museum.