



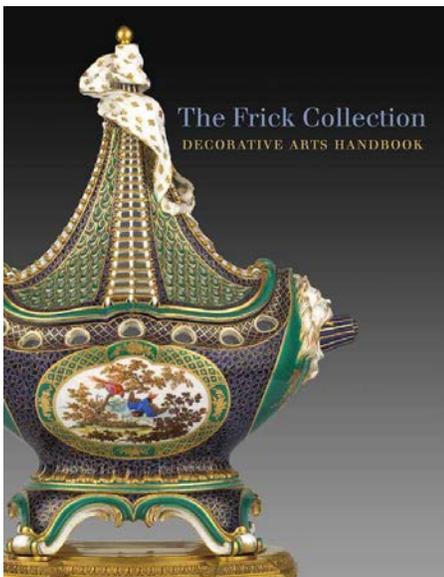
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from

THE FRICK COLLECTION

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FRICK PUBLISHES FIRST HANDBOOK ON DECORATIVE ARTS IN ITS COLLECTION IN BOTH ENGLISH AND FRENCH EDITIONS



The unique atmosphere of The Frick Collection has as much to do with the decorative arts as with the old master paintings that line the museum's walls. Indeed the enamels, clocks and watches, furniture, gilt bronzes, porcelain, ceramics, silver, and textiles far exceed in number, and are the equal in quality, of the works on canvas and panel. The institution announces the publication of the first handbook devoted to the decorative arts in the collection. This long overdue book will help convey the balance among the various art forms represented in the house and provide a valuable introduction to this area. Comments Director Ian Wardropper, "Despite the manifest importance of decorative arts at the Frick, until recently our small staff did not

include a specialist in the field. Thanks to an endowment campaign and the generosity of a number of supporters a permanent curatorial position was created in September 2009. With energy and imagination, the first incumbent of this curatorship, Charlotte Vignon, has initiated a series of exhibitions that highlight this aspect of the collection. The present handbook is another indication of her scholarly dedication to the decorative arts."

ABOUT THE PUBLICATION

The Frick Collection: Decorative Arts Handbook, written by Curator of Decorative Arts Charlotte Vignon, offers fresh insight on various works long in the museum's holdings and also includes commentary on more recently acquired examples. Exquisitely illustrated with new photography, this paperback volume is available in English and French editions (188 color illustrations; 7 x 9 inches, \$24.95, member price \$22.46). Published by the Frick in association with Scala Arts Publishers Inc., it is available at the Museum Shop of the Frick, by phone at 212.547.6848, and on the institution's Web site. shopfrick.org/index.htm

HENRY CLAY FRICK: DEVELOPING A DECORATIVE ARTS COLLECTION

Acquiring paintings preoccupied Henry Clay Frick when he moved to New York in the first years of the twentieth century. While renting William H. Vanderbilt's mansion at Fifth Avenue and 51st Street, he devoted his attention to collecting masterpieces by Rembrandt, Velázquez, and other masters. As the sumptuous house he constructed at 70th Street took shape between 1912 and 1914, he recognized the need for furnishings of a caliber that matched his painting collection. Interestingly, most of his purchases in this area were made just before or after he began to occupy the house and in a very concentrated period of time.



The Fragonard Room, The Frick Collection, New York; photo: Michael Bodycomb



Two Vases "à Oreilles," Sèvres Porcelain Manufactory, c. 1759, soft-paste porcelain, The Frick Collection, New York; photo: Michael Bodycomb

periods and materials, especially porcelain, oriental carpets, and French Renaissance enamels and furniture, such as pieces

A trip to London and Paris in the spring of 1914 inspired many of the choices Frick would make for his New York mansion. After meeting Victor Cavendish, the ninth Duke of Devonshire, at Landsdowne House in London and his country house at Chatsworth, Frick acquired from him a suite of tapestry furniture thought to be eighteenth-century Gobelins. Impressed by the Wallace Collection and wishing to emulate it, he set out to acquire high-quality decorative arts of different



André-Charles Boulle and Etienne Levasseur, Kneehole Desk, French, Paris, c. 1692-95, with later alterations, c. 1770 (before 1777), oak, fir, and walnut veneered with brass, turtle shell, and ebony, gilt bronze, leather, The Frick Collection, New York; photo: Michael Bodycomb

made by André-Charles Boulle, with their distinctive turtle-shell and brass veneers. In Paris, through the intermediary of the American decorator Elsie de Wolfe, he purchased French furniture from the collection of Sir John Murray Scott (inherited from Lady Wallace, the widow of the founder of the Wallace Collection). In a single month, he spent more than \$400,000, more than he had ever spent on collecting in this field.



The Boucher Room, The Frick Collection, New York; photo: Michael Bodycomb

In some cases, furniture and decorative arts were assembled to complement specific rooms of the house. Elsie de Wolfe, for example, counseled the acquisition of a desk by the great French eighteenth-century cabinetmaker Jean-Henri Riesener together with Sèvres porcelain for Adelaide Frick's second-floor dressing room, which was lined with wall panels painted by François Boucher's workshop. The room and its furnishings were transferred to the first floor in 1935.

Other great eighteenth-century French furnishings for Adelaide's dressing room came through Joseph Duveen, then the head of Duveen Brothers. After Fragonard's cycle of paintings was installed in the drawing room in 1915–16, Duveen sold Frick many more works to embellish its decor. French Renaissance furniture was bought to complement the collection of sixteenth-century enamels acquired in 1916; Henry's office was transformed into a gallery for its display. The Italian Renaissance cassoni were always intended to be placed beneath masterpieces of painting in the West Gallery or elsewhere.

Carefully selected blocs of decorative arts, such as the forty-six pieces of Limoges enamel Frick acquired through Duveen from the estate of J. Pierpont Morgan, were one means by which the collection grew quickly. Morgan's death in 1913 gave Frick the opportunity to choose from one of the finest and largest collections in the world just when he was seeking to expand in this area. Another example was the group of fifty Chinese porcelain jars and vases that Duveen had also acquired from Morgan's estate. Apart from the windfall of the availability of the Morgan collection, Duveen's own stock was so extensive and of such quality that Frick could buy from him French royal commissions,



Léonard Limousin (c. 1505–1575/77), Portrait of a Man (Antoine de Bourbon?), c. 1560, Limoges, enamel on copper, The Frick Collection, New York; photo: Michael Bodycomb

such as Gilles Joubert's chest of drawers, which was among some twenty-five pieces of furniture that arrived at Fifth Avenue and 70th Street during the year 1915.

LATER ACQUISITIONS



Great Bustard, Modeled by Johann Gottlieb Kirchner, Meissen Porcelain Manufactory, 1732, The Frick Collection, New York; photo: Maggie Nimkin

Generous gifts from members of the Frick family and other donors have continued to enrich the decorative arts collection. The founder's son, Childs, gave about two hundred pieces of Chinese blue-and-white porcelain in 1965, considerably augmenting those works his father had purchased fifty years earlier. In 1999, Winthrop Kellogg Edey's extraordinary collection of some forty clocks and watches arrived at the Frick. Henry Arnhold has recently given us the Great Bustard from his distinguished and comprehensive collection of Meissen porcelain, and another one hundred and thirty-five works are pledged to the Frick as a bequest. Individual objects of great merit are prized additions to our holdings. Diane Modestini gave us our first piece

of Italian majolica in honor of her husband Mario Modestini in 2008. On occasion, acquisitions are also made, such as the unusual vase japon, purchased in 2011.

Media requests for review copies of the book, within the United States, may be directed to Jennifer Burch, Scala Publishers, at jburch@antiquecc.com.

Media requests for review copies of the book, outside the United States, may be directed to Nina Chang, Scala Publishers, at nchang@scalapublishers.com.

INTERACT

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BASIC INFORMATION

General Information Phone: 212.288.0700

Web site: www.frick.org

Building project: www.frickfuture.org

E-mail: info@frick.org

App: frick.org/app

Where: 1 East 70th Street, near Fifth Avenue

Museum Hours: open six days a week: 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Tuesdays through Saturdays; 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sundays. Closed Mondays, New Year's Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day. Limited hours (11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) on Lincoln's Birthday, Election Day, and Veterans Day

Admission: \$22; senior citizens \$17; students \$12; "pay what you wish" on Sundays from 11 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE TO YOUR READERS: Children under ten are not admitted to the Collection

Subway: #6 local (on Lexington Avenue) to 68th Street station; Bus: M1, M2, M3, and M4 southbound on Fifth Avenue to 72nd Street and northbound on Madison Avenue to 70th Street

Tour Information: included in the price of admission is an Acoustiguide Audio Tour of the permanent collection. The tour is offered in six languages: English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish.

Shop: the shop is open the same days as the Museum, closing fifteen minutes before the institution.

Group Visits: Please call 212.288.0700 for details and to make reservations.

Public Programs: A calendar of events is published regularly and is available upon request.

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For further press information, please contact Heidi Rosenau, Associate Director of Media Relations & Marketing

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