



CONNECTICUT CERAMICS STUDY CIRCLE

NEWSLETTER

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"A Delectable Dessert: A Late Eighteenth Century Dessert Table at the Gardiner Museum"

By Meredith Chilton, Independent Consultant and Researcher,
Former Chief Curator, The Gardiner Museum, Toronto, Canada



Detail, Dessert Table at the Gardiner
Museum, Toronto. Photo: Tara Fillion

Dessert Table at the Gardiner
Museum, Toronto. Photo: Tara Fillion

The Gardiner Museum's European porcelain galleries underwent a radical transformation in 2015. At the heart of the gallery is a new area devoted to dining and drinking, which includes an interpretation of a late eighteenth-century dessert table. At this period, dessert was a visual feast as well as the gastronomic climax to a meal. Delectable ices, moulded jellied flummeries, rolled wagers and sugar novelties accompanied dishes of

fruits and nuts placed on the table in a symmetrical pattern around a mirrored stand or *surtout*, ornamented with sugar and porcelain sculptures. It was all conceived to delight the guests and impress them with the taste and wealth of their hosts.

This lecture will tell the fascinating story of how the Gardiner dessert table came to be made. You will discover how James Woodforde's "very elegant dinner" with the Bishop of Norwich in September 1783, and an engraving of a dessert table from the cookbook of Vincenzo Corrado, provided period references for the table. A selection from a Derby botanical dessert service in the Gardiner collection inspired the table decoration, including floral bouquets made of waxed paper using a secret formula dating back to the eighteenth century. The quest for a tablecloth, and a visit to the Cumbrian home of food historian Ivan Day who created the sugar work and the artificial food, completes the account.

Meredith Chilton, C. M., is an art historian who specializes in European ceramics of the seventeenth and eighteenth century. She has served two terms at the Gardiner Museum, Toronto, the first from 1983 to 2004 as curator, and then from 2015 to 2018 as chief curator. Between these appointments she worked for the Sullivan Foundation and also as an independent curator. Over the course of her career, she has curated numerous exhibitions, has lectured and published extensively. Her books include: *Harlequin Unmasked: The Commedia dell'Arte and Porcelain Sculpture* (Yale: 2001); and *Fired by Passion: Baroque Porcelain of Claudius Innocentius Du Paquier*, three volumes in English and German editions (Arnoldsche: 2009). She was also the principal contributor to *Daily Pleasures, French Ceramics from the MaryLou Boone Collection* (Los Angeles County Museum of Art: 2012). In 2015, she was greatly honored by being made a Member of the Order of Canada, with a citation reading, "Meredith Chilton, Lac-Brome and Toronto. For her leadership as an art historian and curator who helped to make the Gardiner Museum a leading institution in the study of historical ceramics." Meredith lives in Quebec and continues to work as an independent curator on a forthcoming exhibition and publications.



The Clay Art Center has an ongoing exhibit, "They," with works by eight artists that explore exploitation, exclusion and erasure by addressing race, gender, class and disability. The artists were invited by potter, social activist and educator Roberto Lugo. The exhibit extends to May 26, and gallery hours are Monday - Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Clay Art Center is located at 40 Beech Street, Port Chester, New York.



Dining by Design: Exhibit, Courtesy, Winterthur

Dining by Design at Winterthur Museum

From April 1, 2018, to January 6, 2019, this major new exhibition at Winterthur Museum in Delaware takes a fresh look at the history of dining and dinnerware from the 1600s onward and celebrates how hosts and hostesses have brought the natural world into their dining rooms. Everything from painted butterflies and hand-modeled flowers to tureens in the shapes of the foods served in them will be on view, set among a fascinating range of ceramic and silver tableware.

The exhibit encompasses tableware from both the Western world and Asia, with decorative schemes related to hunting, fishing, natural tourist sights, flowers, animals and more.

General admission includes a tour of some of the most notable spaces in the 175-room house as well as access to the Winterthur Garden and Galleries, special exhibitions, a narrated tram tour (weather permitting), the Campbell Collection of Soup Tureens, and the Enchanted Woods children's garden. Admission costs \$20 for adults; \$18 for students and seniors; and \$6 for ages 2–11. Group rates available. For details, visit winterthur.org or call 800.448.3883.

CCSC Slate of Officers, 2018-2019

President Fran O'Neil wishes to thank those board members who are continuing and especially welcome Irene Willisch and Leticia Roberts to the board for the first time. Thank you, Irene and Tish, for your willingness to serve!

President: Frances O'Neil *

Vice President: Adam Chau*

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Hospitality Supervision: Lillian Johnson*+ and
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Research: Natalie Robinson*+

Website: Ginny Waters*

Nominating: Position Open

*Second of two year term;+Has served multiple terms

Two positions, Archivist and Member Collection Tours, are no longer part of the Board this year. Positions on the Board of CCSC are for 2 years and can be renewed any number of times.

Elsewhere in the Decorative Arts

May 2: "New Discoveries in American Majolica." Lecture by Laura Microulis, Research Associate, Bard Graduate Center. Bard Graduate Center, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m., 38 West 86th Street, New York. Information and registration at bgc.bard.edu/events and at 212.501.3010.

May 7: "From Antiques Roadshow to the Rhode Island Furniture Archive: Identifying Antique Furniture Today." Lecture by Philip Zimmerman, museum and decorative arts consultant, author and American antique furniture broker and appraiser. Greenwich Decorative Arts Society, 1:15 p.m., the Bruce Museum, 1 Museum Drive, Greenwich, Connecticut. Go to greenwichdecorativeartssociety@gmail.com, for information and to register.

May 14: "A Delectable Dessert: A Late 18th-Century Dessert Table at the Gardiner Museum." Lecture by Meredith Chilton, independent consultant and researcher, former chief curator, the Gardiner Museum, Toronto, Canada. CCSC, 1:15 p.m., the Bruce Museum, 1 Museum Drive, Greenwich, Connecticut. For information, call 203.912.7226 or visit ctcsc.org.

May 17: "Contemporary Roku." Annual Meeting, luncheon and lecture by Tiffany Adams, ceramic artist, Exeter, Rhode Island. Providence Pottery and Porcelain Club, Squantum Association, 947 Veterans Memorial Parkway, Riverside, RI. For information and registration, contact daisy.schnepel@verizon.net.

May 19: Connoisseurship and Artful Deceptions: Understanding 18th-Century English Ceramics. Day-long decorative arts forum at Historic Deerfield, Deerfield, Massachusetts. For information and to register, go to www.historic-deerfield.org/event.

May 20: SFCC member, former vice-president and distinguished collector of neoclassical porcelain, Glenn Berry, will speak on his current research. San Francisco Ceramic Circle, 9:45 a.m., Gunn Theater, Legion of Honor, San Francisco. Call 415.750.3551 for information.

May 24: "It's About the Clay: The American 20th-Century Studio Pottery Movement." Annual meeting, tea and lecture by Martha Vida, executive Director, The Marks Project, Riverside, Connecticut. Ceramics Study Club of Boston, 1:00 p.m. at King's Chapel Parish House, 64 Beacon Street, Boston, Massachusetts. Information at ceramicsstudyclub.org.

June 4: "The Very Idea of a Garden in the Middle of the Sea: Gardens of Venice." Lecture by John Dixon Hunt, Professor of History and Theory of Landscape, Emeritus, University of Pennsylvania. Greenwich Decorative Arts Society, 1:15 p.m., the First Congregational Church of Greenwich, 108 Sound Beach Avenue, Old Greenwich, Connecticut. For information and to register, go to greenwichdecorativeartssociety@gmail.com.

June 13-14: Porcelain Circling the globe: International trading structures and the East Asia Collection of Augustus the Strong (1670-1733). International conference, Porzellansammlung, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden, Germany. Contact ruth.simonis@skd.museum for registration and information.

To June 30: Carnival & Cabaret. Exhibit exploring flamboyant festivals in Venice, Rio and New Orleans as seen by European porcelain artists. Wiener Museum of Decorative Arts, 481 South Federal Highway, Dania Beach, Florida 33004.



Teapot, "Monkey-Rooster- Snail", Minton Majolica earthenware, circa 1875, L. 7"

2018-2019 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please print clearly and remember, it is important to include your email address.

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Email Address _____

Street, City, State, Zip _____

Telephone: _____ Cell: _____

Membership includes: Seven lectures per year and reduced fee for the annual seminar, along with the newsletter sent to your email address. To receive the newsletter by U. S. Mail, add \$20 to your membership level.

Indicate your level of membership below:

_____ Individual \$100 _____ Couple \$140

_____ Contributing Member \$200 (\$100 tax deductible)

_____ Sponsoring Member \$300 (\$200 tax deductible)

_____ I would like to receive the Newsletter via U. S. Mail

I would like to make an additional donation of \$ _____ to:

_____ The General Fund _____ The Phyllis E. Simons
Memorial Lecture Fund

Total Amount enclosed: \$ _____

To be listed in the annual directory, please return this form by September 1 with your check made out to "CCSC" to: Sarah Vorder Bruegge, 35 Druid Lane, Riverside, CT 06878. Questions? Contact Marylin Chou at 203.863.9655 or at marylin.chou@gmail.com

Interest Questionnaire:

I am interested in ceramics of the following geographic regions, periods, makers, collections, etc.: _____

I would like to suggest the following lecture topics: _____

I would be interested in joining the following: _____ Study Group

_____ Program Committee _____ Website _____ Newsletter

_____ Hospitality and Greeting _____ Trip Planning

_____ Membership _____ Directory



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Our mailing address is:

c/o Natalie Robinson, 18 Foxhall Place, Scarsdale, New York 10583

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