



Sèvres Porcelain Manufactory, Vase Aubert, 1921. Auguste Berlin (dates unknown), decorator. Hard-paste porcelain, 9 5/16 x 3 1/2 in. (23.7 x 8.9 cm). Gift of the French Government (1925.519).

"Modernism and Historicism: A State Gift of Sèvres in the Early
1920s"

by Jeffrey Ruda,
Professor Emeritus of Art History,
University of California, Davis

Sponsored by Gail Geibel and Amy Parenti

Monday, October 13 at 2:00 p.m. via Zoom

[Zoom Registration Link To Be Determined](#)

We welcome you to join the first Zoom lecture of the Connecticut Ceramics Circle's 2025-2026 season, a close look at a magnificent gift from the French government in tribute to the 1924 opening of San Francisco's new art museum, a namesake and reduced replica of the Palace of the Legion of Honor in Paris.

The gift divides into three groups: Two big vases show the most difficult glazing techniques the factory had mastered; twenty-some cabinet-sized pieces show the most advanced fashion in design as of the early 1920s; finally, thirty-one biscuit sculptures, ranging from table-sized to very small, show a surprising range of subjects. Some are clearly appropriate to a war memorial and others to Franco-American friendship, but other selections are harder to understand. Even the obvious commemorative subjects involved meaningful expressive choices.

The Sèvres factory became a government agency early in its history, producing state gifts and public imagery and working in multiple styles for diverse audiences. This background helps to clarify some of the choices in the museum's founding gift. Others benefit from a close look on their own terms.

Jeffrey Ruda is a Professor Emeritus of Art History at the University of California, Davis, where he served three terms as head of the Art History faculty. He is now on the Board of the American Ceramic Circle, where he serves as managing editor of the *ACC Journal* and is a member of the Grants Committee.



Sèvres Porcelain Manufactory, Statuette of Lafayette, 1921, after Aimé-Jules Dalou (1838-1902).
Stoneware, 12 3/4 x 6 x 6 in. (32.4 x 15.2 x 15.2 cm). Gift of the French Government.

Sèvres is Back at the Bard!

The exhibit, 'Sèvres Extraordinaire: Sculpture from 1740 Until Today' has reopened and will be on display through November 16. CCC's Research Committee will have a docent-guided tour of the exhibit on Wednesday, October 15, open to all members. If you are interested in attending, please contact Natalie Robinson at natrobs@gmail.com or at 914.588.0844 as soon as possible, as space is limited.

More information on the exhibit can be found at <https://bgc.bard.edu/exhibitions/27/in-the-gallery>. Should the CCC Research Committee tour date on October 15 not be convenient for you, a public tour will be given on September 25 at 12:30 p.m. and you may register online for it.

Exciting New Website in Progress for the Connecticut Ceramics Circle

We are delighted to announce upcoming improvements to both the aesthetics and the function of our website. The first and most obvious improvement will be our URL as the name will be changed. Watch for the announcement to be made to all members once the site is live.

A new benefit for members on the new site will be the Members Zone, where our recordings will reside, along with the location for members to look up information about their account. This section will be reachable only with a password selected by the member him or herself, therefore easy to remember.

We look forward to sharing the good news of this improved website in the next month!



Clay Art Center's Fall Activities

The Clay Art Center in neighboring Port Chester has a new exhibit, "Shake it up: Ceramic Salt and Pepper Shakers and Cellars." On display is an amazing variety of that dining staple in inventive forms and colors, on exhibit until October 18.

October 18 also brings Hand in Hand, the Annual Benefit and Auction to be held outside the Clay Center at 40 Beech Street in Port Chester.

As always, there are many classes, both one-time and weekly, to sign up for. And the Clay Art Center Shop is full of enticing handmade wares -- shop in person or online at clayartcenter.org.



Asia Week NY, September 11 to 19

Beginning on Thursday, September 11, New York area auction houses and museums will offer a treasure trove of Asian ceramics during the upcoming Asia Week. If exploring these venues in person isn't an option, go to asiaweekny.com to connect to six auction houses and their offerings.

In addition, a click on <https://asiaweekny.com/museums-institutions/> will take you to local museum exhibits, as well as those of museums around the country.

A Mug Hunt is On!

The Salmagundi Club New York, founded in 1871 as a Sketch Class and located on New York's Fifth Avenue since 1917, started a library fundraising campaign in 1899 that consisted of the decoration and then auction of 24 mugs or steins, which were already being kept by members at the Club. Each mug was numbered, signed and had the owner's name burned into it; the auction campaign lasted until 1907.

Originally, the Club's potter Charles Volkmar provided the six-inch stoneware blanks; after his death, Lenox in Trenton, New Jersey was used. Though the last one, a 24" mug belonging to Frank Pierce French, sold for \$16 in 1970, it would be worth perhaps \$547 today.

There were a possible 600 mugs created, and the Club now owns 98, displaying 35 in the library and featuring one each month in the round. Participating members over the years included such venerable artists as Charles Dana Gibson, Howard Pyle, Carlton Wiggins, and Leigh Hunt.

Our member and Salmagundi Library Committee Chair, Jay Barksdale, has shared with us that the Club is looking for the remaining 502 mugs and would be grateful for any information about them. If you have any knowledge of a Salmagundi library mug, please contact either library@salmagundi.org or curator@salmagundi.org.

[Read It In the New York Times](#)

Ceramics are getting some love from young men! According to an article in the August 10 New York [Times](#), a number of upscale and fashionable men's stores around the country are successfully selling contemporary ceramics alongside their clothing items. The handmade, earthy nature of the pieces appeals to young men, who have developed an interest in decorating their homes.

[Elsewhere in the Decorative Arts](#)

September 13: Open to March 5, 2028, The Barkan Contemporary Ceramic Collection at the Rhode Island School of Design Museum. **Ongoing to December 14, 2025:** Ceramics in 'Mountains and Water, Selections from Japan and China.' 20 North Main Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903. Information at <https://risdmuseum.org>.

September 17: The Rhode Island Pottery and Porcelain Club presents its opening lecture and luncheon, "Residency at Sèvres: One Stop On an Artist's Path" by Kate Blacklock, followed by luncheon at the Hope Club, 6 Benevolent Street. \$35. For reservations, please send your check to Ms. Judith Brett, Treasurer, 31 Elmgrove Avenue, Providence, Rhode Island 02906 .

September 30: At the Museum of Arts and Design, a "On the Couch with Jonathan Adler," a conversation with Jonathan Adler and Garth Johnson in conjunction with the exhibit, 'The Mad, Mad World of Jonathan Adler,' on display until April 19, 2026. For event tickets, click on "Tickets" at <https://madmuseum.org/events/couch-jonathan-adler-and-garth-johnson>.

October 10: Zoom Lecture by Neil Buttery, "Exploring Social History and Behavior in the 19th Century Through Wedgwood Ceramics." More information at <https://www.wedgwoodinternationalseminar.org/events>. Past lectures are accessible on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/@wedgwoodinternationalseminar/videos>.

Ongoing: Through September 28 at the American Museum of Ceramic Art in Pomona, California, 'Hot! & Ready to Serve: Celebrating Functional Ceramics.' Two current exhibits open through November 23, 2025 are 'In Their Hands: The Evolution of Mata Ortiz Pottery' and 'Making In Between: Indigenous Americans.' <https://www.amoca.org> for more information.

Ongoing: The Gardiner Museum in Toronto, Canada, is in the midst of a \$15.5 million campaign to create a unique visitor experience with a full-scale reimagining of the ground floor. This will include construction of a new fully equipped makerspace, a Community Learning Centre and an indigenous gallery space. All floors except the ground floor are currently open to visitors. Learn more at <https://www.gardinermuseum.on.ca/fromthegroundup/>.

November 10: "Connections: An Inaugural Exhibition of Chinese Ceramics and Asian Export Art at the Albuquerque Collection," by Becky MacGuire, former Senior Specialist for Chinese Export Art at Christie's and Guest Curator, The Albuquerque Foundation in Sintra, Portugal. This lecture will be in person at the Bruce Museum, Greenwich, Connecticut, with tea to follow, and via Zoom.

