



*Peacock Tile*, glazed earthenware, circa 1910. By Frederick Hurten Rhead (British/American, 1880–1942) for University City Pottery, Saint Louis, Missouri, 1909–14; width 10 3/4 in.

## "Rago/Wright's Greatest Hits of Pre-War American Ceramics"

by David Rago,  
Founder of Rago Auctions, Partner at Rago/Wright,  
Lambertville, New Jersey

Sponsored by Jay Barksdale and James Kaufman

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

Registration at

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/3617714361178/WN\\_qtG4tjkVQ0KJ9FB9lqg3gg](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/3617714361178/WN_qtG4tjkVQ0KJ9FB9lqg3gg)

We look forward to welcoming you to our Monday, April 13 lecture with knowledgeable and genial Antiques Roadshow star, David Rago, who will bring us firmly into the field of 20th century ceramics. Throughout more than five decades dealing in American ceramics, Rago has brought to market, in both public auctions and through private sales, some of the most important and

record-breaking works of Pre-War American art pottery. In what promises to be a highly engaging and visually stimulating lecture, Rago will share highlights of works that have passed through his hands, telling stories about the objects and the people who made them. Rather than a superficial survey of the topic, David will share his own favorite pieces that he has handled and personal anecdotes from a lifetime spent immersed in this material.

David Rago began dealing in American decorative ceramics at a flea market in his home state of New Jersey at the age of seventeen. He founded Rago Auctions in 1984 and now is a partner at Rago/Wright, which owns six of the strongest independent auction brands in the industry: Rago, Wright, LA Modern Auctions (LAMA), Toomey & Co., Poster Auctions International (PAI), and the newly launched Landry Pop Auctions (LPA). With more than five decades of experience handling 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century works, David Rago and Suzanne Perrault, his partner and wife, have established Rago as the preeminent venue for American and European art pottery, American craft furniture, and contemporary glass works. David has authored several titles on fields of collecting, including *American Art Pottery*, *The Arts and Crafts Collector's Guide*, *The Fulper Book*, and *Collecting Modern*. Further, he takes his passion on the road, lecturing nationally and appearing regularly on the PBS series *The Antiques Roadshow* since its inception in 1996.

Register at [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/3617714361178/WN\\_qtG4tjkVQ0KJ9FB9lqg3gg](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/3617714361178/WN_qtG4tjkVQ0KJ9FB9lqg3gg)



Lamp with Louisiana Irises, Mary Sheerer (1865–1964) for Newcomb College Pottery (1886–1940), New Orleans, Louisiana. Glazed earthenware, patinated metal, beaded shade, 1904. H. 21 in. Private collection.

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## SAVE THE DATE: GDAS on June 1!

The Greenwich Decorative Arts Society continues our reciprocal invitation practice with an invitation to all CCC members to attend their Monday, June 1 lecture at the Bruce Museum at 1:00 p.m. for what will be a fascinating talk, "Liberty, Equality, Fashion: Women Who Styled the French Revolution," by Anne Higonnet, Barbara Novak Professor of Art History, Barnard College, Columbia University. This lecture is a must-see! Please RSVP to Natalie Robinson at [natrobs@gmail.com](mailto:natrobs@gmail.com).

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## Addition to CCC Directory

Please add this new member information to your Directory. Thank you!

Karen Handal, 120 Arbor Road, Menlo Park, California 94025; 203.536.9425, [kyhandal@gmail.com](mailto:kyhandal@gmail.com).

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Teapot and Cover, Saint-Cloud Factory, soft-paste porcelain in the form of a Chinese Man Riding a Winged Dragon, circa 1730. Height 7 1/2 inches (19 cm).

## Book Review

It is a pleasure to reprint below, thanks to its gracious author, Letitia Roberts, a review, edited for brevity, of *Brittle Beauty: Reflections on 18th-century European Porcelain*, a competitor for the 2024 American Ceramic Circle Book Award book composed of articles by six experts in the field of European ceramics. It was the ultimate winner of the 2024 Book Award!

The review starts with another review: In her own review for the March 2024 French Porcelain Society Newsletter, Patricia F. Ferguson summarized succinctly the 2023 appearance and reception of this extraordinary book: “the much-anticipated catalogue of over 80 objects [from two private collections] representing the most paramount sculptural and pictorial achievements of the European porcelain industry, exceeds all expectations.” The assembled five distinguished scholars - already legends in the realm of eighteenth-century European porcelain - wrote the eighty essays on approximately 93 choice pieces of French, German, Austrian, Italian and English ceramics - both vessels and sculptures - with various forms of assistance from the 78 other international collectors, curators, scholars, archivists, auction house specialists, dealers and luminaries in the field listed in the Acknowledgments, and with Jeffrey Munger to supply an introduction to eighteenth-century European porcelain: its history and its effects on society, taste and culture.

In his Introduction, quoted here, Jeffrey Munger has managed to provide in admirable brevity the history of porcelain...while emphasizing its cultural influence on life in Europe in the eighteenth century...and its “almost limitless potential for artistic expression...” He seamlessly melds history and brief discussions of the factories represented in the collection with observations about the collection itself: that “the thread that unites [the works catalogued in *Brittle Beauty*] is that each object is remarkable in one regard or another, none simply a fine or classic example....In consequence, these objects are almost uniformly distinguished by their extreme rarity within each factory’s production, or by being best in kind, and each reflects the aim of the potter or designer involved to create something fresh and innovative - the qualities that made this new material [- translucent porcelain -] so seductive to eighteenth-century European eyes.” Even a short examination of histories in this book reveals the significant role played by women as patrons and collectors, a subject deserving of additional study on its own account.”

“What emerges from the works of art in this volume, and from the accounts of their origin and history, is a far greater understanding of the role that porcelain played in the life of eighteenth-century Europe, inspiring as it did a sense of awe, and desire, and endless possibility:” porcelain as an arbiter of taste during the Enlightenment and for over two centuries thereafter.

In spite of, or possibly because of, their extensive scholarship, the essays (identified by their author’s initials), are, in fact, highly readable, engaging, and captivatingly illustrated, often with multiple views of each object, fascinating details, source prints, drawings or other related objects, contemporary paintings

and interiors for context, portraits of key personages, and the occasional amusing archival photograph. This is a book, alive with images, whose reasonably short essays (generally four to six pages) can be read in small bites, each savored like a favorite dessert.

*Brittle Beauty: Reflections on 18<sup>th</sup>-century European Porcelain* by Andreina d'Agliano, Claudia Lehner-Jobst, Errol Manners, Jeffrey Munger, Rosalind Savill and Selma Schwartz. Published by Ad Ilissum (Paul Holberton Publishing Ltd.), London, 2023, over 560 pages. £90 from the publisher or \$110 on Amazon.com.

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The Haughton International Seminar  
“Courtly Magnificence - Gender, Dynasty & Politics”  
Wednesday and Thursday, June 24-25, 2026  
At The British Academy, 10-11 Carlton House Terrace,  
London SW1Y 5AH

From the Royal Courts of the Middle Ages to the 20th Century, this seminar will look at how some of the world's greatest art collections were formed. It will explore how political intrigue and power were involved in their accumulation, and how the personalities of these Royal collectors - women as much as men - were reflected in their collections.

Subjects to be discussed will include the following: Catherine The Great, Marie Theresa of Austria, Queen Hedwig Eleonora, Queen Christina of Sweden, Madame de Pompadour, Courtly Maiolica, Imperial City Collections, The Thorne Miniature Rooms, Lady Charlotte Schreiber, Horace Walpole, Royal Intaglios and our Royal Family's Collections.

Details: Cost of the two-day seminar: £140 (inc VAT)

Cost of the two-day seminar including champagne reception and dinner at The Athenaeum (Wednesday, June 24): £230 (inc VAT)

Student tickets for two-day seminar (on production of ID): £60 (inc VAT)

Reserve your place at <https://www.haughton.com/seminar>. More details at <https://www.haughton.com>.

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Elsewhere in the Decorative Arts

**April 9:** On Zoom: "Collecting and Copying in the 19th Century: The Impact of Islamic Designs on British Ceramic Makers," by Dr. Melanie Gibson, Art Series Editor, GINGKO, at 2:00 p.m. ET presented by the San Francisco Ceramic Circle. The Zoom Link will be forthcoming.

The Zoom Link to the February 15 lecture from the San Francisco Ceramic Circle, "Impressionists in Clay" by Brittany Severt, Ann Stone Associate Curator of Decorative Arts, Baltimore Museum of Art: <https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/yChCCYAEExZqEj4Pc7FNKJ7M9efNIW-TpzXZQ4D8XQKdAmoMCShDSBdQYVXdA7Jq9.DCfJ4pT1ph1dMk09?startTime=1771182697000>  
Passcode: 6J\*%AMN6

**April 12:** On Zoom: "Sèvres Extraordinaire! An Exhibition!," by Tamara Préaud, president of the French Porcelain Society and presented by the French Porcelain Society at 1:00 p.m. ET. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83282187390?pwd=eEb9ZcN30Wa0mZib5raxr2kcnaXmLf.1>  
Meeting ID: **832 8218 7390**, Passcode: **631454**

**Ongoing:** Ciboure Pottery, newly acquired at the gallery Maison Gerard, 43 East 10th Street, New York, New York 10003. Information at [maisongerard.com/collection/c/newacquisitions](https://maisongerard.com/collection/c/newacquisitions).

**Ongoing:** Register by April 3 for early bird rates for the June 4-6 Colonial Williamsburg and MESDA 2026 Ceramics Symposium in Williamsburg, Virginia, Clay Stories. Information and Registration at: <https://web.cvent.com/event/4557b4ab-2814-40cb-8392-3908743f93e1/register?rp=9374a011-8a53-4ecf-a3fa-09843d30b9bf>.

**Ongoing:** To October 12, 2026, the exhibit 'Alice Riehl's Porcelain Florilegium,' a florilegium being a curated collection of botanical images or texts. At the Museum of Arts and Design, 2 Columbus Circle, New York City. For more information, go to [https://madmuseum.org/exhibition/alice-riehls-porcelain-florilegium?utm\\_source=Mar+2026+MAD+News&utm\\_medium=email+&utm\\_campaign=Explore+Alice%2BRiehl+Photo&mc\\_cid=0b9c72e56c&mc\\_eid=dd80bde08f](https://madmuseum.org/exhibition/alice-riehls-porcelain-florilegium?utm_source=Mar+2026+MAD+News&utm_medium=email+&utm_campaign=Explore+Alice%2BRiehl+Photo&mc_cid=0b9c72e56c&mc_eid=dd80bde08f).

**May 12:** "3D-Printed Porcelain: Exploring the Intersection of Technology and Handcraft," by Michael Eden, artist/maker, Cumbria, United Kingdom, presented by the Connecticut Ceramics Circle at 2:00 p.m. via Zoom. Register at [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/6917722082089/WN\\_NOjcKdgISL\\_S6O-mpseOIYg](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/6917722082089/WN_NOjcKdgISL_S6O-mpseOIYg).

**June 1:** "Liberty, Equality, Fashion: Women Who Styled the French Revolution," by Anne Higonnet, Barbara Novak Professor of Art History, Barnard College, Columbia University. Presented by the Greenwich Decorative Arts Society at the Bruce Museum, Greenwich, Connecticut at 1:00 p.m.; please RSVP to Natalie Robinson at [natrob@gmail.com](mailto:natrob@gmail.com).

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