



Vase, Saint-Cloud Porcelain Manufactory, France, soft-paste porcelain, circa 1695-1700.
D. 6 5/8 in. (16.9 cm) x H. 8 1/2 in. (21.6 cm). The Art Institute of Chicago, (2023.1325).

"An Introduction to French Soft-Paste Porcelain Factories of the 18th Century"

by Bernard Dragesco,
Ceramics Specialist and Dealer, Paris

Sponsored by Linda Roth

Monday, March 9 at 2:00 p.m. via Zoom

Registration at

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/9217676501609/WN_vudSA6YcSOeCvcBDz5jIDA

In this lecture, Bernard Dragesco will provide an introduction to France's porcelain industry in the 17th and 18th centuries, beginning with the earliest

porcelain made in France at the Poterat workshop in Rouen and continuing through the founding of the Vincennes factory in 1740. This factory would in 1756 become the famous Sèvres factory still in operation today.

Without the knowledge of how to create “true” hard-paste porcelain as was made in China and so popular in Europe at this time, the French factories produced soft-paste porcelain which mimicked the whiteness and translucence of Asian porcelain. The earliest commercial factory, Saint-Cloud, produced pieces with blue and white decoration, as was done in China, but mostly in European renaissance style, with grotesques and ornamental strapwork copied from the designs of Jacques Androuet du Cerceau. Chantilly, the factory patronized by the Prince de Condé, made porcelain with decoration and forms inspired by Japanese porcelain. Other factories to be discussed are Villeroy/Mennecy, Antoine Pavie in Paris, and, of course, Vincennes/Sèvres.

Born in 1951 near Paris and educated in France, Bernard Dragesco moved to England in 1970 to study at Cambridge and then to teach French. In 1977, He started a career in France as an antiques gallery assistant, quickly moving on to gallery manager. Two years later, he started dealing on his own, soon specializing in French porcelain and European glass. The next step was the acquisition of an antiques shop at 13 rue de Beaune, 75007 Paris, in May 1982, from which he has been dealing ever since.

Bernard Dragesco is an internationally acknowledged expert in French porcelain and European glass and, since 1996, a member of the *Chambre Nationale des Experts Spécialisés*. He regularly assists several French auctioneers and has been on the vetting committees of the most prestigious European arts fairs. As a past Vice-President of the *Syndicat National des Antiquaires*, he is on the board of the *Société des Amis du Musée National de Céramiques* (Sèvres). Also active in the preservation of French architectural heritage, he is a keen gardener and a private pilot. In 2007, he was awarded the medal of Officier des Arts et des Lettres by the French Culture Minister.

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Leopard, Chantilly factory, soft-paste porcelain, circa 1735-40. Height 5 1/4 in. (13.3 cm).
Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Jack and Belle Linsky Collection (1982.60.369).



Fabulous, Comprehensive Rothschild Family Sèvres Exhibit: Paris, April 17-July 26

The Rothschild family, renowned especially for its revered ceramics collection passed down through generations, is the central theme of the upcoming exhibition at the Mobilier National, open from April 17 to July 26, 2026. Their passion for 18th-century Sèvres porcelain and its manufacture played a key role in preserving these treasures, some of which eventually found their way into public collections, generously donated by the family.

From Frankfurt, Vienna, Naples, London, or Paris, the Rothschild family owned some of the most exquisite objects crafted in the 18th century: ship-shaped vases, elephant and pineapple motifs, towers adorned with goat, lion, nymph, or child figures, showcased within reconstructed interiors in this immersive exhibition. Visitors also encounter rare archival documents, offering new insights into this opulent era.

Béatrice Ephrussi de Rothschild, one of the most passionate collectors of Sèvres porcelain in the family, bequeathed her Mediterranean seaside villa and its extraordinary collection to the Académie des Beaux-Arts in 1934. She is the guiding figure throughout the exhibit, leading visitors on a journey across Europe through objects that bear witness to history. The display features ten family members, each represented by a vase, illustrating the intricate links and transmission of heritage within the family.

Vintage display cases recreate the atmosphere of an 1870s auction house, where visitors can learn how collectors acquire their treasures and gain insight into the art market. Afterward, guests can explore one of the salons at the Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild. The journey continues at the heart of the Manufacture, within the square salon

of the Mobilier National, observing the intricate steps involved in crafting Sèvres masterworks—from initial sketches to plaster models.

While visitors may find it easier to recognize the family’s donations, they will also gain a clearer understanding of the spoliation endured within their “Rothschild palaces” in France, Germany, and Austria—many of which were stripped of their possessions during World War II. The exhibit brings this history to life through moving testimonials, from tobacco boxes to writing desks. Learn more at <https://www.sevresciteceramique.fr/en.html>.



Botanivase, Laurent Craste, 2025. Porcelain, glaze, decals, burnished matte gold, and nail.
Courtesy of the artist and the Hohmann Gallery.

The Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York

Ceramics events at this Upstate New York museum are often mentioned in the Connecticut Ceramics Circle newsletter, but what is the Everson, really?

The Everson grew from the Syracuse Museum of Fine Arts, founded in 1897. Following Helen Everson's gift in 1941, the museum became the Everson Museum of Art.

The current building was the first museum designed by I. M. Pei! Ground was broken in 1965, and the building opened in 1968 in downtown Syracuse. Another first: It was the first to create a permanent collection of American ceramics, the collection growing from a number of pieces by Adelaide Alsop Robineau purchased by the Museum in 1916, with others purchased later. In 1932, the Ceramic National exhibitions were established in Robineau's

memory, enabling the Museum to amass one of the most comprehensive holdings of American ceramic art.

Currently noteworthy is the exhibit, 'Iconoclasts,' on display until May 24 by French-born Canadian ceramist Laurent Craste, who creates ornate vases and urns unusually pummeled and pierced, image above. In addition, a solo exhibit from June 13-August 16 this year will show the work of Rengian Yang, one of four ceramic artists selected for the museum's Central New York Artist Initiative program. As the museum describes, "using hand building, slip casting and paper clay, she creates fragile yet enduring forms that blend geometric and organic shapes." Watch out for more news about this exhibit in the spring.

An Addition to the CCC Directory

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A bonus of CCC membership: Jody Wilkie, Consultant to Christie's and CCC Treasurer, is shown on February 10 at Christie's in New York touring with ACC, CCC and FPS members the Estate of Irene Roosevelt Aitken exhibit prior to its sale on February 12. The exquisite pair of Louis XV ormolu-mounted Chinese celadon porcelain ewers brought \$698,500.

Elsewhere in the Decorative Arts

June 2-9: The dates of the Transferware Collectors Club ceramic study tour to England with Patricia Halfpenny, where both public and private collections will be visited. The one-week tour will introduce you to some of the most significant collections of earthenware found in and around London and Staffordshire — including special access to private homes and museums not possible independently. Accompanied by Patricia Halfpenny, born in Staffordshire, a former curator of ceramics at The Potteries Museum in Stoke for 28 years, who then served as Curator of Ceramics & Glass, at Winterthur Museum, retiring

with honors as Curator Emerita in 2009. Her invaluable contacts will allow us to draw on the expertise of knowledgeable authorities and collectors who have generously offered to make the best collections available. Not many places left! For more information and the application form, go to <https://travelmuseinc.wetravel.com/trips/tcc-england-including-the-newark-antiques-fair-tour-advisor-meg-macdonald-at-travel-muse-18203387>

March 4: Dr. Neil Buttery and Paul Crane FSA, a past CCC lecturer, will speak for the Museum of Royal Worcester about the thought-provoking "Sugar, Slavery and Empire and the Evolution of Worcester Porcelain Sucriers" exhibit now on display. 1:00 p.m. ET. To learn more and to register for the lecture, go to [https://www.museumofroyalworcester.org/whats-on/winter-talk-series-sugar-slavery-and-empire-and-the-evolution-of-worcester-porcelain-sucriers-by-dr-neil-buttery-and-paul-crane-fsa/?utm_source=MoRW+Newsletter&utm_campaign=e05b2a096d-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_20251003_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0-74aad6d68b-522820657&ct=t\(EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_20251003_COPY_01\)&mc_cid=e05b2a096d&mc_eid=b06ddfdcef](https://www.museumofroyalworcester.org/whats-on/winter-talk-series-sugar-slavery-and-empire-and-the-evolution-of-worcester-porcelain-sucriers-by-dr-neil-buttery-and-paul-crane-fsa/?utm_source=MoRW+Newsletter&utm_campaign=e05b2a096d-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_20251003_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0-74aad6d68b-522820657&ct=t(EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_20251003_COPY_01)&mc_cid=e05b2a096d&mc_eid=b06ddfdcef).

Ongoing: The San Francisco Ceramic Circle has generously shared the link to their February 15 lecture, "Impressionists in Clay," given by Brittany Severt, Ann Stone Associate Curator of Decorative Arts at the Baltimore Museum of Art. <https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/yChCCYAEExZqEj4Pc7FNKJ7M9efNIW-TpzXZQ4D8XQKdAmoMCSHDSBdQYVXdA7Jq9.DCfJ4pT1ph1dMk09?startTime=1771182697000> Passcode 6J*%AMN6.

Ongoing to April 18: An exhibit at HB381 Gallery at 381 Broadway, New York 10013 of the sculptural works in porcelain of Eva Zethraeus. More information at <https://hb381gallery.com/exhibitions/shimmering-real>.

Ongoing to May 31: At the American Museum of Ceramic Art in Pomona, California: "Air 2026: Compulsion," the works of the museum's four Artists in Residence. <https://www.amoca.org/> for more information.

Due May 1: Applications are due on May 1 for the Paul and Gladys Richards Study of British Transferware grant administered by the Transferware Collectors Club. The grants are up to \$10,000 and support research, publications, exhibitions, lectures and conferences that advance the understanding and appreciation of British transfer printed ceramics. For more information, go to <https://www.transferwarecollectorsclub.org/research-learning/research-grants>.

April 13: "Rago/Wright's Greatest Hits of Pre-Warm American Ceramics," by David Rago, founder of Rago Auctions, Partner at Rago/Wright, Lambertville, New Jersey, via Zoom, presented by the Connecticut Ceramics Circle.
