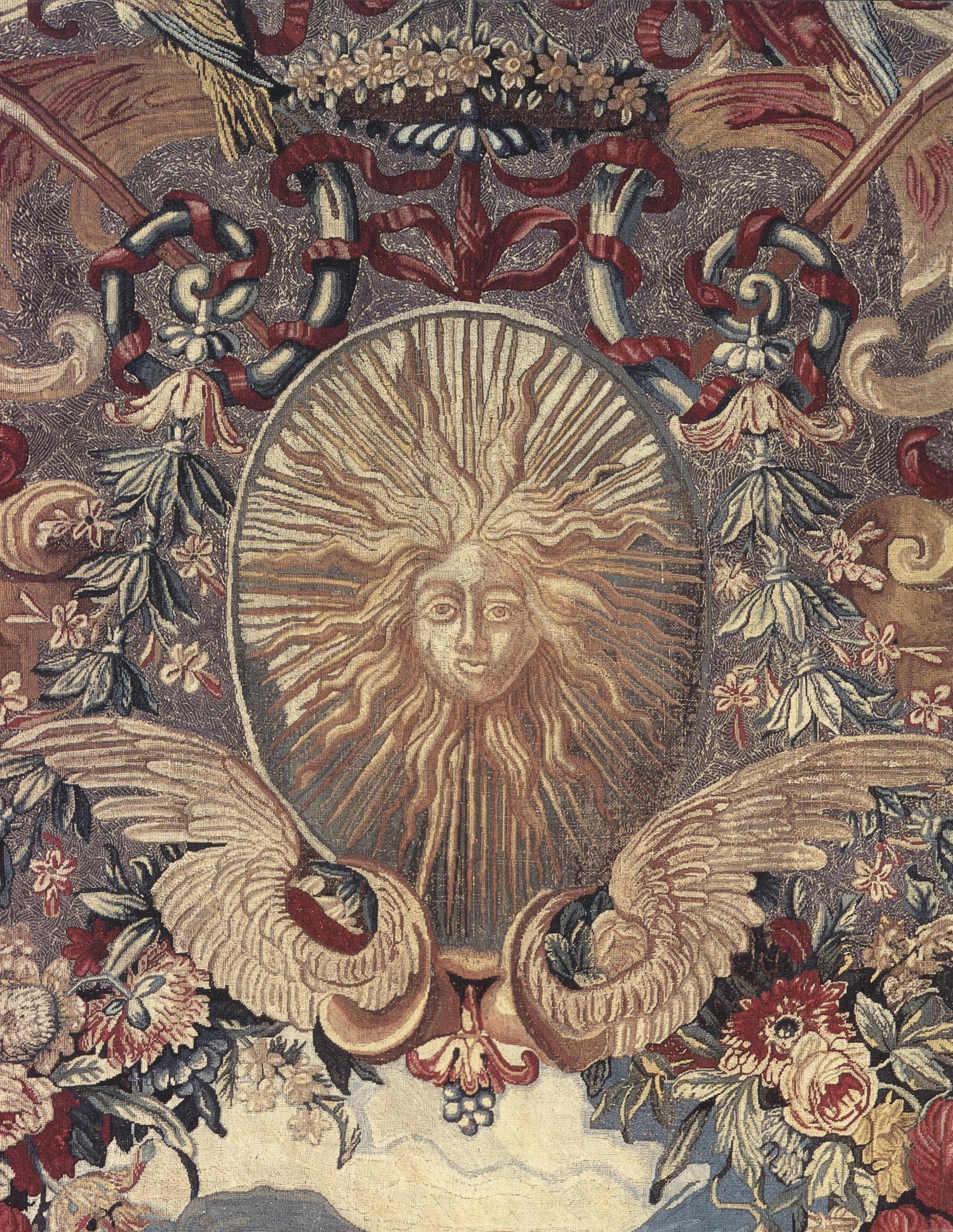


The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin

Spring 1989



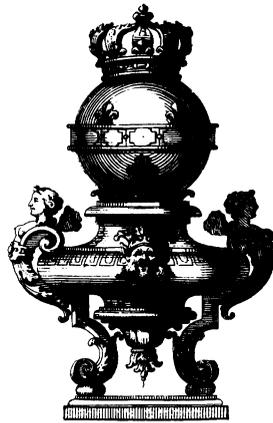


FRENCH
DECORATIVE
ARTS

*during the reign
of*

LOUIS XIV

1654-1715



THE
METROPOLITAN
MUSEUM
of ART

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART BULLETIN Spring 1989

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Cover and inside front cover: Louis XIV as Jupiter and a sunburst, details from the wall hanging Air (see also p. 33). To celebrate the birth of Louis XIV in 1638, fireworks representing a rising sun were commissioned by the City of Paris. By 1663 the sun had become the official emblem of Louis, who is frequently referred to as the Sun King.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The relationship between Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman and the Museum's Department of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts began in 1955. In the summer and autumn the Wrightsmans loaned the Metropolitan a magnificent Savonnerie carpet, three gold-and-enamel French snuffboxes, and a pair of Chelsea porcelain vases. The relationship proved a fortunate one; as the Wrightsmans' interest in French eighteenth-century decorative arts intensified and their collection grew, settings were prepared for it—the costs being borne by the collectors—in the southwest corner of the park wing, then the location of French decorative arts galleries. In 1966 work began on the first three Wrightsman rooms: two eighteenth-century paneled interiors, the Varengeville and Paar rooms, and a re-created period setting, the Louis XVI gallery. When they opened in 1969, Wrightsman furniture was commingled with works already owned by the Museum, including gifts from other generous benefactors of the Metropolitan—J. Pierpont Morgan, Mrs. Byron C. Foy, Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and the Samuel H. Kress Foundation. The de Tessé Room *boiserie* and the Cabris Room were added by 1973. Three years later the entire area was closed for remodeling and renovation. When the Wrightsman Galleries reopened in 1977, they comprised nine period rooms and two galleries. These refurbished settings were further enhanced by Wrightsman gifts, among them the Savonnerie carpet from the original loan—one of the four they donated in 1976—and the three snuffboxes, which joined twenty others given by Mr. and Mrs. Wrightsman in 1976 and 1977. Such spectacular acts of generosity enabled the Museum to become the foremost repository in this country for whole groups of rare and beautiful French seventeenth- and eighteenth-century objects.

There was still a need for space to display Louis XIV and *Régence* furniture, characterized by the Baroque and classical forms that influenced the stylistic development of furniture during the reigns of Louis XV and Louis XVI—already well represented in the Wrightsman Galleries. A bedroom was to be the focal point, in part because the Museum owned a set of splendid needlework bed hangings from the period, which were given by Irwin Untermyer in 1953. Sculpture, tapestries, furniture, and faience were to be exhibited in an adjoining gallery. Funds were provided by Mrs. Wrightsman, who continued the splendid tradition of museum patronage she had established together with her late husband.

Efforts to secure authentic bedroom paneling were unsuccessful, and Henri Samuel, of Paris, was commissioned to design a room in the style of Louis XIV. Building from scratch allowed more latitude than planning

around existing paneling, and space was allotted for four magnificent wall hangings, a Rogers Fund purchase in 1946, on either side of the bed, and a location was provided for a monumental chimneypiece, which was given to the Museum by the Hearst Foundation in 1956. The room became an amalgam of old and new elements. The crimson velvet on the walls was commissioned from a Lyonnais textile firm in 1983, while the covers for the seat furniture date from the seventeenth or eighteenth century. New gilding on the walls complements the old on the carved furniture, so that these diverse elements form a unified presentation of color and texture.

The room, which opened to the public in November 1987, re-creates a state bedroom (*chambre de parade*), such as might have been part of the succession of ceremonial apartments in an aristocratic house. It has been furnished with spectacular pieces by the leading craftsmen and manufactories of the time; most of these objects are illustrated and discussed in this issue of the *Bulletin*.

The adjoining gallery, which also gives access to the Hôtel de Tessé Room, is hung with tapestries woven for Louis XIV and contains wall cases devoted to contemporary faience from Nevers and Rouen, many examples of which are also illustrated in this publication. These latest additions to the Wrightsman Galleries reveal to the visitor the sumptuous taste and formal elegance of the style named for Louis XIV, who, according to the *Mémoires* of the duc de Saint-Simon, was a devotee of “en tout la splendeur, la magnificence, la profusion.”

Philippe de Montebello
Director

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All photographs, unless otherwise noted, by the staff of The Metropolitan Museum of Art Photograph Studio: Chief Photographer, Walter J. F. Yee; Photographers, Gene C. Herbert, Alexander Mikhailovich, Bruce M. White, Karin L. Willis, and Carmel Wilson. Other sources: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, pp. 3 (bottom), 4–5; Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, pp. 54 (inset), 59.

INTRODUCTION

In 1663 Louis XIV's future superintendent of finance, Jean-Baptiste Colbert (1619–1683), wrote that the time of private patrons was over: The hour had come for them to yield to the king. To him, and him alone, now belonged the task of steering the intellectual and artistic life of the kingdom. Colbert's vision for the young Louis XIV (1638–1715), to whom he was to dedicate all his gifts as financial adviser and administrator, strikingly prefigures the development of the arts in France during the long reign of the Sun King, when all the arts would revolve around the king's personal tastes and will and would reflect the power and splendor of the sovereign and the state. Yet, the prophetic accuracy of Colbert's statement notwithstanding, no declaration of artistic policy can truly account for the variety, the fantasy, and the brilliant accomplishments of the arts fostered by Louis XIV from 1661, the year he decided to rule France alone (without a prime minister, assisted only by a three-man Privy Council) until his death in 1715.

In 1661 both the taste of the young monarch and prevailing artistic style had already been shaped by the creative fervor of the 1650s. When Louis was anointed king at Reims in 1654, the then-predominant fashion in Paris was the Italian Baroque, so enthusiastically promoted by Cardinal Mazarin (1601–1661), prime minister and godfather to Louis. Italian painters such as Gian Francesco Romanelli were imported by Mazarin to decorate his own palace and were recruited to work on the Palais du Louvre. The Royal Apartments and those of the Queen Mother, Anne of Austria, were redecorated in 1654–55 with frescoed and stuccoed ceilings in the Bolognese manner. Romanelli worked side by side with French sculptors—sometimes trained in Italy, like Michel Anguier—in a new-found harmony that recalled the

Renaissance traditions of the Fontainebleau of François I (1494–1547) and brought together Italian decorative inventions and French elegance of line and composition. These qualities are striking even in a wooden casket of this date (fig. 1), carved with exquisite reliefs that seem to echo the style of that most lyrical of French painters, Eustache Le Sueur (1616–1655).

Italian Baroque forms had also seduced French designers and engravers. Foremost among them was Jean Le Pautre (1618–1682), who engraved and gathered in ornament books his exuberantly decorative fantasies, often inspired by the Roman and Florentine painted and stuccoed ensembles of Pietro da Cortona (1596–1669). Le Pautre's prints were meant to spread the new style and stimulate the imagination of sculptors and decorators, not only in Paris but also in the provinces (figs. 2, 3). The love of Italian Baroque decoration was inseparable from that of Italian ballets and musical comedies. Thus, Mazarin saw to it that the young king was lavishly entertained by Italian musicians and singers, while Gasparo Vigarani, the brilliant theatrical engineer whom he had imported in 1659 from the Este court at Modena, designed astonishingly ingenious stage sets and machinery.

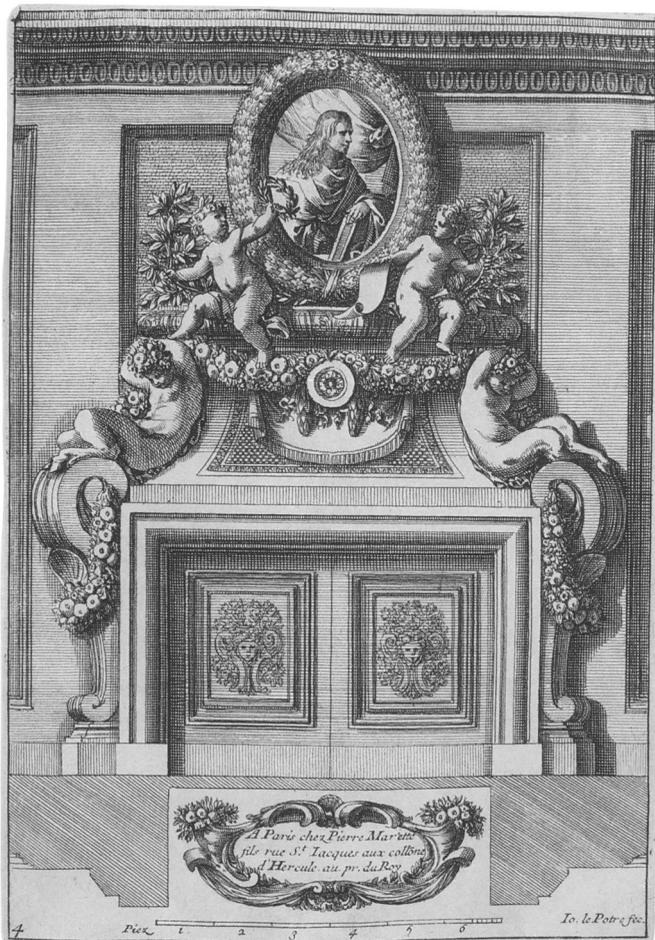
Among the Parisian painters, a new star had risen with Charles Le Brun (1619–1690). Le Brun, who had studied in Italy for four years, showed an extraordinary talent for painting and also for creating decorative ensembles that integrated architecture, painting, and sculpture with a sense of style both sumptuous and alluring. Le Brun's most brilliant work before 1661 was the decoration of Vaux-le-Vicomte, the splendid château built by the architect Louis Le Vau (1612–1670) for the ill-fated superintendent of finance Nicolas Fouquet. After Louis XIV assumed the reins of power and, a few months later, had



1. Wooden casket with the arms of Henri de La Ferté (1600–1681), marquis de Senneterre, gouverneur de Lorraine, and maréchal de France. About 1651–55



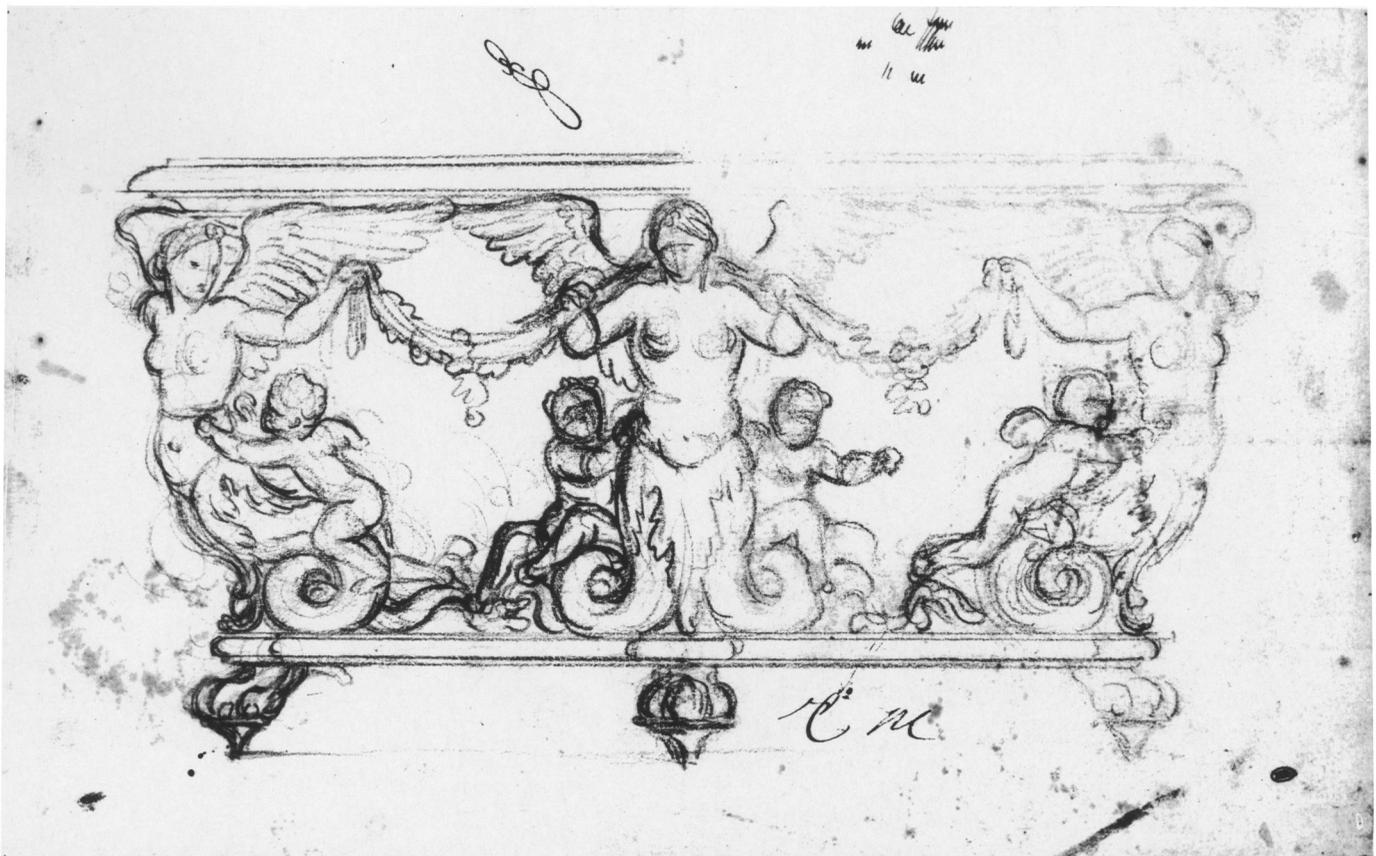
2. Limestone chimneypiece, from southwest France, about 1670, shown in the Louis XIV bedroom in the Wrightsman Galleries. Based on a design by Jean Le Pautre (see fig. 3)



3. Design for a chimneypiece by Jean Le Pautre, engraving from his "Cheminées à la Romaine" (Paris, about 1663)

Fouquet arrested and tried, replacing him with Colbert, the wheel of fortune turned toward Le Brun. His versatile talents as painter and draftsman and his instinct for decoration destined Le Brun to become, and remain for the next twenty-five years, the principal creator and orchestrator of the court style of the Sun King.

Colbert, whose zeal for the glory of the king and the welfare of France rapidly put into motion the most efficient administrative state machinery the country had ever seen, was quick to recognize the value of Le Brun's gifts as an artistic director. Soon after Louis XIV named him *Premier Peintre du Roi* in 1662 and turned to him to create the decoration of the Galerie d'Apollon at the Louvre, Colbert put him in charge of the sprawling complex of artists' workshops that he had gathered, under the name of Manufacture Royale des Meubles de la Couronne, at the Hôtel des Gobelins on the left bank of the Seine in Paris. Here, working together, were some 250 French as well as Italian, Flemish, and Dutch artists and craftsmen—painters and tapestry weavers, sculptors and cabinetmakers, silversmiths and metalworkers, mosaicists and embroiderers—hired for the sole purpose of creating the lavish furnishings needed to embellish the king's residences. As director of the Manufacture Royale,



4. Sketch for a console table, by Charles Le Brun. Red chalk, about 1665. Paris, Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins



Le Brun supplied sketches (fig. 4) and approved models for all its products, inspiring and harmonizing the works of painters like Adam van der Meulen, Jean-Baptiste Monnoyer, and René-Antoine Houasse; sculptors and cabinetmakers like Philippe Caffieri and Domenico Cucci; and goldsmiths and engravers like Alexis Loir. Le Brun's success was complete. In a famous tapestry of his design depicting the visit of Louis XIV to the Gobelins (fig. 5), we see Le Brun on the left, hat in hand to receive the king, who is accompanied by Colbert. He shows the glorious products of his establishment: in the foreground, some of the silversmiths present massive silver

vases and a richly sculptured silver brazier; in the center, the *ébéniste* Pierre Gole watches over two attendants who carefully bring in a small table decorated with delicate ivory inlays; behind Gole, a mosaicist (perhaps Fernando Megliorini) holds aloft a table of *pietre dure* mosaic; while, on the right, Cucci and Caffieri put the finishing touches on an elaborately carved two-tier cabinet.

At the Gobelins a steady stream of tapestries, silver tables, mirrors, candlestands, and elaborate cabinets was created to furnish Louis XIV's apartments at the palaces of the Louvre and the Tuileries, at the Château de Saint-

5. *Visit of Louis XIV to the Gobelins (October 15, 1667)*, tapestry from the series "L'Histoire du Roi." Woven in workshop of Jans fils, 1673–80, after designs by Charles Le Brun and Adam van der Meulen. Paris, Mobilier National



6. *Louis XIV as Apollo*, attributed to Jean Varin de Liège (1607–1672). Bronze, 1672



Germain, and, above all, at the Château de Versailles.

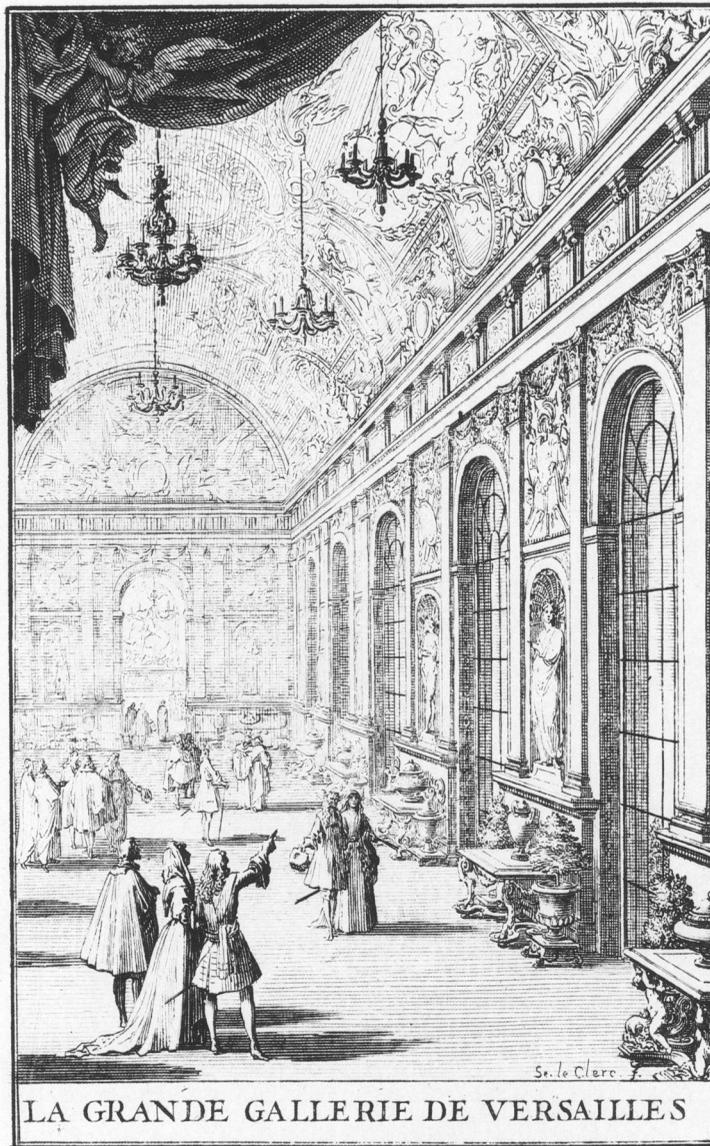
At Versailles the young Louis XIV could also indulge in his personal dream world. It was a world haunted by the memory of the elaborate and exotic furnishings assembled at the Louvre by his mother and of the Italian operas organized by Mazarin, and a world inhabited less by the virtuous presence of Marie-Thérèse, the Spanish Infanta he had married in 1660, than by the charms of Mlle de La Vallière, the first of his mistresses. Here, in the still small but gay and colorful pavilion devised by Le Vau, now his favorite architect, the young sovereign surrounded himself with sensuous Italian or Flemish cabi-

nets of ebony and *pietre dure*, Chinese porcelains and Chinese vases inlaid with gold and silver filigree, Turkish carpets, and tubs full of fragrant jasmine and orange trees. In the gardens that stretched from the château out toward the thickly wooded countryside, Louis could entertain his mistress and his court with countless banquets, theatrical and musical performances, ballets, and fireworks. Some of the most lavish *fêtes* lasted several days, like the *Plaisirs de l'Isle Enchantée* (1664) and the *Fêtes de l'Amour et de Bacchus* (1668), always created by Louis's favorite artists and depicted in numerous prints.

A small bronze relief designed in 1672 (fig. 6), the year

the City of Paris conferred on Louis the title of *Magnus* (Great), conveys the mood of these happy years. Shown as the Sun King, he wears a fanciful helmet crowned with the chariot of Apollo that drags in triumph a chained prisoner—a symbol of the German towns captured by Louis XIV's armies during the first of his victorious campaigns against the Dutch in 1672. The helmet and the armor embossed with a wealth of allegorical details may well have been worn by the king at one of the *fêtes* at Versailles. It is a fairy-tale image of a fairy-tale prince, the way Louis XIV wanted to appear to his subjects and to the whole of Europe in the mid-1670s and during the ten years of peace and prosperity that began with the Peace of Nijmegen in 1678.

Louis XIV's understanding of architecture and the decorative arts astonished his contemporaries. Although he always remained faithful to a fully Baroque ideal of stately decor, his youthful flights of fancy yielded later on to a more mature appreciation of the beauty of classical architectural forms and the symmetry and clarity of a grander, more rational order. A last, formal display of royal magnificence was created for him by Charles Le Brun in 1681–84 in the new Galerie des Glaces at Versailles (fig. 7). Here the paintings of the vaulted ceiling displaying Louis XIV's triumphs in peace and in war, the colored marbles, the gilt-bronze fittings, the silver and silver-gilt furnishings, the crystal candelabra, and the many-colored carpets, all multiplied by the large,



7. *Galerie des Glaces at Versailles*, by Sébastien Le Clerc (1637–1714). Etching, 1684



shimmering mirrors, created a symphony of visual enchantment hailed as the crowning moment of the Louis XIV style.

By the time that the Galerie des Glaces was completed, Colbert was dead. He was succeeded by the marquis de Louvois (1641–1691), and a new generation of architects and designers was now ready to interpret the sovereign's wishes. In 1678 Jules Hardouin-Mansart (1646–1708) had been named by Louis XIV as architect of Versailles, and it was he who transformed the château into the permanent royal residence, the seat of the court, and the center of the French government (fig. 8). In 1688 as Mansart set out to enlarge Versailles, to design new living quarters for the king and for the Grand Dauphin

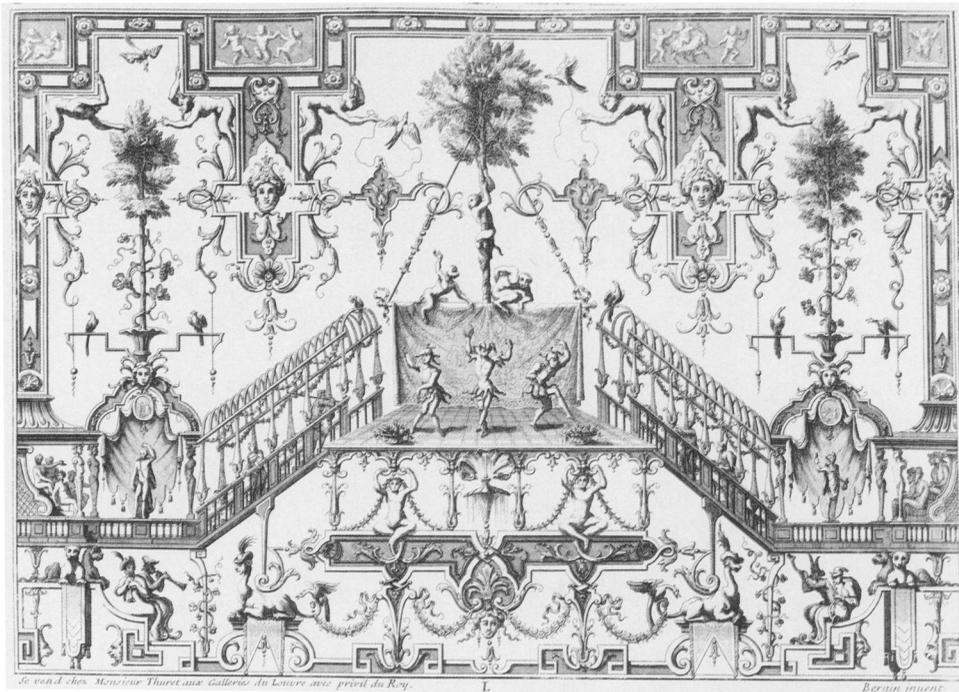
and his family, and to build a royal retreat at Trianon, the Holy Roman Emperor Leopold I and the League of Augsburg declared war on France. While the conflict raged for nine years at the borders of France, severely straining all the resources of the nation, royal construction came to a halt, the Gobelins was closed and its artists disbanded. Only after the Peace of Ryswick in 1697 did the Manufacture Royale reopen, this time housing only the tapestry weavers.

Since 1680 Jean I Berain (1640–1711) had been entrusted with the drawings for costumes, stage sets, and royal ceremonies at the Académie Royale de Musique, where the post of director had been bestowed upon the Florentine Jean-Baptiste Lully. Although Berain had



8. Château de Versailles seen from the forecourt, by Israel Silvestre (1621–1691). Engraving, 1682

9. Grottesques, by Jean I Berain. Engraving, before 1693



10. L'Académie des Sciences et des Beaux-Arts, by Sébastien Le Clerc. Etching, 1698

never been to Rome, his talent for inventing and drawing beguiling theatrical costumes, enchanting opera sets, and fanciful banquets gained him the post of *Dessinateur de la Chambre et du Cabinet du Roi* in 1674. His imagination, first stirred by the ornamental vocabulary of Le Pautre and Le Brun, had magically transformed their opulent formal inventions into lighthearted and witty fantasies. Elaborating on the grotesques that Raphael had borrowed from the vaults of the Golden House of Nero and adapted for the stucco decorations of the Vatican Logge, Berain introduced into them a population of dancers and acrobats, impertinent monkeys, and riotous satyrs—the children of his own theatrical world. In these designs, soon to be multiplied by means of engravings (fig. 9), the antics of Berain's little actors were restrained by delicate filaments and an elegant yet rigidly disciplined structure of seventeenth-century ornamental motifs.

Berain's mixture of playfulness and stateliness held an irresistible appeal. His designs for grotesques and for all manner of objects soon became as influential in the closing years of the seventeenth century as those of Le Brun had been in the heyday of Louis XIV's reign. They were adopted by the king's favorite *ébéniste*, André-Charles Boulle (1642–1732), by the textile and tapestry weavers now employed not only by the king but also by the Grand Dauphin, the princes, and the envoys from foreign courts: for their more relaxed, carefree lightness and wit seemed to bring a breath of fresh air.

Although the intellectual and artistic ferment that united artists and poets, musicians and scientists around the various academies of arts and sciences, as telescoped in a famous print by Sébastien Le Clerc (fig. 10), continued to add to the brilliance of Louis XIV's court, the old monarch became tired of Versailles and the stiffness and solemnity of its official life. Saddened by the War of the Spanish Succession (1700–1717) and by the many deaths in his immediate family, Louis XIV yearned in his last years for a simpler lifestyle. As a new sensibility—more lyrical, more French, and, above all, more spontaneous—appeared in the designs for tapestries, furnishings, and costumes sketched by Berain's younger competitor, the painter Claude III Audran (1658–1735), and in the small collectors' bronzes by sculptors like Corneille van Clève (1646–1732) and Robert Le Lorrain (1666–1743) (fig. 11), the decorative style of Louis XIV's long reign moved imperceptibly into that of the oncoming *Régence*.

Olga Raggio



11. *Dancing Bacchante*, by Robert Le Lorrain. Bronze, mounted on ebony-and-gilt-bronze base, early 18th century





*The Louis XIV period-room setting, southwest view. Many of the furnishings shown here are discussed on the following pages. Above the table is *The Rape of Tamar* by Eustache Le Sueur, painted about 1640. Purchase, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman Gift, 1984 (1984.342)*



Table, attributed to Pierre Gole, Paris, 1653–60. Opposite: View of the top

In 1663, two years after assuming absolute power, Louis XIV appointed a supervisor for the royal furniture. In the letter of appointment, the king wrote, “There is nothing that indicates more clearly the magnificence of great princes than their superb palaces and their precious furniture.” With the intention of glorifying the monarchy, Louis XIV embarked on grand building programs that entailed the design and manufacture of splendid sets of furniture. Emulating the lavish tastes of his mentor, Cardinal Mazarin, he acquired or commissioned a dazzling series of seventy-six wood cabinets; some were decorated with lacquer, but many displayed combinations of precious materials such as lapis lazuli, agate, marble, silver, and ivory. (Three of these cabinets are known to have survived: one, somewhat altered, in a Paris museum and a pair in an English private collection.) The king also favored fine carved and gilded wood furniture and commissioned a broad range of objects in solid silver that included tall candlestands, massive tables, benches and stools, chandeliers, and mirror frames.

Among the foremost cabinetmakers of this period were Pierre Gole, named cabinetmaker to Louis XIV in 1651, and Domenico Cucci (about 1635–1704/5), who was employed at the Gobelins manufactory under the direction of Charles Le

Brun. André-Charles Boulle, appointed royal cabinetmaker in 1672, specialized at this time in furniture set with wood-marquetry panels of high quality; he was later to work in the metal-marquetry technique (brass or pewter inlaid on tortoiseshell) for which he is best known (pp. 16–21). Contrast in the treatment of colors and surfaces as well as bold and sometimes exaggerated movement, features of the Baroque style, are characteristic of the furniture produced in these craftsmen’s workshops.

The rising cost of Louis XIV’s unsuccessful military campaigns that forced the king to order the destruction of his silver furniture in 1689 caused drastic retrenchment in his expenditures for the arts. Every aspect of furniture production was affected: restrictions were imposed on the gilding of wall paneling and furniture, and the Gobelins manufactory was closed between 1694 and 1699.

In 1699 a decorative scheme of wall painting was proposed for the apartment of the duchesse de Bourgogne, Louis XIV’s granddaughter-in-law. In a written comment on the proposal, the king urged his architect and newly appointed artistic administrator, Jules Hardouin-Mansart, to avoid solemnity and to ensure that these decorations be graceful, airy, and impregnated with a sense of youthful high spirits. The king’s comments helped to



generate a reaction against the pompous aspects of the Louis XIV style and to introduce a lighter approach to the decorative arts. Formality still prevailed, but the shapes and outlines of furniture had begun to lose their stiffness (compare pp. 12–13, 20–21). Oversize cabinets with their imposing decor fell from favor, while commodes came into vogue for storing clothing, replacing antiquated chests or coffers. Growing interest in comfort and a resultant erosion of formality struck at the heart of the Louis XIV style. The transition to a new style, the *Régence*, was already under way in the last years of the king’s reign, 1710 to 1715.



The practice of veneering with tortoiseshell, believed to date to the first century B.C. in Rome, underwent a tremendous revival in Europe during the seventeenth century, when the shell of the tropical sea-going turtle was applied to wood surfaces of furniture, where it often served as a ground for inlaid decorative patterns of other showy and sometimes exotic materials. On the Museum's table, mottled brown tortoiseshell provides the ground for wood marquetry and veneers of ebony and ivory (stained green for the leaves). The stylized bouquet within the central four-lobed band of the top contains tulips, roses, jasmine, and lilies of the valley, while naturalistic sprays of roses, tulips,

carnations, and myrtle are rendered with similar marquetry in the wide border along the edge. Cardinal Mazarin owned a comparable table, as described in his last inventory of 1661. This description contains a reference to a marquetry butterfly that may have resembled the small winged insect about to alight on a rose near the upper right corner of the Museum table's top. The cardinal's table is not known to have survived.

Both tables are attributed to the Dutch-born cabinetmaker Pierre Gole (about 1620–1684) and are dated to 1653–60. Gole would have been responsible for designing the gilt-bronze mounts, the severely classical capitals and bases on the four

columnar legs. His workshop contained no foundry, and independent metalworkers must have supplied the mounts to his design. The upper sections of the legs are veneered with alternating strips of tortoiseshell and ivory that imitate fluting. The lower sections are inlaid with floral sprays.

Gole migrated to Paris in the early 1640s. Although he supplied Louis XIV with a number of pieces of furniture, there is no evidence for including this table among them.



Reddish-tinted tortoiseshell forms the ground for the brass decoration of this compact desk made for Louis XIV by the relatively unknown Dutch-born cabinetmaker Alexandre-Jean Oppenordt (1639–1715). It was one of a pair made for the king's study, a small room in the north wing of Versailles that has since been remodeled. (The pendant, with matching marquetry decoration carried out in tortoiseshell on a brass ground, was greatly altered by the subsequent addition of a slant front; it was in an English collection when it was sold in 1963.)

The Museum's desk belongs to a type of furniture called *bureaux brisés* (literally "broken desks"). The top, shown closed here, is hinged to open, or "break," along its width to reveal a fitted interior, veneered with Brazilian rosewood, that consists of a cramped writing surface with four drawers at the back. The *bureau brisé* originated in 1669 and continued to be made until the early eighteenth century, when a large flat-topped writing table, the *bureau plat*, replaced it.

The closed top displays a blazon of Louis XIV's personal devices that include a crown above a monogram of interlaced L's. The crown is surmounted by a sunburst engraved with a now-indistinct outline of Apollo's mask. The sides of the top are inlaid with Apollo's lyres, and the corners with fleurs-de-lis. This configuration of royal emblems as well as the exterior elements of the desk and its dimensions correspond to a description in the Royal Furniture Inventory that enabled the two desks to be identified as royal property.

Alexandre-Jean Oppenordt became a French citizen in 1679 and was named cabinetmaker to Louis XIV in 1684. A near contemporary of his, the engraver and designer Jean Berain, is thought to have collaborated with Oppenordt on the design for the brass ornament on the Museum's desk. Some of the ornament prints published by Berain contain motifs that match the shapes of these inlays. Trained as an engraver, Berain may even have had a hand in tooling the engraving on the inlays.



Detail: Lyre-shaped brass inlay on the top

The surface of this clock case and pedestal, made about 1690, is inlaid with engraved pewter on a ground of reddish-brown tortoiseshell and set with elaborate gilt-bronze mounts. Both the inlay and the mounts are thought to be products of André-Charles Boulle's workshop. Boulle benefited from the king's lifelong patronage and support, and he remains by far the best-known furniture maker of the Louis XIV period. The combination of tortoiseshell and metal inlay exemplified by the Museum's clock and pedestal was not invented by Boulle, although furniture in this technique is occasionally called *boulle* work. The technique seems to have been imported from Italy and was established in France by the mid-1650s.

Boulle worked in a large community of painters, sculptors, and artisans housed in workshops under the Grande Galerie of the Louvre; his lodgings and workshop were near those of Jean Berain and the clockmaker Jacques Thuret (died about 1738). The three craftsmen were linked by friendship and by blood: Boulle is reputed to have been a relative of Thuret,

who was, in turn, Berain's son-in-law. It seems quite natural therefore that the three should have collaborated in the creation of the Museum's clock. Thuret, who signed its dial and backplate, was responsible for the clock's movement. Boulle produced the case work with its decoration and followed Berain's engraved designs for the shapes of the pedestal and many of the gilt-bronze mounts, including the flaming urns on the crest, the four sphinxes supporting the clock, the female mask set on the front of the pedestal, and the acanthus scrolls that flank it. Above the mask, the five inscriptions describing weather conditions indicate the perimeter of what must have been a barometer dial. In fact, the pedestal door is perforated behind the mask to accommodate the spindle of a pointer.

Recent research indicates that this clock and pedestal, as well as two related versions in English private collections, derive from an original model that Boulle supplied to the marquis de Louvois, Louis XIV's minister of war and of the arts.



*Pedestal clock, by Jacques Thuret, André-Charles Boulle, and Jean Berain, Paris, 1690–95
Details: Thuret's signature on clock dial and female mask with barometric inscriptions*





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Boullé was distinguished from his fellow artisans by a passion for collecting prints and drawings. Inventories of his possessions (particularly one itemizing the losses he suffered in a disastrous studio fire of 1720) record large numbers of such works by the best-known artists of his own and earlier eras. Boullé must have referred to his collection for the design of the ornament on furniture he manufactured, especially for the forms of its gilt-bronze mounts. He is known to have borrowed elements of seventeenth-century sculpture by Michelangelo and the Fleming François Duquesnoy for this purpose, and also to have acquired models for clock figures from contemporary French sculptors.

Boullé's preoccupation with sculpture is reflected in the gilt-bronze ornament on the doors of the Museum's armoire: the eight splendid corner mounts cast with the faces of wind gods—their cheeks puffed out—and the hairy-paw motifs scrolling into acanthus leaves derived from classical prototypes. The hairy-paw mount was often used on Boullé's furniture. It was probably a stock item in his workshop, and this or a similar example may be described in Boullé's last inventory of 1732 as "no. 54 a box of models of dogs' paws terminating in leafage [...]. *pattes de chien terminées en feuillage*."

The interiors of armoires were provided with fixed shelves and sliding drawers not necessarily intended for storage of clothes or linens. Sometimes they held books and prints, silver plate, or other valued possessions that could be displayed when the doors were opened. The Museum's armoire has the vestiges of three shelves.

On the front and sides of this armoire thin sheets of ebony were used for the veneered borders of the brass and tortoiseshell panels. Sixteenth-century Florentine cabinetmakers veneered large cabinets with this exotic wood, and the practice spread to France in the early seventeenth century. French cabinetmakers who then specialized in applying veneers came to be called *ébénistes* (*ébène* is the French word for "ebony").



Armoire, attributed to André-Charles Boullé, Paris, about 1710. Opposite: Wind-god corner mount on a door

Although Boulle provided quite a few pieces of furniture for the royal household, only two items intended specifically for Louis XIV have been identified: a pair of commodes made between 1708 and 1709 for the king's bedroom at the Grand Trianon and now exhibited at the Château de Versailles. Boulle's workshop retained templates for their marquetry decoration and bronze models for their gilt-bronze mounts. (These models are recorded as still among Boulle's possessions in his inventory of 1732.) His craftsmen were therefore able to repeat the original commission whenever needed. It seems likely that the first workshop replicas were

turned out before 1715, since another of Boulle's inventories drawn up in that year, on the occasion of a transfer of property to his four sons (also cabinetmakers), contains the entry: "three commodes in an unfinished state [... *en bois blanc* ...] similar to the king's commode at the Trianon."

The workmanship of the example illustrated here is of high quality, exemplified in the casting and chasing of the gilt-bronze winged-sphinx corner mounts. It would appear to belong among the early workshop replicas dating from 1710 to 1715. At that time the commode was still a relatively new type of furniture that was first produced about 1700 as a combi-

nation of a chest and a desk with drawers.

Boulle's original commodes and their copies have been criticized on aesthetic grounds for their awkward treatment of forms, which is particularly obvious in their supporting structures of squat spiral-shaped feet that abut on the inner sides of grandly curving legs. The four low feet might have been added by a practical cabinetmaker. Without them, the ornamental but insubstantial legs could not have supported the weight of the commode and its marble top. In spite of this awkwardness, Boulle's model was duplicated many times over a period of almost two hundred years.



Commode, attributed to the workshop of André-Charles Boulle, Paris, 1710–15



Lavishly carved side supports are distinguishing elements of a remarkable table recently acquired by the Museum. Taking the form of elongated S's, the legs are carved with fantastic female herm figures, their wings springing up in place of arms and their torsos ending in leafy fringes. The convoluted shape of these supports as well as their sculptural decoration relate them to the legs of tables in ornament drawings by Charles Le Brun.

Le Brun is best known as Louis XIV's court painter. During his lifetime he was widely acknowledged as a gifted designer of decorative arts, a talent he exploited to great effect after his appointment as director of the Gobelins manufactory in 1663.

Between 1683 and 1687 a number of Le Brun's sketches were carried out in solid silver, part of an amazing lot of silver furniture and decorative objects supplied for the Galerie des Glaces at Versailles. In 1689, when these marvels of craftsmanship were melted down, they yielded about 20,000 tons of bullion for Louis

XIV's troops. Before they perished, elements of their shapes and decoration were adapted to less valuable materials such as gilt-bronze and wood. This gilded oak table, which was made about 1690, resembles one shown in an etching of the Galerie des Glaces (fig. 7), and it is possibly a later and humbler version of a piece originally worked in silver.

The view at the right shows the table against the west wall of the Museum's recreation of a state bedroom in Louis XIV's time (see pp. 10–11). On its marble top—not original to the piece—are contemporary French bronzes: in the center is an equestrian statuette of the king by Martin van den Bogaert (1637–1694), called Desjardins; flanking it are groups representing two of the Labors of Hercules attributed to François Lespingola (1644–1705). The central motif of the table's apron, containing an armorial carving, is a nineteenth-century addition. Below, on the shelf of the stretcher, is a Dutch Delft covered jar of about 1700–1705.



Side table, based on designs by Charles Le Brun, Paris, about 1690



Table against the west wall of the Louis XIV bedroom



Pair of candlestands, Paris, about 1710, shown with crystal candelabra, Sweden, early 18th century

Over four hundred stands of the *guêridon* type were recorded in Louis XIV's inventories of Versailles. These ubiquitous stands supported platters of food when of low or medium height (some measured barely two feet), candlestands if of table height, and decorative vases or candelabra if they were five or more feet tall.

First known in Italy in the early seventeenth century, the stands were probably originally based on a human figure holding aloft a circular tray. By the end of the century the *guêridon* became primarily a candle holder (hence, the English name candlestand). The stem still sometimes included human figures but often consisted of nonnaturalistic elements with stylized ornamental carving. This kind of ornament is epitomized in the Museum's beautiful pair of candlestands, dated to about 1710. Their upper stems are formed by three graceful freestanding scrolls carved with trailing flowers; grapevines bind three scrolls to the lower vertical elements of the stand. The bases

of the stands were probably supported on short bun- or paw-shaped feet.

The six-branch, rock crystal and gilt-bronze candelabra illustrated here are probably Swedish, made during the early eighteenth century.

Although Louis XIV's devices of interlaced Ls and fleurs-de-lis are carved along the apron rails of its seat, no royal connection has been established for the majestic gilded armchair. If, as seems likely, the chair had a ceremonial purpose, its nature has not been clarified.

Most of the chair's low-relief ornament was carved in the solid wood, except for a few motifs applied to the stiles and rails of the back that have, consequently, suffered losses over the years. The caning technique used on its back and seat (under the cushion) began to be practiced by French chairmakers about 1700 in imitation of work on Dutch, English, and oriental chairs. The armchair's original upholstery has been lost.

The small side chair, one of a recently

acquired pair, was made about 1690–1700, close in date to the thronelike armchair. Confronted, they illustrate the wide diversity within the same style that characterized the late period of Louis XIV's reign: The traditional massive forms of the armchair (height 57 in.), its outline breaking into rounded shapes that heralded stylistic developments to come, are in contrast to the restrained lines and austere carved ornament of the modest side chair (height 45¹/₄ in.). Evidence of the survival of the classical repertory in France, this ornament anticipates by eighty years manifestations of the neoclassical style named for Louis XVI. Under Louis XIV such a pure expression of classical influences was more likely to be seen in contemporary architectural façades rather than in interiors or the decorative arts.

The chair's covering is of the period. It consists of wool velvet (*moquette*) with a stamped pattern in red, blue, and beige.

James Parker



Armchair, Paris, about 1700



Side chair, Paris, about 1690–1700



Venus and Adonis, tapestry, Gobelinins, 1686-92

The flourishing of the textile arts during the reign of Louis XIV was aided by the earlier efforts of Henri IV, who had established ateliers for the manufacturing of tapestries and carpets, introduced sericulture, and attracted foreign artisans to France. Although there were tapestry ateliers active in Paris and Mancy, it was Colbert's creation of the royal Gobelins workshops in 1662 that announced the new regime. In these four ateliers, three with high-warp looms and one with low-warp looms, the production of elaborate sets of wall hangings and portieres for the Sun King began.

In 1664 another royal tapestry manufactory was established at Beauvais. Initially under the direction of Louis Hinard until 1684, these workshops specialized in low-warp weavings for the French court and for private foreign customers; however, they attained greater achievements under Hinard's successor, Philippe Behagle (1641–1705). In addition to Beauvais and the Gobelins, tapestry ateliers also existed in other regions, most notably Aubusson, where numerous independent workshops were located. These smaller establishments produced primarily inexpensive, lower quality work, which frequently copied tapestries made in the major centers. They were authorized by Colbert to add "Manufacture Royale" after the names or initials appearing on each piece.

Many large-scale decorative wall panels and other furnishing textiles, particularly elaborate bed hangings, were not woven but embroidered. At the Gobelins and Versailles professional embroiderers executed royal commissions following the

designs of painters. Royal patrons often supported convent workshops. A particular interest of the marquise de Montespan was the Parisian convent of Saint-Joseph-de-la-Providence, where young orphan girls made embroideries of very high quality. At a less ambitious atelier under the patronage of Mme de Maintenon, girls of limited means were directed by the professional embroiderers Lhermot, father and son, and De Reynes. Elsewhere, nuns such as the Ursulines of Amiens also had their own workshops.

Founded during the reign of Henri IV, the Savonnerie manufactory was moved from galleries of the Louvre and renamed for its new location on the site of an abandoned soap factory at Chaillot on the western outskirts of Paris; its purpose was to produce carpets of comparable or superior quality to the alarmingly large number of Near Eastern imports. There were two rival carpet workshops: One was supervised by Pierre Dupont (1577–1640), who was originally granted lodgings at the Louvre in 1608, and a second headed by his former apprentice, Simon Lourdet (died 1666). The founders of these ateliers and their descendants competed for and secured royal favor, with the crown assuming control of both workshops in 1673. Under the watchful eye of Colbert and the artistic influence of Le Brun, the Savonnerie produced carpets that were true masterpieces of the weavers' art.

Lacemaking, too, came under control of the crown. Futile attempts to prohibit the use of imported lace from Italy and Flanders led in 1665 to Colbert's establishment of royal lace manufactories in several

cities. Foreign workers, enticed by favorable terms of employment, came to France and nurtured the fledgling industry with their talents. The French manufacturers succeeded due to the numerous privileges they enjoyed, the directive that citizens should wear or use only *point de France*, and the large demand for costume and furnishing lace by the court and export consumers. True *point de France* included both needle and bobbin laces made only by authorized lacemakers who used approved materials and patterns and worked to established standards.

Colbert's regulations and attempts to reorganize the textile arts were met with varying degrees of success. The revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 dealt a blow to his efforts, as many non-Catholic masters and artisans were forced to flee to England, Holland, and elsewhere, taking with them the skills that had fashioned the brilliance of the Sun King's reign.

Programs devised by Charles Le Brun, director of the Gobelins tapestry ateliers from 1662 until his death in 1690, and designs provided by him and his collaborators served as models for several of the most impressive sets of tapestries woven there, such as the *Story of the King* and the *Royal Residences*. Other series, however, took as their models earlier tapestries, stylistically updated as required, or works of art in the royal collection.

Drawings in the king's possession, then attributed to Raphael and Giulio Romano, were the source for two sets of tapestries that were designed between 1684 and 1686 and illustrated mythological subjects. Each series was the work of



Fragments of a lower tapestry border, Gobelins, 1687–91

various artists and consisted of eight panels that follow no particular iconographic progression. The draped figures in both *Venus and Adonis* (p. 26), designed by Pierre de Sève the Younger (ca. 1623–1695), and the *Festival of Psyche with Bacchus* (inside back cover), by Bon Boulogne (1649–1717), indicate that the artists found it necessary to clothe the nudes of the original drawings, perhaps to make them acceptable to the sensitivities of critics such as Mme de Maintenon.

When installed, the individual tapestries hung edge to edge creating a continuous woven panorama. Although the borders are missing from *Venus and Adonis*, one can imagine their original appearance from fragments (p. 27), which have been cut from a lower border and refashioned into upholstery coverings for a sofa. Designed by Jean Lemoine de Lorraine (1638–1713), Claude Guy Hallé (1652–1736), and Boulogne, the subject of the border is unrelated to the central scenes of

the hangings and instead depicts, in a whimsical manner, activities associated with tapestry making. The sofa seat, decorated with the king's symbols of interlacing I's surrounded by the orders of Saint Michel and Saint Esprit and surmounted by the French crown, was originally the center of this border. The ends of the border were cut off and subsequently joined to create the sofa back, thus interrupting the depiction of monkeys preparing skeins of yarn on a swift and the pairs of putti winding the skeins into balls. As a tapestry border, two putti, one on either side, were next to a basket containing the balls of yarn as well as the spools and bobbins necessary for weaving.

Of the many sets of tapestries made at Beauvais, one of the most successful is the so-called *Berain Grotesques* (p. 29), which was woven in various combinations from the late seventeenth century through the first quarter of the eighteenth. Although the designs are indeed compositionally indebted to the ornamental prints of Jean Berain, they are actually the work of Jean-Baptiste Monnoyer (1636–1699).

Each set of *Grotesques* usually consisted of three long horizontal panels and three smaller vertical ones. Against a fashionable yellow, "Spanish tobacco" ground, fanciful architectural constructions swagged with draperies and floral garlands provide perches for exotic birds as well as an extravagant, stagelike setting for the activities of the foreground figures. In some of the tapestries musicians, acrobats, animal trainers, and actors from the *Commedia dell'Arte* perform; in others, like the example illustrated, they make offerings to the gods Bacchus or Pan.

The border, possibly designed by Guy Vernansal (1648–1729), echoes this lighthearted frivolity and combines imaginative grotesques, ultimately derived from Raphael's adaptations of the antique, with chinoiserie motifs. These figures, such as the one shown in detail, became increasingly in vogue in the early eighteenth century. The forward-looking design of such elements contrasts with Berain's sober and stately strapwork decorations, which were used as an alternative border scheme on other tapestries in this series.

The popularity of the *Grotesques* was widespread. In 1696 the Swedish chancellor Carl Piper, acting on the advice of his knowledgeable countryman Baron Daniel Cronström, then residing in Paris, commissioned a set of *Grotesques*. To accompany these he also ordered en suite furniture coverings, a specialty of Beauvais, for six side chairs and six armchairs; one set of covers can be seen on a chair in the Louis XIV bedroom (far left, p. 10).



Detail of left border of *Offering to Bacchus*



Offering to Bacchus, tapestry, Beauvais, late 17th or early 18th century

Detail of a carpet, Savonnerie, 1680



The greatest challenge undertaken by the Savonnerie manufactory was the royal order given for ninety-three carpets to cover the entire floor of the Long Gallery (Galerie du Bord de l'Eau) of the Louvre. This enormous room, which measures over 480 yards in length, connected the salon adjacent to the Galerie d'Apollon—for which Lourdet provided thirteen carpets by 1669—with the Pavillon de Flore that adjoined the Palais des Tuileries.

The accomplishment of this monumental project required the efforts of both the Dupont and Lourdet ateliers at the Savonnerie. The large size of the carpets, each approximately thirty feet long with a width varying from ten to sixteen feet, ne-



30 *Music, carpet, Savonnerie, 1687-89*

cessitated the construction of new looms built from stout tree trunks. These were provided in 1665, the workshop space expanded, and weaving commenced in 1668. Of the ninety-three carpets planned, all but one were completed and delivered by 1685. Six additional carpets were woven between 1683 and 1689 to replace those given by the king as gifts, and four others were made in anticipation of future royal largesse.

The overall conception of the program was daunting. The carpets had to harmonize not only with each other but also with the ceiling, which was covered with stuccowork and painted medallions and panels. Furthermore, they had to com-

plement the landscape decorations of the walls. Each of the carpets follows the same organization seen in the example illustrated below.

The royal references are obvious: the crossed Ls, coronated globes with fleurs-de-lis, writhing dolphins, and sunflowers all combine with an exuberant array of flowers, garlands, and cornucopias to dominate the central area. At each end are imitation bas-reliefs representing subjects such as the four elements, the virtues, or aspects of good government. Medallions with faux-painted landscapes, such as the one depicted here in black and white, appear in other carpets of the series. Animated acanthus rinceaux fill to the limit

the remaining space of the field. The composition is further enlivened by the contrast of the clear colors against the black background. Although no documents have been found naming the creator of this extraordinary program, it is undoubtedly the genius of Charles Le Brun who oversaw this grandiose and impressive scheme. Louis Le Vau, an architect for the Louvre, may perhaps also have been influential in coordinating the designs of the carpets to their surroundings. Payment records do mention the names of two painters: François Francart (1622–1672) and Baudoin Yvart (1611–1690), but their contribution, probably cartoons, would have been supervised by Le Brun.

Never completely installed in their intended setting and scattered by fate and auction, these carpets, or rather more than half of them, exist today in public and private collections in France and the United States. Three are in the Metropolitan Museum. *Music* (left) is a reweaving of the design of the carpet given to the king of Siam in 1685. *Fame* is exhibited in the Palais Paar Room, and the carpet (detail illustrated above) with landscape medallions can be seen in the adjoining room from the Hôtel de Varengeville in the Wrightsman Galleries.





Spring, embroidered wall hanging, Paris, about 1685

The pervasive influence of Le Brun's decorative style is also visible in four extraordinary embroidered panels, now installed in the alcove of the state bedchamber re-created in the style of Louis XIV (pp. 10–11). Depicting Spring (left), Summer, Air (detail below), and Fire, these hangings must have originally belonged to a set of eight illustrating the four seasons and the four elements.

In the center of each panel is a personification of the subject surrounded by a luxurious mélange of appropriate decorative details. The manner in which these cleverly and purposefully chosen subjects are artfully arranged, as well as certain details such as the baskets of flowers and acanthus rinceaux, recalls the Savonnerie carpets. Furthermore, the figure representing Air, Louis XIV in the guise of Jupiter (cover), is nearly identical to the image of the king in the ceiling painting executed by Le Brun in 1683–84 in the Galerie des Glaces at Versailles. Although documentation is lacking, it seems evident that the designs for these embroideries emanated from Le Brun's workshop.

These embroideries quite possibly are identical to some of the wall decorations, worked in *tapisserie de petit point*, that adorned the king's apartment at the Château de Rambouillet and depicted princes and princesses. Those decorations are believed to portray six children of Louis XIV and his mistress the marquise de Montespan, for whom our embroideries were made.

Flora, who represents Spring, can be identified as Mlle de Nantes. Shown above the twins of Gemini, one of the astrological signs of the season, is a blazon with three yellow fleurs-de-lis separated by a narrow red band and set against a blue background—a device connoting a legitimized prince or princess. Mlle de Blois as Ceres evokes Summer, while the duc de Maine personifies Fire. Three other children—the comte de Vexin, Mlle de Tours, and the comte de Toulouse—must have been included in other panels, although Earth was most certainly portrayed by the marquise de Montespan as Juno. In the tapestry depicting Air, this goddess appears again with her symbolic peacock

underneath the figure of Louis XIV as Jupiter.

Colored silks and wools have been beautifully embroidered in tent stitch on canvas with an elaborately worked background of silver and silver-gilt threads, couched in herringbone and spiral patterns. Executed about 1685, these embroideries were probably made at the convent of Saint-Joseph-de-la-Providence in Paris, which supplied numerous sumptuous embroidered furnishings for Versailles, including the hangings for the king's throne room.

The convent, a favorite charity of the marquise de Montespan, trained orphan girls from the ages of about eight to eighteen in embroidery, an art and a trade that would later support them. In 1681 the marquise was named a director and ten years later retired from the court to the convent. It was probably through her influence that the convent workshop had access to designs by the best artists of the realm and could undertake such large-scale and ambitious projects.



Detail of Juno from the embroidered wall hanging Air, Paris, about 1685

Embroidered bed valance, about 1700



Compared to the skill and time required for more delicate and complex types of needlework, canvas embroidery in tent stitch is an easy and relatively quick method for the production of exquisite furnishings such as screens, wall panels, bed hangings, and chair covers. It is a technique that was practiced not only by semiprofessionals in convent ateliers, with or without royal affiliations, but also by other minor workshops and individuals often employed by the local nobility. Without documentation, it is usually impossible to establish firmly a place of manufacture or provenance for the work of such anonymous artisans. The pattern books and prints that served as design sources traveled widely, and this type of embroidery was also practiced outside France, further complicating identification.

About 1700 one—or probably more—unknown embroideresses created the six valances and two side curtains that remain from a larger set of bed hangings and now decorate the bed in the Louis XIV gallery. The main subjects, usually set within cartouches, are primarily derived from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, while the secondary scenes relate tales from the fables of Aesop and La Fontaine, which were long popular as sources for engaging decorations. In the valance above, Orpheus charms the wild beasts with his music, while to either side an episode from the fable of *The Fox and the Stork* unfolds: center left, the fox deceives his dinner guest, the stork, by serving a meal on a flat plate; center right, the stork returns the invitation and trick, enjoying his supper from a long-neck bottle.

Adroitly worked in wool and silk on

canvas using a typical period combination of gros and petit point—the latter for faces, hands, and finer details—these furnishings are not high style or grand, but they are certainly delightful. One can only imagine how amusing it must have been to embroider scenes and figures such as Ariadne (below) leaving a trail of thread for Theseus to follow through the maze; however, we can share the enjoyment and entertainment they provide.

The embroidery on the opposite page is only the center portion of a narrow, ten-foot-high hanging from the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century. Such panels were frequently used as wall coverings, side by side or in alternation with simpler fabrics or woodwork. Among the popular embroidery techniques employed to fashion these furnishings were appliqué, tent stitch, and, as in this example, crewel embroidery. Worked in silks on canvas, the main motifs are achieved primarily by satin stitch against a background of golden yellow silk couched in a diaper pattern.

The individual motifs and overall design are clearly conversant with other arts of the era. The impressive waterworks of Versailles are here echoed by the multi-tiered playing fountain inhabited by basilisks, griffins, and dolphins. Parrots, peacocks, and other exotic birds also grace this and similar embroideries, while the “backbone” of the composition—full-blown, realistic flowers and bursting bunches of fruit interconnected by undulating foliage—recalls the great carpets. There is a certain lightheartedness, however, which is an indication of the stylistic change to come.

Detail of Ariadne from an embroidered bed valance, about 1700



Detail of a silk-embroidered wall panel, about 1700





Embroidered panel from a fire screen, late 17th or early 18th century



Jabot, point de France lace, probably Alençon, about 1697

The Berain-inspired panel from a fire screen on the opposite page depicts a controlled cacophony of *divertissements*. Three ladies, as if in their theater box, are entertained by three musicians below. One man plays a musette, the bellows under his arm, another a lute, and the third a shawm. They are joined in their efforts by an ape-man playing a bell tree, while another of his kind dances to the tune.

Two men seated on their leafy perches sound the horn to announce the hunt. A monkey astride a crocodile responds by attempting to spear a game bird, while on the other side of the panel a hound pursues a rabbit. Elsewhere bird hunting, with a crossbow or a snare, is the chosen activity. Other creatures as different as the fleet squirrel and the slow-moving snail balance on the arabesque framework. The petit-point embroidery achieves an additional vitality and a certain three-

dimensionality through the subtle padding of the faces. The couched gold silk background, embroidered in a diaper pattern, serves as a luminous foil for the wool-and-silk design.

The same whimsy and finesse prevail in a lace jabot from the 1690s (above). Radically different from the early *point de France* of the 1660s that was modeled on formal Venetian Baroque laces with details in high relief, this jabot presages the delicacy of the Rococo. The French preference for symmetry underlies this depiction of the hunt, but here it is lenient, not strict. As the horns are sounded, a fashionably dressed couple take their weapons—she a bow and he a gun—and prepare to unleash the hounds. Dogs chase fluffy-tailed foxes through the leafy forest, evoked by the use of *brides à picot*, and successful hunters hold rabbits by their ears. A retainer offers a boar's head on a

platter for the subsequent feast. A French royal crown supports the hypothesis that the lace was made at the time of the marriage of the fifteen-year-old duc de Bourgogne, grandson of Louis XIV, to Princess Marie-Adelaide of Savoy in 1697. The extremely high quality of the workmanship suggests that the probable place of manufacture was Alençon, a name now synonymous with French lacemaking.

Very costly, laces of this caliber were indispensable accessories for the fashionably dressed man and woman, and they were used to adorn not only neck and bodice but also head, cuff, and hem. The elaborate depictions on the jabot are an excessive indulgence intended for the private amusement of the owner, for when it was worn many of the charming details disappeared amid the soft vertical folds.

Alice M. Zrebiec



Ewer illustrating the myth of Europa and the Bull, Nevers, about 1675-85

The application of ceramic and glass to other than utilitarian purposes was widely practiced during the reigns of Louis XIV's father, Louis XIII, and grandfather, Henri IV, both of whom encouraged, as a matter of statecraft, the establishment of luxury industries. Under the guidance of Italian craftsmen who possessed the technical secrets, fine glass and pottery making became French industries. By the time of Louis XIV, the descendants of these foreigners, often working for generations within family enterprises, were native-born Frenchmen, whose techniques evolved to accommodate slight differences in available raw materials and the changing cultural environment for their products.

Louis XIV continued to grant temporary monopolies to new factories making luxury wares. Although we do not find any direct orders for works in pottery and glass, he promoted these materials by their use in royal palaces and especially in furnishing two important structures at Versailles, the Trianon de Porcelaine at the edge of the formal gardens and the Galerie des Glaces in the main building of the palace. The Trianon de Porcelaine, built for Louis XIV in 1670, was a small private retreat conceived as an oriental pavilion. The external walls were covered with blue-and-white tiles, which also lined the floors and some of the interior walls; blue-and-white-tiled stoves were set up in the rooms, and large blue-and-poly-chrome vases decorated the roof. Chinese silks also hung on the walls, and the furniture reportedly was in an orientaling taste. The orders for the thousands of ceramics needed to complete this scheme were filled by the faience potteries of Nevers, Saint-Cloud, and Rouen, as well as by manufacturers in Holland. Large ewers and basins, some with fantastic serpent (as on this ewer) or dragon handles or eagle-claw feet, may have been made for the Trianon de Porcelaine.

The Galerie des Glaces (Hall of Mirrors) was a spectacular innovation in interior effects. It was not for reasons of vanity but for light itself that these vast mirrors were developed. Placed opposite the window bays of this long, rectangular space, they doubled the existing daylight, and at night, when the great chandeliers were lit, they intensified the candlelight.

The inventor of cast mirror glass, Bernard Perrot, was a descendant of an Italian family of master glassmakers from the Altare region of Italy who arrived in France in the late sixteenth century. Venetian techniques of decolorizing glass and blowing it into hollow forms were widely

practiced in many parts of Europe, but Venice controlled one lucrative monopoly: the making of large sheets of clear glass for mirrors. There were repeated efforts in France, encouraged by the king and his minister Colbert, to build up a national mirror-glass industry. Perrot succeeded in perfecting a formula and a process for casting sheet glass. Invalided soldiers, of whom there was no scarcity in Louis XIV's France, were entrusted with the polishing. Perrot's methods, once adopted, gave France the lead in Europe as maker of fine mirror glass.

This ewer, one of a pair, exemplifies the florid classicism of the first half of the reign of Louis XIV (1654–85). The shape, goat's-head antefix, forcefully scrolling acanthus encircling the neck, and pictorial decoration contained in side panels recall the bronze vases in the manner of the antique designed by the court goldsmith, Claude I Ballin (1615–1678). Presented here is the story of Europa, best known from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which tells how Zeus, disguised as a bull, mingled with a herd of cattle on the seashore of Phoenicia. The bull attracted Europa, the king's daughter, who climbed on the back of the seemingly compliant animal. She was, however, immediately carried off through the waves to Crete. This scene, Europa looking tearfully backward as she is borne away, is the one customarily chosen to illustrate the story. The composition is adapted from a painting (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston), dated 1644, by

Laurent de La Hyre (1606–1656), a founding member of the Academy of Painting. Large and imposing objects such as this ewer, although made at Nevers, far from the capital, were undoubtedly destined for a formal interior in the house of a member of the court or possibly for one of the royal palaces, such as the Trianon de Porcelaine.

The subject of this plate, Venus combing Cupid's hair, is derived from a set of engravings, *Scherzi d'Amor* ("Love's Games"), by Odoardo Fialetti (1573–1638). The scene is given importance through the use of an encircling border of scrolling leaf ornament in yellow and blue and a raised semicircular molding in yellow. Possibly other prints from Fialetti's set were painted on faience, but this particular subject was popular for some time, as it exists on other plates with various borders. Formal and decorative wares such as the objects shown here, would have been the most costly and rarified products of the leading faience pottery at Nevers, which was the most important center for faience throughout the seventeenth century.

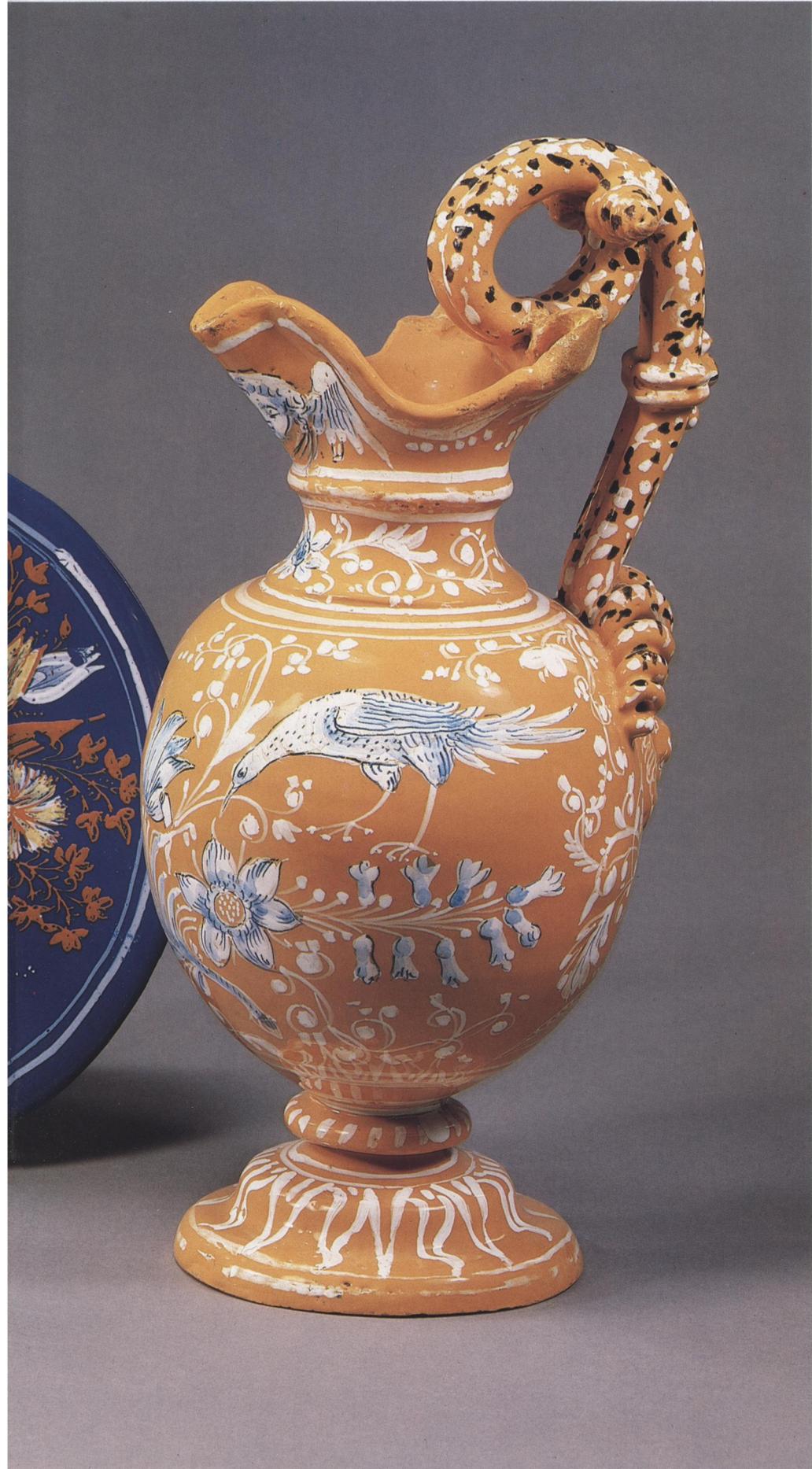
The soft, misty colors of the plate are typical of much Nevers ware. This tonality may have been due in part to the way the colors were mixed, and it reflects a preference for massed, muted colors rather than sharp, striking ones. Moreover, the absence of a clear-glaze covering, which was common in Italy where pictorial compositions on white pottery originated, also preserved the softness of the tones.



Plate with Venus combing Cupid's hair, Nevers, about 1675–85



Pitcher, plate, and ewer, Nevers, 1650–90



These Nevers faïences, made in the period 1650–70, imitate Near Eastern ceramics, but with a certain French flair. The blue grounds (called *bleu persan*) of the pitcher and plate and the flowers—tulips, carnations, narcissus, and hyacinth—painted on all three pieces were found on Isnik faïences that reached France through transshipment from Rhodes and Genoa. Chinese porcelains (which had been plentiful) were not then available because internal wars had disrupted the industry in China. The Nevers pieces combine Western shapes with Eastern ornament or Eastern shapes with Western ornament; the pitcher, for example, is Islamic in shape and ground color, but the handle and leaf scrolls around the neck are adapted from classical models. A second mixture of design types can be seen on the plate. Two bouquets of flowers placed upside down to each other across the horizontal axis of the plate have foliage painted not in ceramic pigments but in a brownish, clayey paint, the closest perhaps that Nevers potters could come to the rather fierce and gritty red-brown luster of these patterns in Turkish pottery. The two birds are reminiscent of a common motif on Chinese porcelains imported into Europe earlier in the century. The one above glides through the sky, while the second, on the ground, cranes to observe it; their interest in each other creates a dynamic, vertical line in the plate's composition. Fragments of large urns with polychrome painting on blue grounds were found at the site of the Trianon de Porcelaine.

In 1670 Louis XIV established a company to trade directly with the Levant. This made Turkish and other Near Eastern goods cheaper since they skirted middlemen in eastern Mediterranean ports, but it also probably made them less exotic; hence Nevers ceased to imitate them.

The ewer was possibly made about 1670 or some years later. The yellow ground painted with white shaded in blue has much the same mixture of flower and bird motifs as on the *bleu persan* pieces, but the overall appearance is lighter and more elegant. The ground is possibly inspired by the rich yellow of Chinese silk rather than the yellow of Chinese ceramic ground, which was a more lemon shade. The decoration reflects an interest in blue-and-white Chinese porcelain, which was available again after about 1680. The ewer's Western shape was developed originally in the sixteenth century for silver. The coiled-serpent handle is borrowed from classical types, and the winged-angel mask under the lip is a centuries-old Christian motif.

Much of the silver and ceramics for interior furnishings (as distinct from useful pieces, however costly) produced during the reign of Louis XIV shared the large scale of contemporary furniture. The imposing (diam. 22 1/8 in.) display dish below was made about 1700 at the faience factory in Moustiers-Sainte-Marie, a village set in the Basses-Alpes some sixty miles from Marseilles. The factory was founded in 1677 by Pierre Clérissy (1651–1728) and continued by his descendants. The quality that sets Moustiers apart from all other French faience is the very pure, almost lu-

minous tin glaze, apparently achieved by some processes, and probably materials, that appear to have remained secret. It is characteristic of Moustiers faience to leave large areas of the beautiful white glaze unpainted. The scene of an ostrich hunt, painted on the dish in several tones of blue, has been taken from a smaller engraving from a series, published in 1598, of unusual hunting subjects by the Italian Renaissance artist Antonio Tempesta (1555–1630). The edging growing inward from an outer edging of small flower heads shows the creative combination of

various ornamental elements taken from oriental porcelain into a rhythmical, symmetrical Europeanized decoration. François Viry (1614–1689), an artist from the nearby town of Riez, was the first head of the painting shop at Moustiers. The blue “hunt” dishes are among the factory’s earliest pieces. One is signed by Gustave Viry (died 1720).

At Saint-Jean-du-Désert, just outside Marseilles, a faience factory was founded in 1679 by Joseph Clérissy (1644–1685), brother of Pierre. He hired François Viry’s son Joseph to be in charge of painting.



Products of Saint-Jean-du-Désert such as this dish (diam. 20 in., below) often displayed the gigantic proportions fashionable in the late seventeenth century. The acanthus-leaf border in relief is a simpler and naturally coarser version of similar decoration used on ceremonial silver in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Moustiers and Saint-Jean-du-Désert faïences were very different. The latter's white tin glaze was harder and more opaque looking, and its painted decoration was usually confined by firm outlines of manganese purple. The scene on the

plate is taken from an illustration of the myth of Glaucus, a fisherman who was turned into a sea deity by eating a divine herb. He was enamored of Scylla, a mortal who spurned his love and was later turned by Circe into a dreadful monster guarding one side of the channel between Italy and Sicily. The composition is taken from a print, by Bernard Salomon (1508–1561), that illustrated the story in an edition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* published in Lyon in 1557 by Jean de Tournes.

After 1664, when Marseilles was designated the port of entry for the national

companies trading with the Orient and the Levant, a newly prosperous period opened for the ancient city. The products of Saint-Jean-du-Désert were sold locally as well as exported, and a large proportion of surviving pieces seems to have been made specially for particular clients. Also exported from Marseilles were wares from Moustiers that were shipped down the Rhone from Beaucaire, the riverine market from which goods were sent to central and north France.



Display dish illustrating myth of Glaucus and Scylla, Saint-Jean-du-Désert, about 1690–1700

The large hollow tile is one of nine known that are painted with a musician in blue monochrome within a raised circular frame. All have fleurs-de-lis at the corners, suggesting that the tile was part of the decorative exterior of a stove for heating a music room in an official building or in a royal foundation such as a school. The motif of scrolls and flowers in blue-shaded white reserves on a blue ground is a type of decoration called *broderies*. The compositions of this flautist and of musicians playing various other instruments on similar tiles in French museums are probably after engravings by Nicolas (1636–1718) or Jean-Baptiste Bonnart (1678–1726), father and son, who produced contemporary genre subjects for a series of prints sold at their Paris shop. Although stoves were standard furnishings during the period of Louis XIV, no faience examples have survived. Judging by its proportions, this tile must have been applied to a large stove that made a ringing color statement in the room where it was built, and it may even have stood on a blue-and-white tiled floor. The charm of blue-and-white Chi-

nese porcelain was widely admired throughout Europe. The color scheme was reproduced in France in the last quarter of the seventeenth century and remained in favor for some fifty years. This tile is made of a dark red clay and is unlikely to have come from Rouen, where the clay for faience was a pale cream or buff color. Saint-Cloud or possibly Paris are likely alternatives.

The *écuelle*—possibly evolved from a type of small Spanish bowl—appeared in France during the 1670s. Usually made in silver or silver-gilt, the *écuelle* consisted typically of a broad low bowl with horizontal handles, domed cover, and under-dish or saucer that could also serve as a plate. It was a personal item for informal or occasional use, such as while traveling. Faience examples are rare. The charming composition inside this bowl, a shepherdess spinning wool, is painted in yellow, blue, and red. The handles are pairs of dolphins. It is difficult to attribute this early eighteenth-century luxury faience to a particular pottery. Rouen is unlikely, in spite of the radiating design in blue and

red on the sides and the cover. Lille, which was founded by workers drawn in part from Rouen, is possible, for a yellow was used there. Alternatively, if the dolphin handles allude to the Grand Dauphin (Louis XIV's son and prime heir), whose personal emblem was two intertwined dolphins, the piece may have been made at the faience pottery at Saint-Cloud, opposite the Grand Dauphin's château on the Seine.

The red used on this *écuelle* was not a stain derived from metal oxide painted onto the unfired white glaze—as were other colors in the high-temperature palette—but it was, in fact, a fine clay containing a high proportion of iron oxide. This clay, similar to the Armenian bole of Near Eastern pottery, was found in the south of France. It was first used at Rouen, where an entire class of wares with red-and-blue *rayonnant* schemes was created. No doubt the blue-and-red combination was the French response to the similarly colored Japanese Imari ware, copied also in Chinese export porcelain.



Stove tile, probably Paris or Saint-Cloud, about 1705



Covered bowl (écuelle), Lille or Saint-Cloud, about 1700–10

This large dish is a highly evolved example of the *rayonnant* style of decoration. The radial organization shown here, of red-and-blue motifs, was first developed at Rouen in the late seventeenth century, imitating and taking further the engraved and cast decoration on elaborate silver of

the period. In addition, the dish has a shaped central medallion in ocher decorated with fronds and scrolls in the manner of the inlaid tortoiseshell-and-brass panels on court furniture executed by the master *ébéniste* André-Charles Boulle (see p. 19). A third element of decoration is

the group in blue monochrome at the center with putti probably derived from two or more prints. This layering of references on a large display piece was characteristic of the most elaborate of Rouen productions in the first decade of the eighteenth century.





This ewer is essentially a vase form cut at the upper edge to yield the so-called helmet shape. The mask under the lip, harp-shaped handle with leaf decoration, and pointed and rounded reserves on the lower body were transferred from silver ornament of the decades 1690 to 1710. During this period a wealthy, discriminating clientele increasingly used faience in place of metal, and this explains why the humbler clay products conformed to the latest, most courtly of tastes. Blue on white, blue and red on white, and later blue, red, and ochre on white were the standard color combinations for opulent but elegantly restrained decoration.

In the early eighteenth century most faience production was dedicated to table and toilet wares. Near-toys like the one below were also made, along with other unusual pieces such as mantelpieces, pedestals, and busts. This inkstand has inkwells and boxes for sand, seals, and wafers, drawers for quills, and a hidden socket for a candle to melt sealing wax. When this equipment is stowed, the inkstand presents terraces with owls and seated figures, balustrades and flowerbeds, leading to a pool with a dolphin fountain, reflecting figures enjoying seasonal pastimes.



Opposite: Display dish, Rouen, about 1700–20. Above: Ewer, Rouen, about 1690–1710, and inkstand, Rouen or possibly Lille, about 1700–15



This vase-shaped ewer is the equivalent in glass of silver ewers that evolved in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. The undulating band of extra glass at the base of the body imitates the calyxlike cup of leaves often seen as decoration on silver of the period 1660 to 1680. Impressed on glass wafers affixed to the foot below the spout—that is, on the front, or presenting side of the ewer—are three fleurs-de-lis, indicating that the ewer was made for one of the royal palaces or official buildings and probably part of a large order. (In a monarchy the furnishings of government buildings carry the state insignia, which are also usually those of the sovereign; it is often mistakenly thought that such insignia point to personal use by the sovereign.) The brilliance and clarity of this glass is due to one of the principal ingredients of the metal, sand from Normandy that contained no impurities, such as iron, to discolor it.

The glass and enameling industry of Nevers was founded by the Italian humanist Louis Gonzaga (1539–1595), who ruled as duc de Nevers from 1565. He was also responsible for attracting majolica potters to the city. Small figures and toys in glass were already a noteworthy product of Nevers in the early seventeenth century. The future King Louis XIII, as a child of three or so, had toy dogs and other animals made of Nevers glass. The kneeling figure of a king is from a Nativity group. Such glass theme sets, with numerous figures in an architectural or landscape setting, were a specialty of Nevers in the late

seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and there are many isolated survivors of this very fragile art. The figures were built up by fusing rods of colored glass around an armature of copper wires with the aid of a special lamp (hence, the name “lampwork”). The colors are soft and pretty and were probably developed in Nevers from bricks of brightly colored glass made in Venice. One still marvels at the personality displayed by these small figures, especially in their finely sculpted faces and lively expressions, imparted while the material was still in a semi-molten state.

The three-and-one-half-inch-high flacons were made in the Orléans glasshouse of Bernard Perrot (active from 1649 to 1709), the most famous member of an Italian glassmaking family that probably went to France as followers of Louis Gonzaga. The flacons are examples of one of his inventions, the use of patterned molds with intaglio decoration to cast molten glass into small bottles, beakers, medallions, and vials that then displayed the motifs in relief. These show the decoration on opposite sides of the same mold. Perrot specialized in colored glass, producing agate bodies, imitation porcelain in white glass, and a transparent red glass. The three fleurs-de-lis may indicate that this was a glasshouse within royal protection, and the hearts were probably a reference to the vials given as courting gifts.

Jessie McNab



Kneeling king from a Nativity group, Nevers, about 1700

Flacons from the same mold, Orléans, about 1690–1710







Detail of strapwork on candlestick base

On December 3, 1689, in order to finance his military campaign against the League of Augsburg, Louis XIV decreed that all silver was to be melted down. For the next six months the work of the court silversmiths, comprising the most ambitious body of work ever accomplished in silver, was brought to the mint for destruction. Huge tables, candlestands, mirrors, chandeliers, and vases designed by Charles Le Brun and executed by Nicolas de Launay, Claude Ballin, and Alexis Loir were among the silver furnishings from Versailles that the king, “with pleasure,” sent to the mint. Members of the nobility and aristocracy followed suit; the Dauphine and the maids of honor even sacrificed their toilet services. Twenty years later during the War of the Spanish Succession, the story was repeated; this time dining tables were stripped of the gold and silver services that had become fashionable during Louis XIV’s reign.

Inventories of the royal plate indicate that by the 1670s an elaborate dining etiquette had developed and, with it, the first true table service, that is, a comprehensive ensemble of pieces of matching design. The composition of a table service often varied, but by the end of the seventeenth century its standard elements were platters, plates, and serving bowls in several sizes, *écuelles* (stew or broth bowls), vinegar cruets, ewers, and flatware. Most of this silver, too, was destroyed. Our knowledge of its variety and appearance is based on small collections of surviving pieces, on descriptions and inventories of the period, and on a group of drawings now in the Nationalmuseum, Stockholm. These were commissioned

in 1702 by the Swedish court architect, Nicodemus Tessin the Younger (1654–1728), as part of an ambitious plan to transplant the taste of Versailles to the royal buildings, furnishings, and gardens in Stockholm. Tessin’s agent in Paris arranged to have drawings made by Nicolas-Ambroise Cousinet (active 1696–died before 1715) of silver belonging to the king and to the duc d’Aumont, thus providing an invaluable record of material now entirely lost.

The melting down of silver and gold in 1709 gave an important boost to the ceramics manufactories. Although, according to the duc de Saint-Simon, Louis XIV himself merely replaced his gold services with others of silver and silver-gilt, the rest of the court was dining off faïence within a week. In addition to factories outside Paris that had been making faïence for decades, there were smaller enterprises within the city, so that the duc d’Antin was able to hurry from Versailles to Paris, where, as Saint-Simon tells us, he bought up the entire stock of two faïence shops.

The porcelain industry, however, received little benefit. The king, in accord with current fashion, had a large collection of oriental porcelain, mostly Chinese blue and white, and had boldly experimented with earthenware as an architectural material in the Trianon de Porcelaine (see p. 39). Unfortunately, either the Dutch and French faïence tiles or the materials used to adhere them to the façade could not withstand the climate, and in 1687 the building was demolished. By then several porcelain factories are known to have been planned or established in France, and one, Saint-Cloud—until

1710 the only commercially viable factory in Europe—was at Louis XIV’s doorstep not far from the palace of its patron, his brother, the duc d’Orléans. The king never became interested in the French manufacture of porcelain, however, and the surviving pieces datable to his reign are comparatively few and rare.

The silver that is known to have escaped the melting pots of 1689 and 1709 is almost entirely small scale and utilitarian in character, a reflection of its lesser monetary worth when compared, for example, with the massive tables and chandeliers designed by Le Brun. Parisian silver naturally reflected court taste, and Jean Berain’s pervasive influence is conspicuous in the architectural form of these candlesticks, made between 1690 and 1692. Each section with its beautifully proportioned and detailed decoration epitomizes his style at its most disciplined, as does the intricate, highly organized strapwork ornament on the bases; it is in fact quite possible that the elegance of design of the candlesticks is due to Berain himself. The simpler decorative scheme of the sugar caster, made by David André in 1709/10, is also derived from Berain’s repertoire. Its form appears to have originated at the end of the seventeenth century. Boxes with spoons for powdered sugar are listed among Cardinal Mazarin’s possessions in 1653, and *sucriers* are mentioned repeatedly in the inventories of Louis XIV’s silver, but their shapes have remained unidentified. This shape with a pierced, high-domed cover appears in one of Cousinet’s drawings of 1702 and was the standard form of silver sugar casters for several decades.



Above: Engraving by Pierre Giffard of designs by Jean Berain. Opposite: Ewer engraved with the arms of L'Estang du Rusquec, Paris, 1699/1700

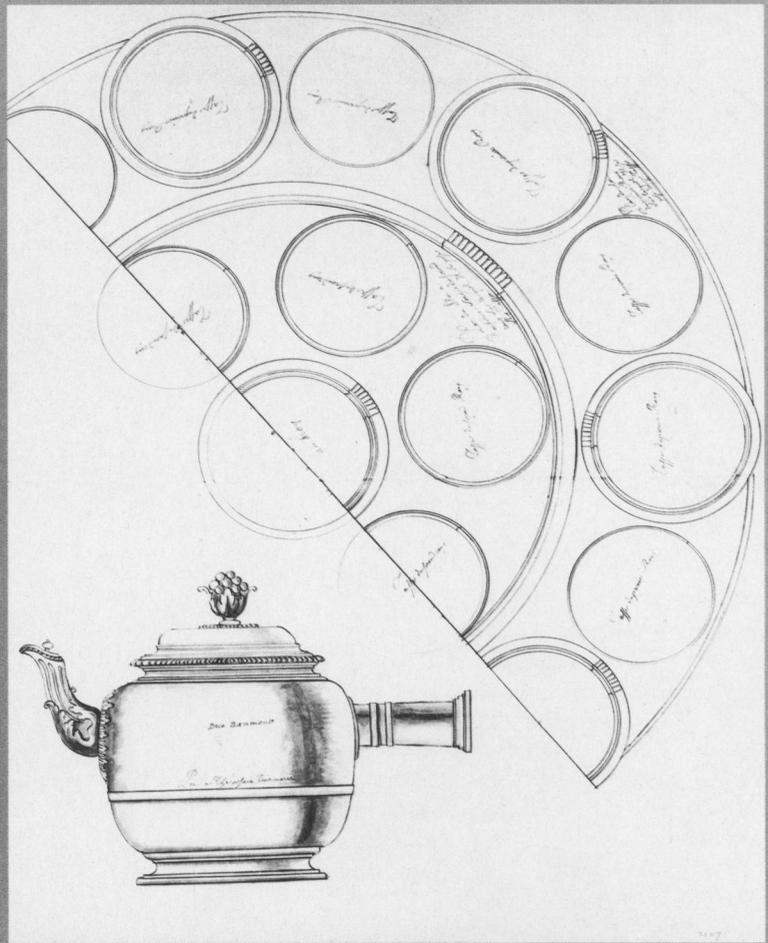
This simple graceful ewer is of the helmet type that evolved at Louis XIV's court. Numerous versions appear among the designs of Jean Berain, and the two shown opposite are typically elaborate. In the absence of any corresponding extant examples it cannot be ascertained whether Berain's illustrations represent actual objects or whether they are simply proposed designs. In either case, they may certainly be seen as a reflection of his characteristic style, in which architectural formality and sculptural richness of detail were equally applicable to a wide range of forms and variety of materials.

Ewers and basins had been in use since the fourteenth century, principally for the dinner table. According to one historian, it was the custom for people to wash their hands at the table both before and after the meal; while one servant held the basin, another poured the water. Originally this ewer, made in 1699/1700, would have been accompanied by an oval basin and could have been part of dining equipment, since forks were then just coming into general use, and it was still common practice to wash one's hands at the table. The ewer could also have been part of a toilet service, which, like the table service, was an innovation of the Louis XIV period: Ewers designated for the dressing table and dining room are included in the drawings of French royal silver sent to the Swedish court.



Tea, coffee, and chocolate were introduced into France toward the end of the seventeenth century, and by 1687 silver pots for each beverage are mentioned in inventories of Louis XIV's plate. The form of this teapot of 1699/1700 corresponds significantly to a drawing, sent just two years later to the Swedish court, of a teapot for the duc d'Aumont. (The remainder of the drawing illustrates the plan of a tiered circular stand set with cups filled with sweetmeats for dessert.) On the Museum's teapot the maker's mark IC with the device of a pellet is clearly struck but is unrecorded.

This is the only Parisian teapot of the period known to survive and, indeed, one of few French silver teapots of any date—the beverage never having gained the popularity of coffee or chocolate.



Although spoons had been in use at the dining table since the fifteenth century, the fork as an eating implement was introduced into France from Italy only at the start of the seventeenth century. It was not until the reign of Louis XIV that matched sets, or *couverts*, became relatively common. At first, sets, like this one of 1683/84 by Louis Nicolle, comprised only a spoon and a fork but within a few years came to include a knife as well. It was during this time, also, that the three-tined fork was beginning to be replaced by one with four tines. (The set shown is actual size.)

The trifid ends of the handles and the vigorous engraving of birds and flowers are features found in other *couverts* of about the same date; a fork of 1681/82 in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, by an unidentified maker was apparently engraved by the same hand. The mortar and pestle and the initials AQ engraved on the reverse of the Museum's pieces are later additions. It has always been customary for the new owners of silver objects to erase earlier armorials or monograms and substitute their own; of the original engraving only the initials PD are legible.



Silver-gilt fork and spoon, by Louis Nicolle, Paris, 1683/84



Potpourri, Rouen, about 1690



Lower section of a bottle or vase, Saint-Cloud, late 17th to early 18th century

According to documentary evidence a privilege to manufacture porcelain was granted to Louis Poterat of Rouen in 1673. Attribution of pieces to this factory centers around a single mustard pot in the Musée National de Céramique, Sèvres. Our potpourri corresponds to the distinctive features of this pot in its greenish glaze, tightly organized decoration featuring arcaded panels, and finely stippled background. The confirmatory link with Rouen is provided by the additional decoration on the mustard pot of a coat of arms found on many examples of Rouen faïence. Even the form of our potpourri is a variant of one produced in Rouen and its cover, now missing, would probably have had the same low-domed profile as the faïence version.

In its present form the little sphere has no parallel to the ceramics or silver of the Louis XIV period. Originally it was probably a long-necked bottle of Chinese shape: The neck presumably was broken, and the rim of the remaining lower section ground smooth along the top of the shallow ridge. Bottles of such a form, standing about seven inches (approximately the height of this one if it were complete) have been attributed to both the Rouen and Saint-Cloud factories. A slightly larger bottle on which a similar ridge is discernible is in the Sèvres Museum. Like our piece, it is painted in brilliant blue with a frieze of rinceaux and, also in blue, with pseudo-Chinese characters on the underside. Based upon the border pattern, which occurs on this and other marked examples, and on the wide borderless midband, a compositional device borrowed from pharmacy jars attributed to Saint-Cloud about 1700, it is here proposed that the two bottles were made at Saint-Cloud.

Familiarity with seventeenth-century Chinese porcelain is evident from these two jars. The covered one displays a form characteristic of the Transitional period (1620–83), and the other includes decorations of flower-filled vases associated with the reign of the Kangxi emperor (1662–1722). They are two of a large group of porcelains of unsettled attribution that was almost certainly made at Saint-Cloud from about 1700 to 1710. Several members of Louis XIV's immediate family had substantial collections of oriental porcelain, among them his brother, patron of the Saint-Cloud factory; it is quite likely that these pieces derive from exemplars in his possession. The European motifs of birds, light-stepping satyrs, and strapwork reinforce the association with court taste and recall the informal, airy decorative schemes designed by Claude Audran for members of the royal family.



Jar and covered jar, Saint-Cloud, about 1700

By 1700 court dining etiquette had spurred the invention of an extraordinary variety of tablewares. Almost every type of object—and in some cases, such as the sugar caster, the exact shape—had its origin in silver made for Louis XIV. An entry in the inventory of the king's plate made in July 1697 listed *Quatre poivriers à trois séparations et le milieu en salière*, a description that corresponds to one of the drawings by Cousinet in Stockholm illustrated on the opposite page. It, too, is identified as a *poivrière* (pepperbox), and while the construction differs from the

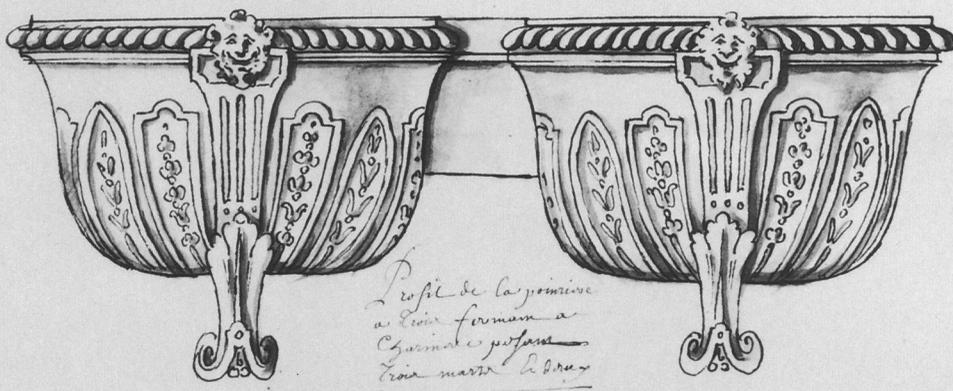
Museum's piece (according to the inscription, the three projecting sections were individually hinged), it includes, as does ours, a central circular well for salt. However, in the porcelain piece, there is a small hole in the well, original to its manufacture, which is obviously impractical for salt. It is therefore reasonable to suppose that the form was also used for spices, the center functioning possibly as a container for a nutmeg.

The stylistic similarity between Cousinet's drawing of a silver pepperbox and our porcelain version points up the direct

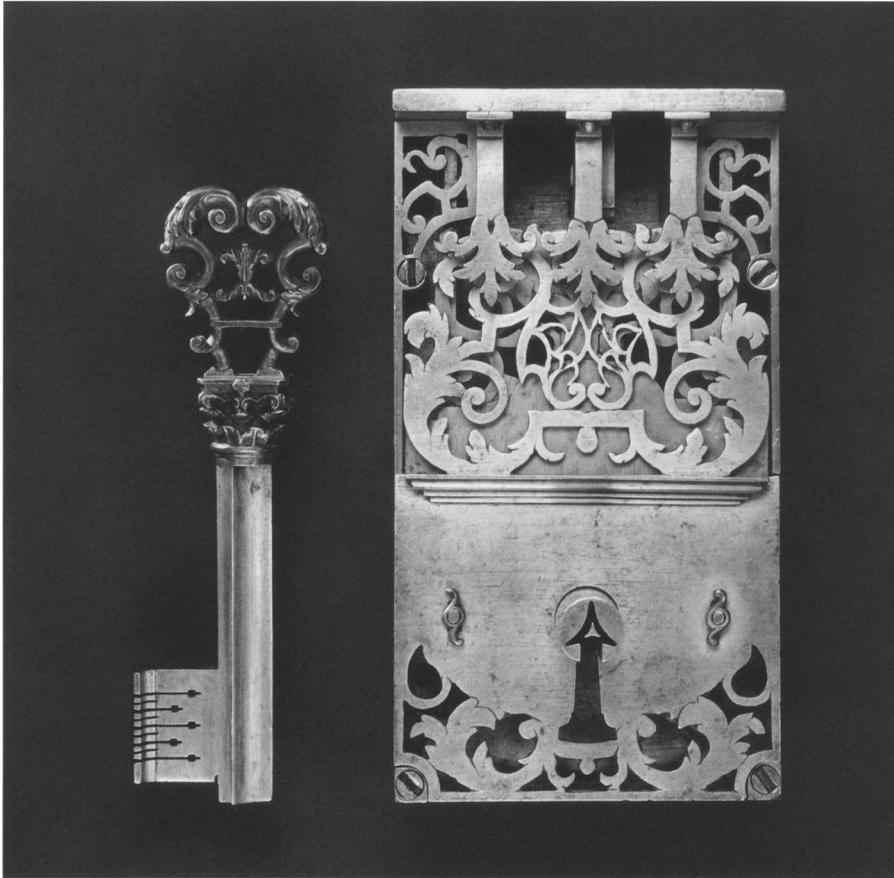
relationship between the two materials at the moment that porcelain was beginning to assume the same function as that of the lost silver. The berry-cluster finial and paw feet are borrowed from the silversmith's vocabulary, as is the foliate ornament similar to that on the candlesticks (pp. 50, 51) and to Cousinet's patterns, which would have been flat-chased on the king's pepperbox.

Clare Le Corbeiller





Opposite: Triple spice or pepperbox, Saint-Cloud, about 1710–20. Above: Drawing of a triple pepperbox, by Nicolas-Ambroise Cousinet, 1702



Coffer lock and key, about 1680–1700



Door knocker, probably 1675–1700

French metalworkers during the reign of Louis XIV were rigidly divided into corporations or guilds. Among the oldest of the corporations was that of the locksmiths, who were chartered in Paris in the thirteenth century. Locksmiths were by nature conservative, and Mathurin Jousse, author of *La Fidèle Ouverture de l'art De Serrurier* (La Flèche, 1627), the most extensive treatise on French locksmithing before the eighteenth century, was still being cited by encyclopedists more than 150 years later. Many of Jousse's models for locks and keys were used by French craftsmen in the latter half of the seventeenth century.

Aspiring locksmiths were required to make masterpieces, or test pieces, as proof of their competence before being admitted to the guild. Set in place, this lock would have been fitted to the inside of a coffer or chest, where most of its embellishments would have been hidden. It seems likely, therefore, that this lock and key were masterpieces. The form of the lock is a traditional one described by Jousse in *La Fidèle Ouverture*, but the maker has modernized it by adding pierced foliate scrolling, commonly found in French decorative design of the last quarter of the seventeenth century. The key, with its intricate, filed bit and hollow pipe of triangular section, also derives from models illustrated by Jousse.

Dolphins were sometimes employed as graceful allusions to the Dauphin, heir to the French throne. The two stylized dolphins that adorn this wrought-iron knocker have prototypes, however, in a design published in Jousse's treatise during a period when there was no Dauphin. The fully developed Baroque shape of this knocker rather than the ornament places it firmly within the reign of Louis XIV. A few such pieces of hardware are still to be seen in Paris on seventeenth-century *hôtels* in the Marais District.

The corporation of clockmakers was not organized in Paris until 1483 and in Blois not until 1597. French clockmakers began making watches in the sixteenth century, and by 1627 Paris watchmakers had wrested the right to make gold and silver watch cases from goldsmiths. It was not until 1643, however, that they were permitted to ornament their cases with enamels and gems. Watches with some of the most magnificent enameled cases ever made were produced in Paris and Blois before the middle of the century. French clock- and watchmakers were interested in new technology as well. The Royal Academy of Sciences was established in Paris in 1666, and the Dutch mathematician

Christiaan Huygens (1629–1695), who invented the first practical pendulum for clocks (1656) and the balance spring for watches (1675), became a member. In 1657 clocks made according to the Huygens patent were imported from The Hague, and the new, more accurate mechanism was soon being copied by French clock-makers, among them Isaac Thuret, father of Jacques Thuret (see p.16).

French clock- and watchmaking suffered with the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, when many Huguenot craftsmen emigrated, taking their skills to other European countries and England.

The maker of the brass-and-steel watch movement at the left of the illustration was probably Nicolas Gribelin (1637–1719), a member of a large family of clock-makers active in Blois from the late sixteenth through the seventeenth century. Nicolas is recorded working in Paris

for Monsieur, brother of the king, as early as 1674. Technological developments incorporated into the movement enable specialists to date it to about 1675–80, but the enameled case is likely to be earlier. Part of the landscape on the interior of the case is from a print by the French artist Laurent de La Hyre (1606–1656); the scene on the outside is a miniature version of a painting of Antony and Cleopatra by Sébastien Bourdon (1616–1671). The lavishly decorated case was probably fitted with a new and more accurate movement at the request of an owner who treasured it.

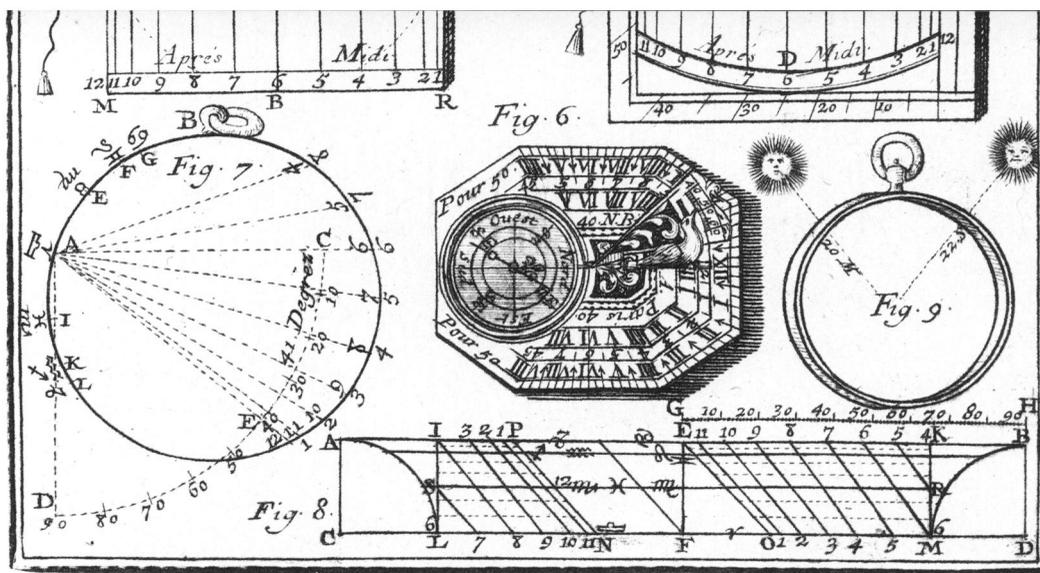
In the decades before the balance spring transformed the watch, watches were often more valuable as jewelry than as timekeepers. The case of the watch at the upper right is made of blued steel overlaid with floral designs of repoussé gold. Its cover, of polished rock crystal set in a silver bezel mounted with diamonds,

protects an exquisitely painted dial and a tiny, sculptured, single hand. The square, pre-balance spring movement is signed “F. Meybom Paris/St. German.” Nothing is known of this maker, but he must have been working in the early 1670s; a similar engraved design by Jean-Louis Durant, who is recorded in Geneva about 1670 to 1678, helps to date the case to about 1670 or shortly thereafter.

The silver case with an openwork design of floral ornament at the lower right houses a bell for an alarm mechanism. The watch is a somewhat provincial version of a design fashionable in Paris and Blois about 1650 and was probably made in Rouen ten or fifteen years later. The movement is signed by Estienne Hubert, son of Noël Hubert, keeper of the town clock of Rouen from 1612 to 1650. Estienne did not become a master in the Rouen corporation until 1656.



Three pocket watches, about 1660–80



Designs for a Butterfield-type sundial (Fig. 6) and a local ring sundial (Fig. 9) and diagrams demonstrating the calibration of the ring sundial (Figs. 7,8), first published in Paris, 1709

Paris sundial makers were not allied with the clockmakers but remained a part of the brass founders' corporation throughout the reign of Louis XIV. An Englishman, Michael Butterfield, who worked in Paris between 1678 and 1727, is credited with inventing a type of small portable sundial that was quickly adopted by French sundial makers. Most Butterfield-type sundials were made to be used in the latitudes between Dieppe and Madrid, and they are invariably fitted with small adjustable styles, or gnomons, with bird-shaped supports. The beak of the bird slides along a scale engraved on the style and indicates the angle appropriate to the use of the dial in a given latitude.

The combination portable sundial and sundial calibrator is not a true Butterfield-type sundial, since it could also be used for

drawing the hour lines of a sundial on any flat surface. Directions for its use can be found in Nicolas Bion's *Traité de la Construction et des Principaux Usages des Instruments de Mathématique*, first published in Paris in 1709 and the most popular treatise on mathematical instruments of the eighteenth century. Bion's text was accompanied by engraved illustrations, and a detail from plate 31 of the third edition shows his version of the Butterfield sundial (above). Such dials were commonly made of brass, but sometimes, like the example shown below, they are of silver.

Usually, but not always, these instruments were signed by their makers. Some of them, however, were included in boxed sets of mathematical instruments along with various kinds of measuring and draft-

ing devices, such as sectors, rulers, protractors, and compasses. Only one or two of the instruments belonging to a set were customarily signed, and thus one that has become separated from a set is often difficult to assign to a specific maker. The maker of the combined portable sundial and sundial calibrator is unknown, but the small silver Butterfield-type sundial illustrated below is signed: "Jaques Lucas / A la Rochelle." Lucas fled from that stronghold of French Protestantism a few years before the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. He is recorded as a refugee in Amsterdam, where he became a citizen in 1681. By 1702 he had a shop on the Rokin, where he seems to have made not sundials but watches.

Clare Vincent



Butterfield-type sundial, probably about 1680



Combination portable horizontal sundial and sundial calibrator, about 1690–1710

CREDITS

INTRODUCTION

- Fig. 1: Rogers Fund, 1928 (28.157)
 Fig. 2: Gift of the Hearst Foundation, 1956 (56.234.34)
 Fig. 3: Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1933 (33.84 [1]) leaf 104
 Fig. 6: Gift of Ogden Mills, 1925 (25.142.61)
 Fig. 7: Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1953 (53.600.2784)
 Fig. 8: Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1930 (30.22 [22-64])
 Fig. 9: Rogers Fund, 1915 (21.36.141) leaf 65
 Fig. 10: The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1962 (62.598.300)
 Fig. 11: Rogers Fund, 1973 (1973.263)

TEXT

- Pp. 12, 13: Table. Tortoiseshell, ivory, ebony, and other woods on oak and fruitwood; gilt-bronze. W. 41³/₁₆ in. (105 cm). Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman, 1986 (1986.38.1)
 Pp. 14, 15: Desk. Oak, pine, and walnut veneered with red tortoiseshell; engraved brass, ebony, and Brazilian rosewood; gilt-bronze and steel. W. 41³/₄ in. (106 cm). Gift of Mrs. Charles Wrightsman, 1986 (1986.365.3)
 Pp. 16, 17: Clock. Tortoiseshell, gilt-bronze, brass, engraved pewter on oak. H. 7 ft. 3¹/₄ in. (222 cm). Rogers Fund, 1958 (58.53a-c)
 Pp. 18, 19: Armoire. Tortoiseshell, engraved brass, and ebony on oak; gilt-bronze. H. 7 ft. 8 in. (234 cm). Fletcher Fund, 1959 (59.108)
 Pp. 20, 21: Commode. Tortoiseshell, engraved brass, and ebony on walnut; gilt-bronze, *verde antico* marble. H. 34¹/₂ in. (87.6 cm). The Jack and Belle Linsky Collection, 1982 (1982.60.82)
 Pp. 22, 23: Side table. Carved and gilded oak, *fleur-de-pêcher* marble top. W. 77 in. (196 cm). Purchase, Mrs. Charles Wrightsman Gift, 1987 (1987.281 a,b)
 P. 24: Candlestands. Gilded walnut. Hts. 64¹/₂ in. (164 cm). Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1907 (07.225.190 a,b)
 P. 24: Six-light candelabra. Rock crystal, gilt-bronze. Hts. 24³/₈ in. (62.5 cm). Purchase, Mrs. Charles Wrightsman Gift, 1989 (1989.22.1, 2)
 P. 25: Armchair. Gilded walnut, early 18th-century silk-velvet upholstery. H. 57 in. (145 cm). Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1738)
 P. 25: Side chair (part of a set). Gilded beechwood, wool velvet (*moquette*). H. 45¹/₄ in. (115 cm). Purchase, Mrs. Charles Wrightsman Gift, 1987 (1987.152.1)
 P. 26: Tapestry: *Venus and Adonis*. Designed in 1684-86 by Pierre de Sève the Younger. Woven in the haute-lisse atelier of Jean Jans the Younger (ca. 1644-1723). Wool, silk, and silver thread. 12 ft. 3 in. x 11 ft. 4 in. (3.73 x 3.45 m). Gift of Julia A. Berwind, 1953 (53.225.7)
 P. 27: Fragments of a lower tapestry border. Woven in the haute-lisse atelier of Jean Jans the Younger. Wool, silk, and metal thread. Sofa back: 1 ft. 9³/₄ in. x 5 ft. 11¹/₂ in. (55.2 x 181 cm). Sofa seat: 2 ft. x 6 ft. 5 in. (60.9 x 195 cm). Bequest of Benjamin Altman, 1913 (14.40.783)
 Pp. 28, 29: Tapestry: *Offering to Bacchus* (detail and full view). Designed ca. 1685-89 by Jean-Baptiste Monnoyer. Woven at Beauvais under the direction of Philippe Behagle (1641-1705) or his son. Wool and silk. Overall: 9 ft. 7 in. x 6 ft. 8 in. (2.92 x 2.03 m). Gift of John M. Schiff, 1977 (1977.437.4)
 P. 30: Carpet with medallions (detail). Number 73 woven for the Long Gallery of the Louvre. Lourdet atelier. Wool, Ghiordes knot. Overall: 29 ft. 9³/₄ in. x 10 ft. 4 in. (9.08 x 3.14 m). Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman, 1976 (1976.155.11)
 Pp. 30-31: Carpet: *Musik*. Lourdet atelier. Wool, Ghiordes knot. 29 ft. 6 in. x 16 ft. (8.99 x 4.87 m). Rogers Fund, 1952 (52.118)
 P. 32: Wall hanging: *Spring*. Embroidery in silk, wool, silver, and silver-gilt threads on canvas. 13 ft. 9 in. x 9 ft. 2 in. (4.19 x 2.79 m). Rogers Fund, 1946 (46.43.1)
 P. 33: Wall hanging: *Air* (detail). Embroidery in silk, wool, silver, and silver-gilt threads on canvas. Overall: 14 ft. 1¹/₂ in. x 9 ft. 1 in. (4.27 x 2.76 m). Rogers Fund, 1946 (46.43.4)
 P. 34 (top): Bed valance. Silk and wool embroidery on canvas. 19 x 81¹/₂ in. (48.3 x 207 cm). Gift of Irwin Untermyer, 1953 (53.2.1)
 P. 34 (bottom): Bed valance (detail). Silk and wool embroidery on canvas. Overall: 19 x 67¹/₂ in. (48.3 x 171 cm). Gift of Irwin Untermyer, 1953 (53.2.3)
 P. 35: Wall panel (detail). Silk embroidery on canvas. Overall: 10 ft. x 29¹/₂ in. (305 x 74.9 cm). Purchase, Gift of Adele Pharo Azar, in memory of her husband, Jemile Wehby Azar, by exchange, 1987 (1987.162)
 P. 36: Panel from a fire screen. Silk and wool embroidery on canvas. 32 x 25³/₄ in. (81.3 x 65.4 cm). Gift of Forsyth Wickes, 1950 (50.76)
 P. 37: Jabot. Linen needle lace (*point de France*). 11 x 15¹/₂ in. (27.9 x 39.4 cm). Gift of Mrs. Edward S. Harkness, 1930 (30.135.143)
 P. 38: Ewer (one of a pair). Polychrome faïence. H. 22 in. (55.9 cm). Purchase, The Charles E. Sampson Memorial Fund, Gift of Irwin Untermyer, by exchange, Rogers Fund, and Bequest of John L. Cadwalader, by exchange, 1985 (1985.181.2)
 P. 39: Plate. Faïence. Diam. 10 in. (25.4 cm). Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1812)
 Pp. 40-41: Pitcher, plate, and ewer. Blue-and-yellow-tinted faïence. H. (pitcher) 7¹/₈ in. (18.1 cm); Diam. (plate) 9¹/₈ in. (23.2 cm); H. (ewer) 12³/₄ in. (32.4 cm). Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1799, 1797, 1796)
 P. 42: Dish. Faïence, painted in blue. Diam. 22¹/₈ in. (56.2 cm). Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1822)
 P. 43: Dish. Faïence, painted in blue and purple. Diam. 20 in. (50.8 cm). Gift of R. Thornton Wilson, in memory of Florence Ellsworth Wilson, 1950 (50.211.76)
 P. 44: Stove tile. Faïence, painted in blue. H. 13 in. (33 cm). Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1940)
 P. 45: Ecuelle (two views). Faïence, painted in yellow, blue, and red. W. (across handles) 11¹/₈ in. (28.3 cm). Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1768)
 P. 46: Display dish. Faïence, painted in blue, red, and yellow. Diam. 22¹/₈ in. (56.2 cm). Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1823)
 P. 47: Ewer. Faïence, painted in blue. H. 11¹/₂ in. (29.2 cm). Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1783)
 P. 47: Inkstand. Faïence, painted in blue and mustard yellow. L. 15¹/₄ in. (38.7 cm). Museum accession X.181 a-j
 P. 48: Ewer. Glass. H. 8³/₄ in. (22.2 cm). Gift of James Jackson Jarves, 1881 (81.8.164)
 P. 49: Kneeling king. Colored-glass lampwork. H. 2³/₈ in. (6.7 cm). Gift of Henry G. Marquand, 1883 (83.7.24)
 P. 49: Two flacons. Amber and blue cast glass, with pewter screw caps. H. (amber) 3¹/₂ in. (8.9 cm); H. (blue) 3¹/₈ in. (7.9 cm). Gift of Henry G. Marquand, 1883 (83.7.165, 22)
 P. 50: Caster. Silver. H. 9¹/₁₆ in. (23 cm). Maker: David André (master 1703, d. 1743?). Engraved in the 19th century with an unidentified coat of arms. Bequest of Catherine D. Wentworth, 1948 (48.187.73 a,b)
 P. 50: Pair of candlesticks. Silver. H. 9¹/₄ in. (23.5 cm). Maker: I.D. Paris, 1690-1692. Engraved ca. 1767, with the arms of Eugène Eustache, marquis de Béthisy, and his wife, Adélaïde Charlotte du Deffand. Bequest of Catherine D. Wentworth, 1948 (48.187.249, 250)
 P. 51: Detail of candlestick base (48.187.250)
 P. 52: Plate 75 of *Ornemens inuentez par J. Berain*. Rogers Fund, 1915 (21.36.141)
 P. 53: Ewer. Silver. H. 10³/₄ in. (27.3 cm). Maker: I.V. Paris, 1699/1700. Bequest of Catherine D. Wentworth, 1948 (48.187.19)
 P. 54: Teapot. Silver. H. 5⁵/₈ in. (14.3 cm). Maker: I.C. Paris, 1699/1700. Bequest of Catherine D. Wentworth, 1948 (48.187.78)
 P. 54 (inset): Drawing by Nicolas-Ambroise Cousinet. Pen and black ink, gray wash. Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, THC 2107
 P. 55: Fork and spoon. Silver gilt. L. (fork) 7 in. (17.8 cm); L. (spoon) 7¹/₈ in. (18.1 cm). Maker: Louis Nicolle (master 1666, working 1694). Bequest of Catherine D. Wentworth, 1948 (48.187.214, 215)
 P. 56: Potpourri (cover missing). Soft-paste porcelain. H. 5 in. (12.7 cm). Gift of R. Thornton Wilson, in memory of Florence Ellsworth Wilson, 1950 (50.211.186)
 P. 56: Lower section of a bottle or vase. Soft-paste porcelain. Pseudo-Chinese marks on the underside. H. 3¹/₂ in. (8.9 cm). Gift of R. Thornton Wilson, in memory of Florence Ellsworth Wilson, 1950 (50.211.185) Note: Bernard Dragesco should be thanked for his insightful suggestion concerning the original form of this piece.
 P. 57: Jar (cover missing) and covered jar. Soft-paste porcelain. H. 8 in. (20.3 cm); H. 10 in. (25.4 cm). Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1911, 12)
 P. 58: Triple spice or pepperbox. Soft-paste porcelain. H. 3³/₈ in. (8.6 cm). Gift of R. Thornton Wilson, in memory of Florence Ellsworth Wilson, 1950 (50.211.134 a,b)
 P. 59: Drawing of a triple pepperbox. Pen and black ink, gray wash. Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, THC 2106 recto
 P. 60: Coffor lock and key. Steel and iron. H. (lock) 6³/₁₆ in. (16 cm); L. (key) 5³/₈ in. (14.3 cm). Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1957 (57.137.7 a,b)
 P. 60: Door knocker. Iron. W. 10¹/₂ in. (26.7 cm). Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1957 (57.137.23)
 P. 61 (left): Watch. Case and dial: painted enamel on gold. Movement: gilded brass, steel, partly blued, and silver. Diam. (case) 2³/₈ in. (6 cm); Diam. (backplate of movement) 1¹⁵/₁₆ in. (4.9 cm). Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1559)
 P. 61 (right, top): Watch. Case: gold, blued steel, rock crystal, and silver set with diamonds. Movement: gilded brass and steel, partly blued. W. 1³/₁₆ in. (3.3 cm). Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1600)
 P. 61 (right, bottom): Watch. Case: silver. Dial: silver and niello. Movement: gilded brass and steel, partly blued. Diam. (case) 1¹³/₁₆ in. (4.6 cm); Diam. (backplate of movement): 1³/₁₆ in. (3.3 cm). Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1596)
 P. 62 (top): Detail from plate 31 of Nicolas Bion's *Traité de la Construction et des Principaux Usages des Instruments de Mathématique* (Paris, 1725). Bequest of W. Gedney Beatty, 1941 (41.100.8)
 P. 62 (bottom): Butterfield-type sundial. Silver. L. 2³/₁₆ in. (5.5 cm). Gift of Mrs. Stephen D. Tucker, 1903 (03.21.60)
 P. 63: Combination sundial and calibrating instrument. Brass and silver. L. 5¹/₄ in. (13.3 cm). Gift of Mrs. Stephen D. Tucker, 1903 (03.21.17)

Inside back cover: Tapestry: Festival of Psyche with Bacchus (detail). Designed in 1684-86 by Bon Boulogne. Woven in the haute-lisse atelier of Jean Jans the Younger at the Gobelins, Paris, 1689-92. Wool, silk, and metal thread. Overall: 12 ft. x 16 ft. 7 in. (3.65 x 5.05 m). Gift of Julia A. Berwind, 1953 (53.225.9). Back cover: Detail of top of bureau brisé on pp. 14-15 showing Louis XIV's personal devices including a monogram of interlaced L's surmounted by a crown and sunburst



