



# San Francisco Ceramic Circle

An Affiliate of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco

## July 2016

P.O. Box 15163, San Francisco, CA 94115-0163

[www.patricianantiques.com/sfcc.html](http://www.patricianantiques.com/sfcc.html)

## SFCC SUMMER SOCIAL:

*Saturday, August 6*

(SFCC Annual Membership Meeting, Sunday, September 18: see next page)

SFCC member **Michael Sack** has a remarkable collection of 19<sup>th</sup>-century British transferware with scenes of southern and southwestern Asia, and their source prints. This summer his collection will go on view at the **San Francisco Airport Museum in the International Terminal** (exhibit cases to the right of the check-in counters). Michael will conduct a **walk-through tour of the exhibition at 11:00 a.m., Saturday, August 6**. SFCC will sponsor a **reception from 12:00 to 2:00** in a private space at the Airport. Both events will be free to SFCC members and their guests. The SFO Museum has promised to comp our parking. Many thanks to **Sarah Bishop** for making the arrangements!



Factory of Josiah Spode, Stoke-on-Trent  
*Soup tureen, 'Caramanian Series,'* introduced c. 1809  
Lead-glazed earthenware with underglaze printing  
Collection of Michael Sack



William Watts (1752-1851) after Luigi Mayer (1755-1803)  
*Sarcophagus Near Castel Rosso*, from Sir Robert Ainslie,  
*Views in Turkey in Europe and Asia*, 1801 and later  
Hand-colored engraving  
Collection of Michael Sack

# SFCC ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING:

*Sunday, September 18*

We traditionally held the SFCC **Annual Membership Meeting**, a.k.a. **Pot Night**, on Thursdays. This year we will move to **4:00 – 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 18**, to see if that fits more people's schedules. The short business meeting, with election of Board members, will be at 6:00. We will not change our favorite traditions: socializing, eating well, and showing favorite pieces and mystery items from our own collections. There will be door prizes, too; but the highlight will be a talk on this year's exceptional ceramics acquisitions at the Legion of Honor. Guest speaker: **Maria Santangelo, Associate Curator of Decorative Arts**. For this event, just as many thanks to **Sharon Lamb** for making the arrangements!

Pot Night is free to members and their guests. The venue will be **San Francisco Towers, 1661 Pine Street, San Francisco** (tel. 415-776-0500). We have reserved 20 parking spaces. Car-pooling or public transportation are advisable where convenient.

**From the Bay Bridge:** Take Fremont Street exit, cross Market Street, go left on Pine Street. At Gough turn left again, then left on Bush, then left on Franklin, and then right onto Austin Street. Enter parking garage from Austin Street.

**From the Golden Gate Bridge:** Take Lombard Street to Gough, go right on Gough. At Bush turn left, then left again on Franklin. Turn right onto Austin Street. Enter parking garage from Austin Street.

**From the South Bay:** From 101 North, take 9<sup>th</sup> Street exit. Go up 9<sup>th</sup> Street, staying in left lanes. Cross Market Street to Larkin Street, turn left onto Hayes. From Hayes turn right onto Franklin, then right again onto Austin Street. Enter parking Garage from Austin.

## SFCC Fall Lectures

Our Fall lectures will be special events with special scheduling. To complement the **Legion of Honor's major Fall exhibition**, paintings by the 17<sup>th</sup>-century French Le Nain brothers, we will sponsor a ceramics talk among the exhibition programming; the schedule is still in the works. Our speaker will be **Camille Leprince**, a remarkable dealer in French ceramics and author of two important books on 16<sup>th</sup>- and 17<sup>th</sup>-century French faience. He gave a terrific talk at the 2015 American Ceramic Circle meeting.

On **Saturday, November 12**, SFCC and the American Decorative Arts Forum are co-hosting a two-lecture presentation by **Dennis Carr**, Curator of American Decorative Arts and Sculpture at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. He organized the MFA's critically acclaimed exhibition "Made in the Americas: The New World Discovers Asia," now on view at the Winterthur Museum in Delaware. The show includes landmark **Chinese export porcelain** and spectacular **pottery from Puebla, Mexico**.

## The San Francisco Fall Antiques Show October 27-30, 2016, at Fort Mason

This year, SFCC's Cultural Partnership with the San Francisco Fall Antiques show brings unlimited **complimentary tickets** for SFCC members! Look for more details in the next Newsletter.

## New at the Legion of Honor: A gift from the San Francisco Ceramic Circle



**Josef Willems (1716-66)**  
at the Chelsea (London) porcelain factory  
*Carpenter with his tools*, c. 1753-55  
Soft-paste porcelain with enamel, height 19.7 cm  
FAMSF, Gift of the San Francisco Ceramic Circle  
in memory of Constance Bowles Peabody

Chelsea was England's first porcelain factory and artistically its most distinguished, from its founding in 1743 till it closed in 1769. With no local source of the key ingredient for true, hard-paste porcelain, Chelsea worked with the mixture of clays and powdered glass called soft-paste porcelain. While this material is less durable as tableware than hard-paste, it absorbs enamel colors especially well.

Small figures for the dining table were high fashion in the mid-1700s, but England had no native sculptors making them to the best artistic standards. Chelsea hired Josef Willems, from Flanders, in 1748. Part of his mandate was to copy Meissen and Sèvres, but he also made original designs that gave Chelsea a distinctive house style.

The *Carpenter with his tools* belongs to a breakthrough group of Willems's own figures from the mid-1750s. Willems took motifs from French prints of street characters and reinvented them as three-dimensional forms. The subtle coloring belongs to the earliest phase of production. It brings out the beauty of the porcelain as such, and also the dynamics of the pose. By the 1760s fashion had shifted to bold, overall coloring that arguably dampens these effects.

Constance Bowles Peabody was the Fine Arts Museums' pre-eminent donor of English porcelain and a long-term supporter of the SFCC. It is an honor to give this figure in her memory.

## Sack Collection Background: Orientalism

With the start of world sea trade around 1500, Europeans and Asians began to make images of each other, with varying mixes of observation and imagination—or caricature.

Because the traders were European the process became increasingly lopsided, and even more so with colonization.

The first widely distributed European 'look' for Asians appeared around 1650, when potters in Delft and Nevers began to copy Chinese porcelain in detail. Early Delftware was not true to Chinese life, but it showed the Chinese pretty much as they showed themselves.

**Unknown factory, Delft**  
**Detail of a rosewater dish, c. 1660-80**  
Tin-glazed earthenware  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (SFCC photo)





**Painting attributed to J.G Höroldt at the Meissen Porcelain Factory**  
**Tea canister with Chinese figures, c. 1723**  
 Hard-paste porcelain with enamels and gilding  
*Collection of Malcolm Gutter (SFCC photo)*

By about 1700, educated Europeans knew that life in China was much different than the scenes on porcelain. They took the difference as license to fantasize. *Chinoiserie* was an escapist mode much like the imaginary world of Arcadian shepherds (think of Marie Antoinette's village at Versailles). Apart from superficial design motifs, no one expected to learn about China by looking at Meissen or Sèvres. Of course, few 18<sup>th</sup>-century Europeans *cared* about real life anywhere else.



**Royal Porcelain Factory, Sèvres**  
**Cup and Saucer from a service for**  
**Mme. de Pompadour, c. 1761**  
 Soft-paste porcelain with enamels and gilding  
*Dauids Samling, Copenhagen (museum photo)*



**Attributed to William Walsh, Burslem, Staffordshire**  
**Platter with the Mausoleum of Sultan Purvez, near Allahabad,**  
**and other subjects, c. 1815-22**  
 Earthenware with underglaze transfer print and overglaze enamels  
*The Potteries Museum, Stoke-on-Trent (SFCC photo)*

Globalization began in the mid-1700s. There were quantum leaps in the number of Europeans who worked across the world, and even more people at home whose livelihoods depended on global trade. How the rest of the world really was, suddenly mattered. The change was greatest in England, with its huge investment in conquering India.

Europeans now wanted 'non-fiction' views of other continents, especially of Asia where trade was expanding most rapidly. With hindsight, their vision turns out—no surprise—to have been highly selective. As Michael Sack's collection shows, the vision emphasized past glories, saying that Asians had lost their way and needed European leadership. This was very much an ideology. Michael's ceramics, used daily by the great new middle class, also show how pervasive this ideology was.