

THE LAST QUARTER CENTURY: A CERAMIC RÉSUMÉ

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Many years before *The International Ceramics Fair and Seminar (ICFS)* had become a feature of the season, I clearly recall a dealer saying to me that he considered the profession finished. He suffered from a *malaise* that hits us all occasionally; as things inevitably change we don't like it and naturally we try to resist. In the antiques trade this change has been dramatic and although it is tempting to be dismissive of the modern way of conducting business, to be churlish about the benefits of global communication and advances in technology, these can be the very tools that enrich our business and take dealing and collecting into the 21st century.

The *International Ceramics Fair & Seminar* has been a mirror of this change and has embraced the concept of sharing academe and commerce in a way that is both educative and inspiring. It is a meeting point for dealers, museum curators, auction house specialists and collectors; it provides a uniquely friendly atmosphere in which to exchange views and current scholarship.

In 1982, Brian and Anna Haughton formulated the idea with Len and Yvonne Adams of launching the Fair in June. Business generally at this time was slow and the idea of putting together a fair that concentrated on one area of the business was innovative and exciting; it certainly caught the mood of the moment. The idea of inviting leading international dealers in the fields of European and Asian ceramics and glass and balancing this with a supporting series of lectures was indeed inspired and met with wide approval. A further encouragement was the lack of a dateline as the organisers felt, quite rightly, that later and contemporary works had just as important a part to play in our ceramic heritage as the antique. Here it was possible to see the earliest Chinese pottery rubbing shoulders with ceramics fired in the kiln a week before the fair. However, the exhibits were all subject to vetting for both quality and authenticity by a panel of specialists, drawn from both the academic and commercial fields, with a sound knowledge of the varied



Figure 1
Brian & Anna Haughton

disciplines on show. The first fair offered a varied programme of eighteen lectures, of which several were published in the handbook the following year.

In the early 1980s the market in antiques was rapidly expanding and reaching a broader clientele; this was fuelled by the media and press. The BBC programme 'Going for a Song' had been popular for many years and this was followed by 'The Antiques Roadshow' in the 1970s and more recently by other programmes that have brought the world of antiques and 'collectibles' to the attention of a wider public. Magazines such as 'The Antique Dealers' & Collectors' Guide', 'The Antique Collector' and more specifically the short-lived magazine 'Ceramics' have had a broad readership among ceramic collectors. Since then price guides on every conceivable subject have been published, pioneered in the 1970s by 'The Antique Collectors' Club'. The enormous improvement in photography and printing has had a dramatic improvement on the quality of specialist ceramic works, exhibition catalogues and auction catalogues, all of which brought the subject to a wider public. Yet, nothing has been so marked as the advent of computer technology and the creation of websites for museums, dealers and individuals. Used in the right way this can make a big difference to the way in which we buy, collect, deal and enjoy the whole spectrum of the world of ceramics.

Looking at this in figures, the export of 'antiques' has dramatically increased over the last 25 years, and although we are importing 'antiques' too, it is interesting to see that new markets are constantly being explored; for example, we are now exporting dramatically more objects to Russia and the Far East. In this global economy, we have of course become less insular in our approach to the whole subject; air travel especially is now considerably less expensive and more available. Museums have embraced modern technology and no longer have a reputation for preserving in aspic, as it were, the objects in their care; they have become in every sense more accessible. Porcelain Societies for the promotion of the understanding of ceramics have flourished and have an ever-increasing and knowledgeable membership.¹ Specialist dealers arrange selling exhibitions frequently with a theme to encourage new collectors into the field. Mrs Anne George, when in charge of Albert Amor Ltd. during the 1980s, produced a spectacular series of exhibition catalogues of private collections of Worcester Porcelain. Since 1981 Jonathan Horne has had an annual exhibition entitled 'A Collection of Early English Pottery'; Garry Atkins also held annually 'An Exhibition of English Pottery' since 1991; Mercury Antiques have had an annual exhibition of 'Recent Acquisitions' since 1981 and Simon Spero of 'Early English Porcelain' since 1988. During this century, we have also had exhibitions presented by Brian Haughton Antiques, Klaber & Klaber, Robyn Robb and Stockspring Antiques. All these have brought the knowledge and expertise of the exhibitor to the fore and, together with improved printing and photography, have undoubtedly stimulated the market for these objects. It is no longer enough to present your wares to the world. Collectors require personal attention, interest and a sound knowledge of the subject to attract them to buy.

In this finely balanced market place, we have the relationship between the dealers and the auction houses. The number of specialist ceramic dealers and the number of specialist ceramic sales has markedly declined since the early 1980s. A decade earlier, Sotheby's had the expertise of A.J.B. (Jim) Kiddell who had gathered a strong following due to his great personal charm and outstanding knowledge of all things ceramic. He built his department at Sotheby's on a foundation of scholarship and practical experience and prized quality and authenticity in both people and objects. As a founder member

and later President of the English Porcelain Circle, Kiddell had knowledge of the many great collections formed in the inter-war years that were finally sold through Sotheby's in their sales in the 60s and 70s. However, after Kiddell's death in 1980, the picture changed as both Christie's and Phillips gained a larger share of the market and there was fierce competition between the houses and, of course, the trade.



Figure 2
The Couper Goblet decorated with the arms of Couper impaling Gray by William Beilby, c. 1765
Height: 8 1/2 in. (21.5 cm)
From The Cinzano Glass Collection, Exhibited 1983

For example, in 1982 Christie's held 9 large sales during the year turning over about £1.5m, in 2005 they held three sales with a total of about £5.5m. I do not intend to discuss here the peculiarities or the ethics of the Buyers' Premium, but this was introduced by Sotheby's and Christie's in 1982 and has increased now to 20% at



Figure 3
Dutch Royal Armorial Goblet, signed Beilby Newcastle Pinxit
c. 1766
Height: 11¼ in. (30 cm.)
Delomosne & Son Ltd. (1998)

most houses. This has caused some disquiet among the trade and collectors, and from a buyer's and a vendor's viewpoint the inclusion of a buyers' premium makes calculations complicated; the buyer is not paying the hammer price, nor is the vendor receiving payment based on the actual price paid for the object, which is psychologically damaging.

At the same time, the market has been diminishing in terms of objects available. Although some pieces go into public collections, never to be recycled, a large number go into private collections that may not be dispersed for another 30 to 40 years. This is cyclical and means that the market has natural vicissitudes. The early pieces from most European factories are now scarce and anything fresh to the market is competed for avidly. New areas evolve: Samson copies are collected in their own

right, copies of Palissy-type wares, *historismus maiolica* and Hispano-Moresque are all considered worthy of attention.² Art Nouveau and Art Deco ceramics have long been collected and new fields of 20th century ceramics and commercial ceramics of the 1950s onwards are now eagerly sought. So, the market is far from finished, as I was told all those years ago, but is constantly evolving as new aspects of ceramic art attract the attention of the contemporary buyer.

However, the traditional fields of collecting still remain the most appealing to the majority of today's collectors and this has been reflected in both the lecture titles, the exhibitions and the stock that the dealers at *The International Ceramics Fair & Seminar* have shown over the last quarter century. Looking back over this time, the fair handbooks present us with a roll call of the finest dealers and scholars in these fields. In this *résumé* I have deliberately concentrated on European ceramics and glass as my expertise does not extend to the Asian side of things and, although much of what I have to say applies to the Oriental market, there are different dynamics that come into play. At the first fair 14 of the 44 exhibitors had solely Oriental stock. A balance of exhibitors and lecturers was decided upon in the first year so the pattern for the future was set in which an exhibition would be an integral part of the event, giving direction to the academic side of the occasion.

In 1983 *The Cinzano Glass Collection*, put together by Peter Lazarus in the 1970s, was exhibited and Robert Charleston acted as the guest curator. The collection of 164 drinking glasses was later an Art Funded purchase by Bristol City Museum & Art Gallery (Figure 2). The programme of 24 lectures included Robert Charleston's 'English 18th Century drinks and drinking glasses and some heresies' and Professor Dreier's lectures on German glass engraving. The decoration of glass was to be the theme that most attracted the exhibitors and the academics.³ In 1984, Delomosne and Son Ltd. exhibited a Beilby decorated opaque-twist goblet from the celebrated Hamilton Clements collection, the following year Christie's were to sell the 'Success to the African Trade of Whitehaven' goblet. In 1987 Simon Cottle discussed the Beilbys in his lecture on 'The Art of Glass: William Beilby and other 18th century glass enamellers' and in 1999 Delomosne again produced a wonderful light baluster goblet with the Arms of Prince William V of Orange. (Figure 3).



Figure 4
Documentary glass panel engraved by Caspar Lehman (1563?-1620)
Prague, 1620
9 in. (23cm) x 7¼ in. (18.5 cm)
Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

In 1986 the glass world was stunned by the appearance of six engraved glass panels by Caspar Lehman (1563?-1620) of which the dated example shown here was sold to the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (Figure 4).⁴ In 1995 an engraved *façon de venise* goblet by Willem van Heemskerck, signed and dated *Leiden 1688* was sold by Sotheby's and bought, with assistance from The Art Fund, for the Burrell Collection, Glasgow.⁵ In 1997 the Art Fund assisted in the purchase from Robert Holden Ltd. of the 'Pitchford Hall Mug' for the Victoria & Albert Museum (Figure 5). At the fair in 2000, the Parisian dealers Dragesco-Cramois exhibited the cast and moulded glass portrait plaque of Louis XIV by Bernard Perrot (Figure 6). Delomosne exhibited a fine pair of Giles gilt-decorated green glass vases and covers in 2001, reflecting the firm's interest in Giles as a decorator of glass; they had previously held a successful exhibition *Gilding the Lily* in July 1978. Robert Charleston had lectured at the ICFS on Giles following his earlier papers on the subject to the English Ceramic Circle in 1967.⁶ Following his lecture in 1986 to the ICFS the publication of Martin

Mortimer's book *The English Glass Chandelier* (Antique Collectors' Club, Woodbridge, 2000) was the culmination of his work on the subject and the first book devoted exclusively to this complicated subject.

The area of Italian maiolica has received much scholastic attention over the last 25 years, but most especially in 1987 when the British Museum held a colloquium bringing worldwide scholars together. Their papers were later published by the Trustees of the British Museum and edited by Timothy Wilson.⁷ This was soon followed by Julia Poole's catalogue of the maiolica in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.⁸ As well as the academic side of the subject stimulating the market, the appearance of the Arthur M. Sackler collection at Christie's in New York in the 1993-94 season caused considerable interest and heightened prices. In 1992, the Art Fund assisted the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, in purchasing a magnificent Urbino dish (Figure 7) and again, in 2003, they bought from Rainer Zietz Ltd. the astonishing head of phalluses dish attributed to Francesco Urbini and dated 1536. The British Museum were able to acquire the documentary Urbino maiolica dish depicting



Figure 5
'Pitchford Hall Mug'
London glasshouse,
Contemporary silver mount inscribed
Bought on ye Thames ice Janu-ry 1683/4
Height: 2½ in. (6.35 cm)
Victoria & Albert Museum, London



Figure 6
Moulded and polished glass medallion
Louis XIV by Bernard Perrot,
Royal Orléans Glassworks
c. 1670-80.
14 in x 11 1/8 in (35.5 cm x 29 cm)
Dragesco-Cramoisan (2000)

'The Sack of Rome', dated 1527, from Trinity Fine Art in 1997. Without support from the Art Fund it is doubtful that these objects would have joined British public collections. The esoteric world of Renaissance maiolica belongs commercially more in the field of works of art than the mainstream ceramic collectors tradition. The interest in Italian ceramics comes mainly, but by no means solely, from Italian collectors and when Capodimonte or more rarely 'Medici' porcelain appears on the market, it generates a flurry of excitement. The J. Paul Getty Museum in Malibu, California purchased a well-documented Medici porcelain blue and white pilgrim flask in 1986⁹ and in the 90s no less than three outstanding pieces appeared in the Paris saleroom of Marc Ferri including a spectacular polychrome ewer with *grottesche*.¹⁰

Continental porcelain, and Meissen especially, has always been avidly collected and has been a mainstay of

the Fair. I should perhaps mention, as an aside, that this year it is 300 years since the birth of J.J. Kändler. In the 1980s, Kate Foster Ltd. provided extensive displays of early Böttger red stoneware and white porcelain, and most notably in 1987 a magnificent white grotesque teapot modelled by J.J. Irminger from a design by Jacques Stella illustrated in his *Livres des Vases* of 1667 (Figure 8). In the previous year the Acceptance in Lieu scheme (AIL) managed by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council recommended a Böttger silver-gilt mounted teapot be accepted for settlement of outstanding tax, this is now in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. Again the AIL recommended a collection of Meissen porcelain be accepted in 2005; this is now in the Victoria & Albert Museum and is a significant addition to their holding of Meissen porcelain. This tax efficient way of saving objects for the nation has secured not only these, but the magnificent Godman collection of Iranian ceramics for the British Museum; The Sèvres Starhemberg Service for The National Trust at Waddesdon; a group of Early English porcelain from the Statham collection for the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge and four rare Longton



Figure 7
Urbino dish painted by Nicola da Urbino, c. 1525
12 in. (30.5 cm) diam.
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford
Purchased with Art Fund assistance 1992



Figure 8
Grotesque teapot after model by J.J. Irminger
Meissen, c. 1720
Height: 6 in. (15.5 cm)
Kate Foster Ltd. (1987)

Hall white figures from the Watney collection for the Potteries Museum, Stoke-on-Trent. The salerooms are frequently a source of new acquisitions for both private and public collections. Among the Meissen highlights was a silver-gilt mounted white garniture after designs by Raymond Leplat, sold by Sotheby's, from the original garniture of seven vases given by Augustus the Strong to the King of Sardinia in 1725¹¹ and the two herons modelled by J.J. Kändler for The Japanese Palace in 1732, sold by Christie's (Figure 11).¹²

In 1985 the Fair exhibition was of *Documentary Continental Ceramics from the British Museum*. A large part of the exhibition comprised Meissen and the rest of other German factories including documentary *Hausmalerei* pieces, and exceptionally rare and hitherto unpublished examples of Höxter, Ottweiler, Würzburg and Kelsterbach (Figure 9). This was followed by examples from Du Paquier's factory in Vienna; Italian porcelain from Vezzi's factory in Venice; Doccia and Capodimonte and a small number of Sèvres pieces.¹³ It was the first time these important documentary pieces had been shown together since the 1960s, illustrating

the British Museum's policy of acquiring pieces of documentary significance; a practice that had been started by their first major benefactor Sir Augustus Wollaston Franks (1826-1897). Many of the exhibited pieces had come from his collection, acquired by the museum on his death. During this time the Art Fund again came to the rescue and in 1989 the Enid Goldblatt collection of 500 pieces of Continental porcelain went to the Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle, Co. Durham. Meanwhile the salerooms had some outstanding collections of Continental porcelain: Blohm in 1989, Firestone (French soft paste) 1991, Korthaus (Meissen) in 1992-3 and the outstanding Meissen animals from the Longleat collection (2003), from which the Victoria & Albert Museum later secured, with assistance from the Art Fund, a model of a King Vulture by Kändler. Du Paquier's Vienna porcelain has had a strong following at the Fair, most notably promoted through the exhibits offered by the firm of Bednarczyk of Vienna. Meredith Chilton delivered a paper in 1986 that discussed some *Hausmaler*



Figure 9
Kelsterbach figure of Harlequin modelled by J.M. Höckel, c. 1790
Height: 6 1/2 in. (16.4 cm)
British Museum (Exhibition, 1985)



Figure 10
Clock-case, Vienna, du Paquier's factory, c. 1725-30
Height: 15½ in. (39.5 cm)
E. & H. Manners (2002)

decorated Vienna pieces¹⁴ and E. & H. Manners exhibited a superb clock-case in 2002 (Figure 10).¹⁵ The salerooms too had some notable success with du Paquier including a small but choice collection of eleven pieces sold by Sotheby's London, that included a *Hausmalerei Schwarzlot* teapot by *Ignaz Preissler*¹⁶ and a chinoiserie tray. Christie's also sold a collection of Vienna porcelain, including du Paquier pieces from the collection of Emma-Henriette Schiff von Suvero (1863-1924) and restituted to her descendants by the Austrian Government in 2003, among which was an exceptional barrel-shaped chinoiserie mug.¹⁷

Of all the progress in the last 25 years, perhaps the most remarkable has been that in the field of early French porcelain and Sèvres in particular. The most astonishing work in this field was the publication of Rosalind Savill's three volume catalogue of *The Wallace Collection Catalogue of Sèvres Porcelain* (1988) that not only reappraised the collection itself, but undoubtedly did much to increase the interest and knowledge of the factory that in turn lead to a new generation of collectors. In 1983 Miss Savill delivered a paper on 'The Rococo Porcelains of Vincennes & Sèvres 1745-64' and the following year 'Sèvres from The Firlé Collection' to compliment the exhibition of Sèvres from Firlé curated by Deborah Gage. In 1993 John Whitehead, a regular exhibitor at the Fair, gave a paper on 'The Marchand-Merciers and Sèvres'. Tamara Préaud, Directeur des Archives de la Manufacture de Sèvres, gave a paper on 'Sèvres and Paris Auction Sales 1800-1847' and in 1996 'Eighteenth Century Sèvres Biscuit Sculpture'. Sèvres was again the focus of the exhibition in 2001 when Adrian Sassoon, a regular exhibitor of both Sèvres and contemporary ceramics and glass, curated 'Sèvres and Vincennes from a Private European Collection' (Figure 12). The exhibitors have regularly shown outstanding pieces of early French porcelain. The Paris dealers Dragesco-Cramoisin exhibited a *seau a demi-bouteille* from the Louis XVI Service (1987)¹⁸, a Vincennes 'Urne antique' (1998) (Figure 13) and a pair of large white Vincennes figures of a River God and Goddess (2005) (Figure 14). Meanwhile the salerooms too were having major success with French porcelain; the Elizabeth Parke Firestone collection sold at Christie's in New York in 1991 for a total approaching \$3.5m that saw dramatic prices and an enthusiasm for French porcelain, not just Vincennes and Sèvres, but St. Cloud, Chantilly and Mennecy; including a fine collection of snuff-boxes, cutlery and cane-handles. Again at Christie's in New York a Vincennes silver-gilt mounted cistern, cover and basin 'Fontaine à Roseaux' of 1754 originally bought by Madame de Pompadour achieved a record \$1,808,000 (£976,320) (Figure 15). In 1999, a pair of hard paste Sèvres vases 'cygnet à Roseau en buire' of 1781 achieved £638,960 (\$1,033,815).¹⁹ Sèvres services or part services made their appearance during this period including the Viscomte de Choiseul Service²⁰ and the dispersal of the Collection of Charles-Otto Ziesenis in Paris gave collectors the opportunity to buy single specimens from



Figure 11
Meissen model of a Heron by J.J. Kändler
c. 1732
Height: 22 ¼ in. (62 cm)
Christie's, Paris 2005

celebrated services.²¹ David Peters' *tour de force* of scholarship on Sèvres services, after many years in the writing, was published in 2005 and has made available to students the extensive details from the Sèvres archives.²² The French Porcelain Society founded by Kate Foster, now Lady Davson, in 1984 has an international membership of collectors, curators, dealers and ceramic scholars and meets annually in London in mid-June at the time of the ICFS. At this time the annual lecture, which is later published, and the regular outing to a significant public or private collection takes place.

There have been several other significant publications on French porcelain during the period: Svend Eriksen & Geoffrey de Bellaigue, *Sèvres Porcelain Vincennes and Sèvres 1740-1800* (London, 1987); Tamara Préaud and Antoine d'Albis, *La Porcelaine de Vincennes* (Paris, 1991);

Jeffrey Munger, *The Forsyth Wickes Collection in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* (Boston, 1992); Geneviève Le Duc, *Porcelaine tendre de Chantilly au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1996) and Linda H. Roth and Clare le Corbeiller, *French Eighteenth-Century Porcelain at the Wadsworth Atheneum, The J. Pierpont Morgan Collection* (Hartford, 2000). The Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts have held two highly important exhibitions in New York: 'The Sèvres Porcelain Manufactory Alexandre Brongniart and the Triumph of Art and Industry, 1800-1847' (1997-98) and 'Discovering the Secrets of Soft-Paste Porcelain at The Saint-Cloud Manufactory ca. 1690-1766' (1999).

It is now time to look at the English ceramic field where the market is more concentrated in the UK, America and Australia. Traditionally the London salerooms, and Sotheby's especially, have held sway in this area. Kiddell's influence, as already mentioned, played a prominent part in collections coming to Sotheby's in the 1960s & 1970s. The names of Ernest Allman, Frank

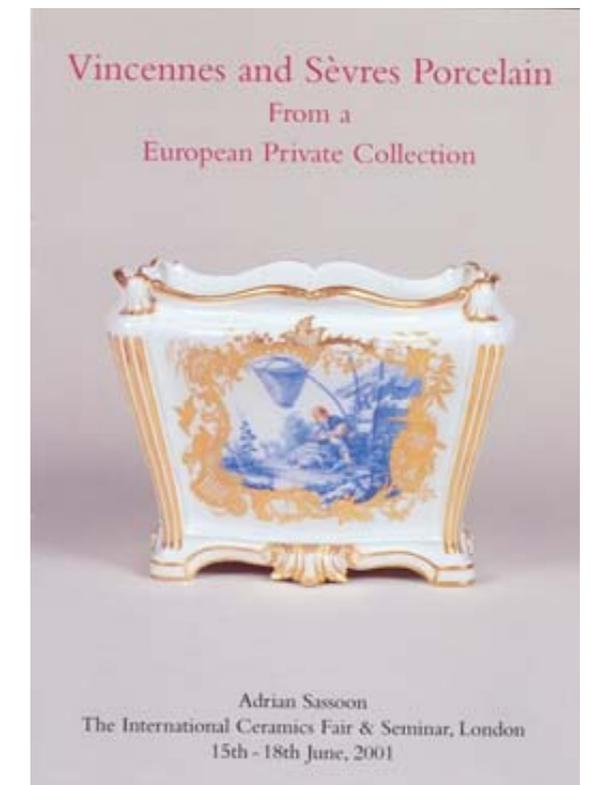


Figure 12
Vincennes and Sèvres Porcelain from a European Private Collection
Adrian Sassoon (Exhibition 2001)



Figure 13
Vincennes Urne Antique, c. 1755
Either purchased by Madame de Pompadour or given by Louis XV to Count Moltke of Denmark.
Height: 11 3/8 in. (30 cm)
Dragesco-Cramoisan (1998)

Arnold, Dr. Knowles Boney, Dr. Selwyn Parkinson, The Rev. C.J. Sharp, Donald Towner, Jenkins and McGregor Stewart, are but a few of the memorable collections that passed through their hands. At that time there was a sale every week at Phillips and every month at Sotheby's and Christie's; the dealers Winifred Williams, Amor, Tilley, Delomosne, The Antique Porcelain Company, Newman & Newman and Manheim were among the active buyers for both collectors and museums. The English Ceramic Circle attracted the more scholarly connoisseurs, their papers being published in the yearly *Transactions*. Of other literature on the subject, the series of monographs on English, Continental and Oriental porcelain published by Faber & Faber edited by the museum scholars W.B. Honey and Arthur Lane were ground-breaking in their scope and scholarship. Particularly important among these was Arthur Lane, *English Porcelain Figures of the*



Figure 14
Vincennes white River God and Goddess, c. 1747-50
Height: 11 1/8 in. (29 cm)
Dragesco-Cramoisan (2005)



Figure 15
Vincennes Cistern 'Fontaine à Roseaux'
1754, originally bought by Madame de Pompadour
Christie's (2005)

Eighteenth Century (1961); Bernard Watney, *English Blue & White Porcelain of the 18th Century* (1963) and the first monograph devoted to *Longton Hall Porcelain* (1957); F.H. Garner, *English Delftware* (1948); D. C. Towner, *English Cream-coloured Earthenware* (1957). Collecting appeared to be pushed rather by events; in other words the publication of literature, sales and fairs.



Figure 16
Staffordshire slipware dish by Ralph Simpson
c. 1680
Diameter: 18 1/2 in. (47 cm)
(From the Rous Lench Collection, Christie's 1990)



Figure 17
'The Chequers Charger', Southwark, 1653
Diameter: 14 3/8 in. (26.5cm)
Victoria & Albert Museum (1998)

One area particularly influenced in this way was early English pottery and delftware. The series of sales held by Sotheby's in the early 1980s of the dispersal of Louis Lipski's collection of English delftware saw a dramatic

increase in prices creating fierce competition among collectors and a new level of prices in that field. Prices for 17th century delftware broke the £20,000 barrier; a Brislington moulded polychrome dish depicting James II realised £28,600 and a rare polychrome group of two lovers £30,800; these were extraordinary prices at the time. This trend was to continue in an ever-increasing spiral fuelled by the enthusiasm of a few, largely American, collectors. At the time of the first Rous Lench sale²³, the dispersal of the collection of exceptionally fine and often documentary, English pottery and porcelain acquired by Tom Burn on the advice of Frank and Kathleen Tilley, the prices appeared stratospheric. A dated Charles II blue-dash charger of 1666 made £85,800; a damaged but extremely rare polychrome figure of Ignis dated 1679 made £59,400. Late 17th century slipware was also breaking records: a Thomas Toft bird dish of circa 1680, despite being cracked almost entirely across, achieved £50,600 and a severely damaged 'Coronation' dish by William Talor (*sic.*) made £33,000. These prices don't appear fantastic to us now but at the time they were huge. It not only showed how discerning these collectors had become but they clearly understood the opportunity to acquire these rarities was naturally going to become less frequent. The second Rous Lench sale, this time at Christie's in 1991, saw a further increase in prices in these fields, the two-day sale making a total of just under £3m with seven of the 'top ten' lots being bought by Jonathan Horne. At this sale there were new records for delftware, slipware and British porcelain (Figure 16). These sales together with the active encouragement of the London dealers Jonathan Horne, Alistair Sampson and Garry Atkins and their annual exhibitions, engendered an enormous enthusiasm for English pottery in a way that had not been seen since Kathleen and Frank Tilley were dealing in the 1950s and 1960s. The cycle had reached another zenith that was to continue, with minor fluctuations, throughout the period under discussion. Although delftware and slipware of 17th century date were perhaps the most expensive areas, Whieldon-type creamware, saltglaze, Ralph Wood figures and animals all experienced an increase in popularity. Again, literature had a lot to do with this upward trend in prices: after the Lipski sales Michael Archer edited Louis L. Lipski's monumental work *Dated English Delftware, Tin-glazed Earthenware 1600-1800* (London, 1984), which set a high standard for the type of catalogue that was to become



Figure 18
Whieldon-type creamware owl-jugs, English 1980s
Of a type first recognized at the ICFS (1989)

prevalent in the future. This was followed by Frank Britton, *London Delftware* (London 1987); John C. Austin, *British Delft at Williamsburg* (Williamsburg, 1994); and finally Michael Archer, *Delftware The Tin-glazed earthenware of The British Isles* (London, 1997) the outstanding catalogue of the Collection in the Victoria and Albert Museum. I should mention that the publication of this exceptional volume was only made possible through the support of Ceramica-Stiftung, Basel and Sir Harry & Lady Djanogly. Michael Archer's dedication was to his mentor Robert Charleston.

Perhaps some of the above makes sad reading for the British collector, but by no means have all the great documentary pieces left these shores. The Art Fund assisted in the purchase from Jonathan Horne of the earliest recorded piece of creamware, dated 1743, attributed to Enoch Wood and in the same year a Staffordshire slipware owl jug to the Potteries Museum.²⁴ The Curtis Museum and Allen Gallery, Alton, Hampshire acquired an Elers redware teapot and a Delftfield polychrome vase in 1992. In 1998 the 'Chequers Charger' depicting Charles I and his children was bought by the Victoria & Albert

Museum with Art Fund assistance (Figure 17).

In 1989, the fair changed its location from The Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane to its new venue The Park Lane Hotel on Piccadilly. In 1990 the exhibition at the fair was 'Unearthing Staffordshire' subtitled 'Towards a new understanding of 18th century ceramics' the exhibition and book by David Barker & Pat Halfpenny based on their work on the ceramics and archaeology collections of the City Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent (now The Potteries Museum). This dealt with most pottery types prevalent in Staffordshire at the time as well as the porcelains from Longton Hall and the Pomona site, Newcastle-under-Lyme.

With high prices for English pottery, it is not surprising that the forger was soon to be attracted to this field too. In 1994 the exhibition mounted by the City Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent was entitled 'The Art of Deception' focusing on the recent fakes of Wedgwood jasper and basalt bodies; Gaye Blake Roberts, Curator, Wedgwood Museum, Barlaston gave a paper on this which based on her co-authored article in *Ars Ceramica*.²⁵

More disturbing, however, was the appearance of a Whieldon-type creamware coffee-pot at the Fair in 1989, which was the subject of much discussion among the Vetting Committee. Much to the natural disappoint-



Figure 19
Eighteenth Century English Porcelain from the British Museum
Exhibition (1987)

ment of the exhibitor the object was withdrawn from the fair and sent to Oxford for thermoluminescence testing. The result of the test eventually led to a large group of Whieldon-type creamwares and saltglaze being recognised as contemporary fakes (Figure 18). Much to the credit of the late Henry Weldon, these pieces remain in his collection now at Winterthur Museum, Delaware.

Turning now to the vast area of British porcelain, the market here has been rather different from that of pottery and delftware. This was more of a home-supported market and although there are collectors in America, Canada and Australia, this was not a subject of interest to continental collectors. The 1980s saw a drop in the number of single-owner sales. In the very issue of *The Antiques Trade Gazette* in which the announcement of the first Ceramics Fair was given front-page editorial, the results of the Gilbert Bradley sale of English blue and white porcelain were reported. This large and eclectic sale of a well-known collection attracted great interest but it was at a time when the market was tight and the total for the 335 lots was just over £60,000; the top price being for a Worcester 'Root Pattern' moulded

teapot at £1,760. The interest in Worcester porcelain was sustained by the enthusiasm and energy of Anne George then in charge of Albert Amor Ltd. in Bury Street. The yearly exhibitions and catalogues are a testament to her tenacity in the field continuing an Amor tradition that began with the exhibition of the Drane Collection in 1922. It was not until 1973 that John Perkins and Anne George mounted their first exhibition of first period Worcester, including both blue and white and coloured wares. The star of the exhibition was the turquoise-ground Giles decorated bowl that had made a world record price of 9,000 guineas at Christie's earlier that year. In 1983, 'The Elegant Porcelain of James Giles' coincided with the publication of Gerald Coke's *In Search of James Giles (1718-1780)* (Wingham, 1983), the first monograph on this versatile artist.²⁶ This was followed by yearly selling exhibitions of Worcester collections representing a roster of the collectors of the previous 20 years who had been loyal clients of the firm. During the 1990s they broadened their exhibitions to include '18th Century English Chinoiserie Porcelain' (1990); 'The Dawnay Collection', including Bow and Chelsea (1991); 'Treasures from Toronto' (1993 & 1994); 'The John Hewett Collection of Early English Porcelain' (1997) and 'The Yarbrough Collection of Bow Porcelain' (1999). Meanwhile other dealers were also using this as a successful way of marketing private collections or 'Recent Acquisitions', Liané Richards of Mercury Antiques had been doing this since the early 80s and Simon Spero held annual exhibitions from 1988, starting with a Chelsea exhibition 'A Taste Entirely New' in 1988. By the new century Robyn Robb and Brian Haughton Antiques, both ICFS Exhibitors, were putting on exhibitions and printing lavish catalogues while Stockspring Antiques held academic, largely non-selling, exhibitions in their premises in Kensington Church Street and Klaber & Klaber, long term exhibitors at Grosvenor House, produced superb catalogues of English and Continental ceramics.

While discussing the subject of Worcester porcelain and James Giles in particular, Robyn Robb held an exhibition at the Fair in 2003 including some superb rarities from the collection of Giles-decorated Worcester formed by Anthony Wood. Perhaps the most exciting exhibit was the pair of hexagonal vases of 'Lady Mary Wortley Montagu' pattern that was most likely the pair sold in Mr. Christie's sale of Giles's stock in 1774.

The ICFS meanwhile had to balance the interest in all



Figure 20
Limehouse tureen and cover, c. 1746-48
Height: 9 1/2 in. (24 cm)
Mercury Antiques (1996)

fields with a choice of lectures and exhibitions on the different disciplines of pottery, porcelain and glass from across the world. Following on from the success of the exhibition of Continental Porcelain from the British Museum in 1985, the 1987 exhibition was 'Rare and Documentary 18th Century English Porcelain from the British Museum' (Figure 19). Here were many examples from the Franks collection, but also bequests from Wallace Elliot and Sir Bernard Eckstein. The dated Chelsea 'goat & bee' jug inscribed Chelsea and dated 1745, a Chelsea guinea fowl teapot, documentary and dated Bow pieces, a remarkable Derby figure of Catherine Macauley, a pair of Worcester signed blue-ground baluster vases painted by Jefferyes Hamett O'Neale and the celebrated Worcester mug painted by James Rogers signed and dated 1757. Although many of these pieces had been previously published this was an unrivalled opportunity to see 69 pieces from the museum's holdings as a comparative collection. Worcester was the focus of the exhibition in 1993 with 'A Celebration of Worcester Porcelain 1751-1840' from the Dyson Perrins Museum, Worcester, curated by Harry Frost. 'The Charles Norman Collection of Eighteenth Century Derby Artists' Work on Porcelain' was shown in 1996 accompanied by Anthony Hoyte's scholarly catalogue. In 1997, Lars Tharp curated the exhibition and lectured on 'China in Hogarth's England'.²⁷ English ceramic rarities

were included in the 2002 exhibition 'Winterthur Turns Fifty' curated by Leslie B. Grigsby, the first international exhibition from Winterthur. The Lady Ludlow collection of Early English Porcelain that had been recently gifted by The Art Fund to The Bowes Museum was the subject of the exhibition curated by Howard Coutts in 2004.

These exhibitions were supported by a variety of lectures on English porcelain. My own lecture in 1986 on 'The Early Years of English Blue and White Porcelain- A Comparative Study' discussed the blue and white porcelains of the 1740s with particular reference to the Pomona works at Newcastle-under-Lyme and the wares then given to Reid's Liverpool factory. I ventured to suggest they could be something else entirely, a hunch that was proved to be precisely the case, when the Limehouse finds were discovered in 1990. Two particularly fine examples of Limehouse appeared at the fair, both exhibited by Mercury Antiques; the large blue and white vase and cover from the Watney collection with huts and wooded river islands and the extraordinary silver-shaped tureen with unusual decoration of putti riding dolphins (Figure 20). One of the most thrilling discoveries on the Limehouse front was by John Axford at Woolley & Wallis in Salisbury of a figure of 'The Old Viceroy of Kanton' (Figure 21) taken from an engraving published in Nieuhoff's *Embassy*.²⁸

This spate of reattribution of several classes of English porcelain has been a particularly fascinating aspect of connoisseurship over the last 25 years. Dr. Bernard Watney's pioneering papers to the E.C.C. in the 1950s separating out the Liverpool factories, that had long been held inviolate until the discovery of shards at Vauxhall, led to the reassignment of the so-called William Ball porcelains to Vauxhall.²⁹ This was to be the subject of Bernard Watney's 1990 lecture 'The Vauxhall Porcelain Factory, 1751-1764'. Similarly, the long awaited revelation of Limehouse porcelain was to be rewarded when excavations on the site occupied by Joseph Wilson at 20 Fore Street between 1744/5 and 1747/8 revealed wasters of porcelains formerly attributed to William Reid's factory at Liverpool.³⁰ The William Reid slot was then left vacant, as it were, waiting for a reassignment of wares from elsewhere. Fortunately, it was found possible to excavate the Reid site in 1997/8 and it was soon apparent that Reid had made some pieces that had hitherto been attributed to Richard Chaffers' factory, and others attributed to Samuel Gilbody's factory at Liverpool. An exhibition of



Figure 21
Limehouse figure of 'The Old Viceroy of Canton', c. 1746-48
Height: 4 1/6 in. (10.5 cm)
Woolley & Wallis, Salisbury (2005)

porcelain and excavated shards was held at Roderick Jellicoe's shop in 2000 and a lavishly illustrated catalogue by Maurice Hillis and Roderick Jellicoe, *The Liverpool Porcelain of William Reid* at last resolved the identity of these problematic wares.³¹ Another remarkable find was that of shards in the Thames near Isleworth which led to the rediscovery of Isleworth Porcelain, recorded by the ceramic scholar William Chaffers in the 19th century, but since lost. This became the subject of another exhibition at Roderick Jellicoe's and the stimulation for several E.C.C. papers and an E.C.C. Exhibition held at Stockspring Antiques in 2003.³² We have certainly not seen the end of these revelations. What of Greenwich and Stepney?

The exhibitors have provided a rich display of English porcelain over the years and I select but a few as outstanding examples. From Chelsea the majestic white owl of the raised anchor period exhibited by The Antique Porcelain Company in 1987 (Figure 22) and a highly important coloured 'Girl-in-a-Swing' model of a canary exhibited by E. & H. Manners in 1996 are especially noteworthy. However, perhaps the most extraordinary object exhibited here was not ceramic, but the recently

discovered portrait of Nicholas Sprimont shown by E. & H. Manners in 1994. (Figure 23) John Mallet gave a lecture on 'Sprimont and his Chelsea Vases' in the following year using this painting as a centrepiece for his presentation. In the salerooms Chelsea has featured highly both in terms of availability and price. In the Rous Lench sale at Sotheby's in 1986 most notably the coloured example of Hogarth's dog 'Trump' which achieved a then record of £85,800. In 2003 two extraordinary lots appeared at auction, a hitherto unknown set of the Four Quarters of the Globe, of late red anchor period,³³ and the delightfully naturalistic 'Hen and Chickens' tureen, cover and stand (Figure 24).³⁴

It was at the ICFS in 1993 shortly before I was to give a lecture on 'Girl-in-a-Swing' Porcelain that Bernard

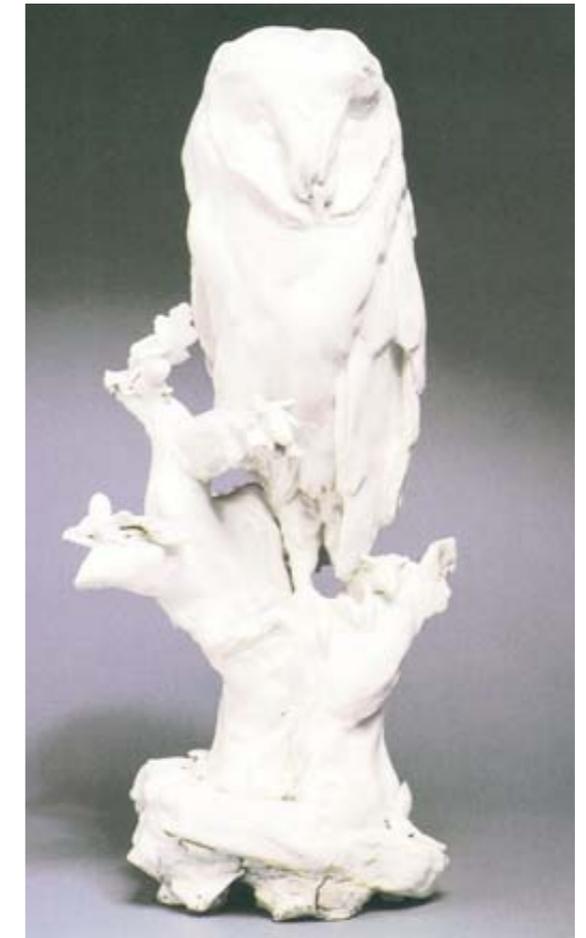


Figure 22
Chelsea owl, raised anchor mark, c. 1750
Height: 14 in. (35.5 cm)
Antique Porcelain Company (1987)



Figure 23
Portrait of Nicholas Sprimont with his wife and daughter in law
c. 1760, unknown artist
30 x 21 in. (76.5 x 53.7 cm)
E. & H. Manners (1994)

Dragesco published *English Ceramics in French Archives*, which lead to the identification of the mysterious 'Girl-in-a-Swing' factory. The writings of Jean Hellot, whose manuscript M. Dragesco had discovered in the Bibliothèque Centrale de la Ville de Caen, revealed the origin of the group. Sprimont's partner Charles Gouyn after leaving Chelsea made '...at his house in St. James's Street, very beautiful small porcelain figures.' At last, we knew that the group could be safely attributed to Charles Gouyn's factory, St. James's. Apart from the scent-bottles and seals from this factory, there were several figures and groups and some rare wares. The second Rous Lench sale at Christie's in 1990 produced a pair of white 'Girl-in-a-Swing' candlestick-figures bought by Brian Haughton Antiques and exhibited at the fair; in the same sale there was a canary candlestick and a spirally-moulded coloured baluster cream-jug. However, the

most spectacular and previously unknown 'Girl-in-a-Swing' silver-gilt-mounted dressing-table casket was sold at Christie's in 1994³⁵.

Bow porcelain has had something of a renaissance in recent years; the publication of Elizabeth Adams & David Redstone, *Bow Porcelain* (London, 1982, 2nd ed. 1991) and Anton Gabszewicz & Geoffrey Freeman, *Bow Porcelain, The Collection Formed by Geoffrey Freeman* (London, 1982) certainly reawakened an interest in the factory. The Freeman Collection, now at Pallant House, Chichester and the collection formerly at The Passmore Edwards Museum, Stratford (now belonging to the London Borough of Newham) were largely formed by Robert Williams. In the latter case, the documentary blue and white inkpot was purchased with support from the Art Fund. In 1985 the Victoria & Albert Museum purchased the James Welsh inkpot with assistance from the Art Fund and a Canadian private donor. Recent research on Bow published in the E.C.C. *Transactions* has led to lively debate.³⁶ I was fortunate to be involved in the co-authorship of a paper that

resulted in the conclusion that the so-called 'A' marked class of porcelains represented the earliest porcelains made in England and were almost certainly made by Edward Heylyn and Thomas Frye at or near Bow in 1744.³⁷ As with all research, this is not the last word and it is important to remain open minded, as new evidence will no doubt become known in the future.

There has been much scholarly writing on English Porcelain in recent years; indeed most factories have had a new monograph or some specific aspect of their production has been selected for attention. However Hilary Young's *English Porcelain 1745-95* subtitled *Its Makers, Design, Marketing and Consumption* (V&A Publications London, 1999) deals with the subject from an entirely new viewpoint; opening up the subject to students from other disciplines, particularly social and economic historians.

Great advances have been made on the scientific front too. Thermoluminescence testing has long been used to help in the dating of Chinese Tang and Sung ceramics, but it has also been helpful with the difficult area of Whieldon-type wares and played a significant part in



Figure 24
Chelsea 'Hen and Chickens' Tureen, cover and stand, c. 1755
Red and brown anchor marks
Width: the stand 19 1/4 in (48.5 cm)
Christie's (2004)

revealing the nature of the recent celebrated fakes mentioned earlier. In the field of German porcelain, science has helped greatly in sorting out some of the notorious Böttger red stoneware fakes of 20th century date, and work is currently under way in tackling the vexed question of later decoration, especially on 18th century Meissen figures and groups.³⁸ Analysis of porcelain bodies has taught us a great deal about the constituent parts of various pastes and glazes which has been invaluable in assessing and in some cases attributing pieces to their correct place or period of manufacture. This is a highly specialised field and one that I am not qualified to discuss, however I do believe it is important to use science as a backup to connoisseurship and not as a replacement for it.

Contemporary ceramics have been well represented at the Fair. Lady Aberdeen, potting as Lady Anne

Gordon, had a sell out at the fair in 1996 when she exhibited her recently made birds after Kändler models as well as her vegetables and fruits. In 1998 The Arts Council presented an exhibition of 'Ceramics from British Collections', that reflected the increased potting activity and public collecting from the 70s onwards. This loan collection brought together pots from the Arts Council Collection and regional museum collections and presented a diverse group of objects illustrating differing techniques and disciplines. Adrian Sassoon, a regular fair exhibitor and well-known specialist in French porcelain, has offered high quality contemporary ceramics and glass and gained a formidable reputation in this field. It is always refreshing to see the combination of the antique and the new, and it works in a remarkably complimentary way (Figure 25). In the fair's 25th anniversary last year it was therefore appropriate that a new exhibitor 'The Manufacture de Sèvres' offered contemporary Sèvres porcelain.³⁹

So where do we go from here? As I write, Sotheby's have announced a 20% Buyers' Premium on every lot under £250,000; dealers are more inclined to act 'pri-



Figure 25
Vincennes bleu lapis milk-jug,
1753 viewed through a Colin
Reid 'Lens Piece', 2001
Height: 4¾ in. (12.5 cm)
& 15 in. (38 cm)
Adrian Sassoon (2002)

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vately' rather than take on the massive overheads of running a shop and the museums are finding it difficult to get funds to purchase new acquisitions. Yet, the salerooms flourish, the market is buoyant and there appears to be little prospect of a collapse of trade, the property market or indeed a decrease in salaries. The upper end of the market will flourish and it is becoming more polarised in this respect. In the neo-brutalist 21st century, I believe the old and the new can sit happily side by side. It will be interesting to see whether the large minimalist spaces that some chose to live in will stimulate a renaissance in collecting and perhaps a revival of the *Kunstammer*. With prices rising in an ever-upward spiral, will collectors aim for fewer, finer objects to satisfy their need? We can but speculate, but the cyclical nature of this business suggests that it will change; the answer is perhaps to embrace rather than resist this.

Notes

- The American Ceramic Circle, The Ceramics & Glass Circle of Australia, The Glass Circle, The Northern Ceramic Society, The Derby Porcelain International Society, The Spode Society, The Wedgwood Society, The American Ceramic Circle, to name but a few.
- See Florence Slitine, *Samson génie de l'imitation* (Paris, 2002) and 'The Samson House in Paris 1845-1980 and its Imitation Wares' *ICFS Handbook* 2000.
- See Rachel Russell, 'Decorated Glass- The Dutch Connection', *ICFS Handbook* 1991.
- Anon., sale Christie's London, 3 June 1986, lots 232-237.
- Joseph R. Ritman, sale Sotheby's, 14 November 1995, lot 56.
- R.J. Charleston, 'A Decorator of Porcelain and Glass- James Giles in a New Light', *ECC Transactions*, Vol. 6, Pt. 3. (1967).
- Timothy Wilson, (Ed.) *Italian Renaissance Pottery* (British Museum Press, London 1991)
- Julia E. Poole, *Italian maiolica and incised slipware in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge* (Cambridge University Press (1995).
- See Catherine Hess, *Italian Maiolica Catalogue of the Collections*, pp. 12-123, Pl. 36, (Malibu, 1988).
- Anon., sale Marc Ferri, Paris, 8 December 1995.
- Anon., sale Sotheby's London, 14 July 1998, lot 84 (for the large central vase) and 24 November 1998, lot 227 (for a pair of flared beaker-vases).
- Anon. Sale Christie's Paris, 22 June 2005, lot 119. See Samuel Wittwer, *A Royal Menagerie Meissen Porcelain Animals* (Amsterdam, 2000).
- The Sèvres pieces were later published by Aileen Dawson, *A Catalogue of French Porcelain in the British Museum* (British Museum Press, 1994).
- Meredith Chilton, 'Hausmaler decorated Porcelain', *ICFS Handbook* 1987, pp.20-9.
- Gheneze Zelleke, 'Keeping Time: Porcelain Clocks of the Baroque Made at Vienna and Meissen' lecture *ICFS* 2006.
- Anon., sale Sotheby's London, 2 June 2005, lots 30-40.
- Sale, Christie's London, 7 July 2003, lots 31-44.
- Illustrated by Geoffrey de Bellaigue, *Louis XVI Service*, no. 175 (Cambridge, 1986).
- Anon, sale Lacy, Scott and Knight, 27 March 1998, lot 82.
- Christie's London, 17 April 2000, lot 89 (£355,750).
- Christie's Paris, 5 & 6 December 2001.
- David Peters, *Sèvres Plates and Services of the 18th Century* (Little Berkhamsted, 2005).
- Executors' sale, Sotheby's London, 1 July 1986.
- See Pat Halfpenny, 'Creamware: Its Origins and Development', *ICFS Handbook* 1993 and Jonathan Horne, *A Collection of Early English Pottery*, Pt. IX, no. 235 (1989).
- See Gaye Blake Roberts *et al.*, 'Wedgwood & Bentley The Art of Deception', *Ars Ceramica*, No.11 April 1994.
- Particularly important among Giles literature is Stephen Hanscombe, with a contribution by Martin Mortimer, *James Giles China and Glass Painter (1718-80)* published in conjunction with a loan exhibition at Stockspring Antiques in 2005. See also Paul Crane, 'James Giles, The Ascent into Splendour', *ICFS Handbook* 2005.
- Lars Tharp, *Hogarth's China: Hogarth's Painting and 18th Century Ceramics* (London, 1997).
- Johan Nieuhoff, *An Embassy from the East-India Company, of the United Provinces, to the Grand Tartar Cham or Emperour of China* (London, 1669). For creamware examples see Leslie B. Grigsby, *English Pottery 1650-1800: The Henry Weldon Collection*, pp. 66-68, Pls. 7a-d (London 1990).
- Bernard M. Watney, 'Recent Excavations on London Porcelain Sites: Vauxhall and Limehouse', *E.C.C. Transactions*, Vol. 14, Pt. 1 (1990) for an interim report.
- See *Limehouse Ware Revealed* (English Ceramic Circle, 193) and Kieron Tyler, Roy Stephenson *et al.*, *The Limehouse porcelain manufactory Excavations at 108-116 Narrow Street*, London, 1990 (MoLAS Monograph 6, 2000).
- See also Maurice Hillis, 'The Liverpool China Manufactory of Wm. Reid & Co.- A Survey of the Wares', *E.C.C. Transactions*, Vol. 18, Pt. 1 (2002).
- Anton Gabszewicz & Roderick Jellicoe, *Isleworth Porcelain* (London, 1998); Ray Howard, 'Isleworth Pottery- Recognition at Last', *E.C.C. Transactions*, Vol. 16, Pt. 3. (1998); Roger Massey, Jacqueline Pearce and Ray Howard, 'Isleworth Pottery and Porcelain recent discoveries', *E.C.C. Exhibition Catalogue* (2003).
- Anon., sale Christie's London, 12 June 2003, lot 56.
- Anon., sale Christie's London, 8 December 2003, lot 12.
- Anon., sale Christie's London, 8 December 1994, lot 16.
- See especially *E.C.C. Transactions*, Vol. 17, Pt. 2 (2000) for Bevis Hillier, 'Bow and the West Indian Collection'; Anton Gabszewicz, 'Bow Porcelain: The Incised 'R' Marked Group and Associated Wares' and Reverend David Thornton, 'Some Bow Friendships'. See also *E.C.C. Transactions*, Vol. 18, Pt. 3 (2004) and Vol. 19, Pt. 1 (2005) for David Redstone, 'Finds and Excavations on the Bow Factory Site 1867-1969'.
- W.H.R. Ramsay, A. Gabszewicz and E.G. Ramsay, "'Unaker' or Cherokee Clay and its relationship to the 'Bow' Porcelain Manufactory", *E.C.C. Transactions*, Vol. 17, Pt. 3 (2001) and Ross Ramsay & Anton Gabszewicz, 'The Chemistry of 'A'-Marked Porcelain and its relation to the Heylyn and Frye Patent of 1744', *E.C.C. Transactions*, Vol. 18, Pt. 2 (2003).
- See Christina H. Nelson, 'Böttger Stoneware: What Science can tell us' *ICFS Handbook* 1998 and Ian C. Freestone, 'The Science of Early British Porcelain' *ICFS Handbook* 2000. For the decoration of Meissen figures see Meredith Chilton, *Harlequin Unmasked The Commedia dell'Arte and Porcelain Sculpture* (London, 2001), most particularly the Appendix by John Page and Meredith Chilton, 'Scientific Analysis of Meissen Commedia dell'Arte Sculpture in The Gardiner Museum Collection', pp. 323-326.
- The Archivist, Manufacture National de Sèvres, Tamara Préaud, gave an *ICFS* lecture in 2006 'New Creations at Sèvres'.