

## Globalism gallery talks – Jennifer Kolmar Olivarez – Porcelain- Oct. 24, 2012

- Not about history of porcelain. Don't have to be an expert on
- Tells story of globalization through examples of porcelain.
- Each has thematic label
- Chronological story. Cases are numbered.

True porcelain developed in China during Tang dynasty – 7<sup>th</sup> through 10<sup>th</sup> centuries.

- Porcelain = Kaolin clay and feldspathic rock. Kaolin holds together. Feldspathic rock fuses or vitrifies
- Kaolin was the one ingredient that chasers of true porcelain did not have or didn't know was a component. That's why took the West so long
- Was a **State secret**.
- Overview opens with quote from Janet Gleeson in "The Arcanum," –
  - ***"Gradually it dawned on sundry ambitious princelings and entrepreneurs that if they could only find a way to make true porcelain themselves, this massive flow of cash to the Far East could be diverted to their coffers and they would be preeminent among their peers."***
- That's getting ahead of the story. The chasing of true porcelain in Europe happens down the road.

Words to describe Porcelain could describe anything we consider "precious" today:

- Imitated, marketed, shipped, sold, coveted, discovered, perfected, displayed, collected, disseminated.
- Words would fit gold & silver, precious stones, diamonds. Porcelain really did fit this.
- Collectors of ancient porcelain today in China. Has come full circle.
- Chinese furniture, wouldn't be able to get today. History is repeating itself

### CASE #1 –

- **Jar, 618-906, #50.46.168**



- Proto-porcelain.

- Blue glazed stone ware jar. On its way to becoming porcelain.
- Seeing perfection of form. Early Chinese porcelain is as much about form as decoration. Sometimes it's not about decoration at all.
- This is from Tang Dynasty at the time they're starting to develop porcelain

- **Pear-Shaped Vase, China, 14<sup>th</sup> Century, Yuan Dynasty # 84.116.5 – with dragons**



- Dragon – year of the Dragon – fun to show. Other pieces with dragons in the show

- **Bowl, Ching dynasty, 1662-1722, #L98.193.19-**



- Egg-yolk yellow glaze
- Part of a large loan group in Chinese dept. Lent by Wang Xing Lou Collection.
- Chinese curator Yang Liu worked with us on labels and helped choose objects.
- Shows why people wanted porcelain. What captivated them.
- Beautiful form. Perfect proportion. Simple but beautifully applied glaze. **Imperial glaze.**
- **Imperial porcelain**
- Very classical perfection of form, color, decoration.
- Even contemporary people would say extremely beautiful. Would appeal as much to people today as in 16<sup>th</sup> c. and 17<sup>th</sup> c. when this began to be exported.

- **Vase, China (Northern Sung dynasty), 960-1127, #76.72.104**



- Made for those who couldn't afford porcelain because such a costly luxury object.
- This is imitation porcelain
- Glaze not adhering. Hasn't vitrified. Glaze is flaking off.

- Listed as stoneware.
- Most people could afford if couldn't afford porcelain

- **Brush Handle pair, Ching, 1736-1795, #99.270.12.1 & 2**



- From same loan collection

**CASE #2** – Early exports to SE Asia and Japan. Shows how prized. Different cultural influences.

- **Bowl, 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> c., Ceramic, celadon glaze, #96.98.6**



- Has a repair, perhaps a firing crack.
- Appreciated so much it was repaired with gold.
- Gold repairs were done in Japan, but not in China. So we believe this was used in Japan. Not sure when repair made. See gold in-fill with Japanese tea-wares. Where they break and are filled. Japanese wares not about perfection but appreciation of beauty
- This had a perfect form with imperfection. Was filled because perfection of the carved bowl with celadon glaze was SO prized by other cultures. Others were not yet making it.

- **Vase, Korea, Korea. 18<sup>th</sup> century, #76.72.28**



- Korean piece from 18<sup>th</sup> c. also with a gold repair at the top
- Not made in China but following the lead of porcelain later on

- **Stem Bowl, China, Yuan Dynasty- #2001.4.68**



- This form is used in Vietnam, but the porcelain was made in China.
- Early 14<sup>th</sup> C. Shows China already adapting forms for use in other SE Asia cultures.

- **Platter, China exported to India, Ming, 17<sup>th</sup> c., #88.83**



*Detail: grasshoppers & butterflies*

- Also shows how China is adapting forms for use in other cultures.
- We believe made for use in India because it takes this communal eating dish form.
- Wonderful grasshoppers and insects design details.
- Often called **Kraak** [crock] after Portuguese trading ships called **carracks** that carried items from Asia to Europe. Portuguese term. Chinese export.
- This is about the dissemination of porcelain: Portuguese trading ships – some of the first trading ships to interact with SE Asia - would bring these trade objects to Europe. Although this probably wasn't consumed in Europe, would fall under that description.

- **Double Gourd Bowl, China, Ming Dynasty, 1522-56, #2004.133**



*Bottom of vessel*

- **ArtsConnected label:** This gourd-shaped porcelain bottle is decorated with lotus scrolls painted in under-glaze blue against an over-glaze yellow enamel ground. The base of the vessel bears a six-character Chia-ching reign mark within a double circle in under-glaze

cobalt blue. Many of the imperial porcelains commissioned in the sixteenth century like this one were based on earlier fifteenth century prototypes. Underglaze blue and overglaze yellow ground dishes were pioneered during the Hsuan-te reign (1426-35), but the style continued through the following Hung-chih, Cheng-te, and Chia-ching eras; and most of those vessels carried six character imperial marks. During the Chia-ching reign, the so-called "double gourd shape seen here was popular in blue and yellow and some examples included red enamel as well in the depiction of the flower blossoms.

**CASE #3** – Chinese Export Case – about global consumption. Pulled these examples to show how different countries were depicted in the consumption of porcelain through export ware. Things that looked less Asian and more European. This case shows who was consuming.

- ***Sparrow Hawks***, China, Porcelain with French 18<sup>th</sup> century gilded bronze mounts, #77.51.1 – were in the corner. See them in a different way in this exhibit.



- Craftsmanship with animals.
- Sculptural exploration. Getting away from purely functional.
- Bronze mounts support made for these were very expensive. Highly prized by those who consumed them. French mounts underscores the way these were prized.
- History off these – owned by Comtesse Alexandre de Casteja of Paris. Purchased by Groves family at auction. In collection since 1977.

- **Coffee pot from coffee set.#82.110.4a,b**



- Shows Dutch ships in Cape Town Harbor trade.
- Cape Town was part of the trade route.
- Shows international trade

- **“The Concert,”** after an engraving by Henry Bonnart II, c. 1700, #2005.159.4



*Musician detail in copied print*

- Original print was French, Bonnart’s “The Music Party.”
- Print was given to Chinese to copy in decorating the plate
- Shows cross-cultural fertilization

- **Punch Bowl with Swedish Banknote, Jingdezhen, China, - #95.98.81**



- Swedish trade back and forth with China
- Punch was a universal drink: Rum from Caribbean. Spices from Europe. Sugar and tropical fruit from Caribbean. Spirits from Europe. Spices from East Indies.
- Global trade provided all these ingredients for punch.
- Made punch a global drink.
- Interesting item to talk about how extensive trade was at this time and how porcelain was part of that.

**CASE #4** - Early Western porcelain.

**“The Arcanum,”** by Janet Gleeson.

This is the story of Europe's reinvention of the manufacture of porcelain. The Chinese had been there first, and when porcelain became a hot ticket item in Europe, people began to notice how much money was flowing east, and sought to keep some of it for themselves. It's hardly surprising that the man who recreated the manufacturing process was an alchemist; indeed, he worked on porcelain to keep his patron, Augustus of Saxony, from putting him to sword for failing to deliver on his promises of gold. (**The Arcanum** of the subject, specifically, is the

formula for manufacturing porcelain. In an era before patent laws, these formulae were... worth their weight in gold?)

Augustus, while still hankering for gold, was making a healthy sum out of porcelain, but also that many parallel manufactories soon sprang up around Europe to compete with the ur-factory in Meissen. Presumably porcelain held its high value because (a) it had a cache of class by association with wealth, and (b) it was hard to obtain (the former depending somewhat on the latter). It's easy to understand the wealthy bourgeois of the 18th century wanting to own what previously only kings possessed, but once it became essentially commonplace, what kept up its value? How did anyone make a profit from it at all?

- **Covered goblet, Johann Jacob Irminger, German #85.37a,b**



- Red Stoneware made early on by Meissen factory which Augustus Strong's patronage Founded. This is quite early .
- This is how the Arcanum fits in because Augustus Strong by early 18<sup>th</sup> c. – actually sequestered people to try to discover porcelain. It was so prized they wanted not only for their own use but knew it was valuable for trade. If could make it themselves could make a fortune trading it
- At first, the Arcanum was like making gold from base metals: Alchemy idea that some sort of magic was necessary to create this. Really it was a matter of using the right combination of ingredients
- Frederick Bottger developed. This piece is called Bottger Stoneware – which is a very early sort of proto-porcelain in the West.
- When Bottger discovered, it was put into production in 1710-13- just after discovered ingredients for porcelain. But hadn't perfected for production

- **Vase a corset with cover, 1755, Vincennes Porcelain Factory, Porcelain with enamel and gilded decoration.**



- We have a couple good pieces of Vincennes, the porcelain factory founded under patronage of Louis XIV. Once it moved to Sevres, it was a royal factory. In France it was felt that it was very important
- Race among European countries to develop porcelain all around same time
- This Vincennes would be early Sevres
- Celeste blue. Highly prized.
- The small pitcher in the French room upstairs is from the same period.
- Production values of really good pieces of Sevres and Vincennes like this so highly prized they were fought over. Still are.

- **America, Johann Joachim Kandler, 1745, #95.98.52 & Harlequin With jug, Johann Joachim Kander, 1738, # 2005.159.2**



- Outside the French room.
- Both showing sculptural explorations of porcelain. Something made in a mold. Very difficult to do successful
- Kandler did modeling for Meissner

- **Bust of Louis XV, 1745-1750, Chantilly Factory, #83.140**



- Chantilly bust of Louis XIV another ex of fairly early porcelain production.

#### Case #5

- **Pair of Covered vases, Sevres Porcelain Factory, #80.36.1a,b**



- A Star. Shows perfection of porcelain at Sevres in 18<sup>th</sup> c.
  - Used to have relationship of Bouche tapestry – **Chinoiserie**, a French term, signifying "Chinese-esque", decoration. Now different context
  - Bronze moulds. Beautifully painted ground.
  - Decorative scenes and scale. Stars.
  - Example of perfection in the west. High style. Very valuable and large scale
- **Head of Augustus, Doccia Porcelain, Sesto Fioentino, Italy - #90.123a,b**
    - Never out before
    - Italian porcelain. Color different than French. Wasn't true porcelain. Reproduction of Emperor sculpted heads.
    - Show Italian exploration of sculpture in porcelain different than what was happening in France.

- Little in file. Doccia firm making copies of ancient Roman heads. Likely weren't cast. Probably had sculptor working for them. Very much in the spirit of ancient Roman heads. Doesn't feel like contemporary interpretation. More like a historic copy.

**CASE #6** – Don't know if there's a star here. There's another dragon here. This is Vaxhall – which is an early English porcelain manufacturer.

- **Ewer, Vaxhall China Works, 1760, #2005.159.3**



- The English worked with **bone ash** as a component. That allowed bone china to be disseminated in a very large way.
- The industrial revolution allowed for middle class disseminate of porcelain
- Exported it. Consumed it nationally and sent to U.S.

- **Platter, James & Ralph Clews, Cobridge, Staffordshire, 1825, #76.39.9 –**



- Not technically porcelain. It's Staffordshire. It's pearl ware, which is white earthen ware.
- Included in exhibit because it's an English depiction of General Lafayette's returning to U.S. from his tour in 1824. Last living Revolutionary general who helped Americans during that war. Had famous reunion tour.
- Depiction on English technically "pottery" consumed by Americans who didn't have a lot of actual porcelain made for them. All they had except for domestic earthen ware.

- **Teapot, Wedgwood, 1879- #92.33a,b**



- Japanese themed tea pot used by Wedgwood
- Shows how in 19<sup>th</sup> c. porcelain was used to disseminate styles
- Vehicle for dissemination of style
- Plated with Greek Revival figures
- **Japonisme** craze fed by porcelain companies
- Industrialization allowed them to change. Consumed by middle class. English and American and continental consumers

**Case #7** - Modernism. For this case I was able to pull a number of things from modernism collection. Think about how style was disseminated. Shows early globalism in which designers active in one country were designing for manufacturers in another. Exchange of talent & ideas

- **Vase, Nils Emil Lundstrom, Rorstrand Pottery, Swedish porcelain Company, 1897-1910, #98.276.189**



**Lilly detail at the top**

- Show piece. Not something people would have in their home, necessarily.
- No proof this shown in Worlds Fair in Paris. But of a scale shown in their booth.
- Showed large scale.
- Beautiful lilies repeated all side of vase.
- Complicated, reticulated design. Showed what could do.
- Fact that this was high style at the time. Art Nouveau. Pinnacle of style at the home.
- Wouldn't necessarily be in middle class household....

- **Soup Plate, Peter Behrens, #98.276.79 & Dinner Plate, Henry van de Velde, #98.276.40.1**



- ...But these two would be (in middle class homes).
- Peter Behrens and Andre Van de Velde working for Meissen. Often did displays in department stores. Designed furniture, dinner ware. Consumers could buy stylish component without commissioning interiors
- Often did unified designs like Prairie School architects.
- Lower cost way of bringing latest style into home
- Kind of **Art Nouveau** and **Wierner Werkstatte** – parallel movements to Prairie school
- Shows design reform with its simplification of design a& adornment and using whiplash lines and more geometric patterns

- **Dinner Plate, Frank Lloyd Wright, #79.26.3**



- Designed by FLW for the Imperial Hotel in Japan in 1922
- Designed entire interior, furniture, rugs, lighting fixtures, dinnerware for the International Lounge, which was a restaurant
- Design by Wright for the Avery Coonlie Playhouse [1912]with abstracted balloons and circles [see balloon elements in window on right below]



- Service ware used for decades. This service dates from mid-60s when Imperial hotel torn down in 1968.
  - Reissued in 1964 – If you have this service, you can still get it from Replacements.com
  - Shows stylish quality & popularity. Made available to consumers outside Imperial Hotel.
- ***“Continental” table setting, Raymond Fernane Loewy, 1955. 98.276.299.1a,b***
- This case shows number of designers . Here you have **Henry van de Velde**, a Belgian designing for Meissen, a German company and Raymond Fernane Loewy, a Frenchman working in the U.S. but designing here for Rosenthal, a manufacturer in Germany
  - This case shows designers from one country active in one country designing for manufacturers in another country – to me this is globalism
  - International hiring of designers by different firms. Very common today. This is early example of that. Earlier: FLW was designing for Noritake, a Japanese porcelain company. Part of a commission in Japan.
  - International exchange of talent, ideas, recognition on **international stage**.
  - Did these men actually design – or was it people in their workshops? These are all attributed to those designers. FLW had his atelier. Even if he didn’t design every element, he would have to approve it or flesh out. Loewry had huge design firm, some of it in France. Attributed to him. Assume at least approved by him. Some elements designed by him for this service.

Starting with Richard Shaw. Think about the early story of porcelain and globalism. How porcelain explored globally. These examples show the subversion of perfection. Think about the blue Chinese pot. From the beginning it was about development of perfection and appreciated as global perfection as global aesthetic . This is about subversion of that perfection and how appreciated globally.

### Case #9

- ***“Two Deconstructed Cups,” Irv Tepper, 2005, #L2011.195.7***



- American artist. Started with exploration of diner tea cup: Thickly potted, often washed.
- Inspired series of sculptures, metaphor for how diner tea cup functioned
- If you meet people at diners for coffee, you might be in for a difficult conversation: “We’re breaking up.” “You’re fired!”

- Explores smashed up teacup. Often on very large scale
- Disguising perfection with slip cast- really thin, very fragile.

### Case #10

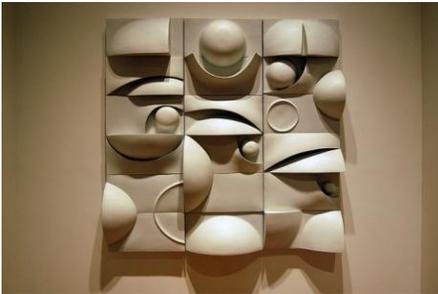
- **Vessel 80, Cheryl Ann Thomas, #2008.16**



- On other side of fragile
- Built with very tiny coils, as tall as she can get it, made even bigger pieces than this, then put in the kiln. Whatever happens, happens.
- In this case it slumped, then stopped. But it still remains a vessel
- She has a small exhibition at Northern Clay Center. You can see how pieces have broken apart and don't resemble vessels anymore.
- For her, it's about **subverting** perfection.
- Uses porcelain because of thinness and qualities of light it can produce.

### Case #12

- **"Untitled," 2007, Ruth Duckworth, #2007.80a-c**



- Porcelain, abstract mural
- Explored abstraction of form. This is in three parts
- Influenced by contemporary English sculptors - Henry Moore & Barbara Hepworth.
- Created sensual components in porcelain
- Also worked in stoneware and bronze. MIA show in 2006. Does free-standing sculptures
- This is largest free-standing mural she did. We commissioned this from her
- Three pieces. Connected to substrait. Sides painted to element the links where epoxied together

### Case #11

- **Beautiful Effigy, Yoshikawa Masamichi, L2010.97.4**



- Two pieces by him in the contemporary Japanese gallery
- Subverting porcelain body by covering with that drippy celadon glaze. It's about how much do you heat it. And knowing how far. Would have to have a lot of control over the glaze to get it to cool in the right way.
- Mysterious architectural form. Upstairs ones are too, but more vertical
- When the crew moves it – “Stop making us move this. On loan. Very fragile.”

### Case #8

- **“Gubbins Return,” Richard Shaw, #81.32**



- Shaw – beginning of the development of this subversion of porcelain.
- California artist. Developed this tromp l’oeil. Doesn’t look like porcelain, but it is.
- Shaw got a grant to develop this process. Created transfers that were attached to porcelain body. Uses these to create the cardboard surface of box and wine bottle.
- Tromp l’oeil assemblies. Large scale. Does table top sculptures as well.
- Signature work of his.
- Part of group of ceramic sculptures that we bought with a grant. Was in storage a long time. Not appreciated outside of California. When I started here, I didn’t know what it was. Like Viola Frey’s “Double Grandmother”



- Now, we’re bringing it full circle. Shaw’s work really was the beginning of subversion.