



San Francisco Ceramic Circle

An Affiliate of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco

May 2016

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

www.patricianantiques.com/sfcc.html

SFCC MAY LECTURE

Sunday, May 22, 2016

9:45 a.m. – Theater opens

10:25 a.m. – Program begins

Florence Gould Theater, Legion of Honor

Italian Lustre Glazes: Renaissance Maiolica and 19th-Century Rediscovery

Justin Raccanello

Leading Dealer in and Scholar of Italian Ceramics, London



Unknown maker, Gubbio, Italy

Dish with Foliage Design, c. 1525-30

Tin-glazed earthenware (maiolica) with underglaze cobalt and overglaze lustres

Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (SFCC staff photo)

About the lecture: First developed by Islamic potters in the 800s, lustre glazes are among the most technically difficult and visually delicate of ceramic effects. Potters in Gubbio and Deruta achieved one of the high points of lustre glazing in the 1500s. The lecture will introduce that material, and then concentrate on the reinvention of lustre glazes by Italian potters from the historicism of the 1850s to the artistic movements of the late 19th century.

About the speaker: Widely regarded as the world's leading dealer in historic Italian ceramics, Justin Raccanello consults for museums regarding their permanent collections and exhibitions and contributes to scholarly publications.

Mini-exhibit: Please bring ceramics with lustre glazes.

SFCC SUMMER & FALL EVENTS

The SFCC **Summer Social** (July) and annual **Membership Meeting/Pot Night** (September) are in the planning stages. Both will be weekend events. We traditionally held Pot Night on Thursdays, but this year we will move to a Sunday, 4 – 7 p.m., to see if that fits more people's schedules.

Our **Fall lectures** will be special events with special scheduling. To complement the Legion of Honor's major Fall exhibition, paintings by the 17th-century French Le Nain brothers, we will host **Camille Leprince** at a date t.b.d. Camille is a remarkable dealer in French ceramics and author of two important books on 16th- and 17th-century French faience. He gave a terrific talk at the 2015 American Ceramic Circle meeting. On **Saturday, November 12**, we 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.

NEW AT THE LEGION: VINCENNES PORCELAIN



Jean-Claude Duplessis, *le père* (ca. 1695–1774), designer
Vincennes Factory, France, 1740-56
Tureen and Stand (pot à oille), 1754-55
Soft-paste porcelain
FAMSF, European Decorative Arts Trust Fund (Museum photo)

Founded at Vincennes in 1740, the French national porcelain factory moved to Sèvres in 1756. At Vincennes the factory grew quickly from imitation of Meissen to leadership in European ceramic design. Their soft-paste body (clays fused with ground glass) was a uniquely pure and lustrous white, and their enamels approached the color range of easel painting.

The Legion's complete three-piece Vincennes *pot à oille* set (not yet on view) is very rare. *L'oille* is the likely forerunner of what we know as *pot-au-feu*, a meat stew with widely varied recipes. The name probably comes from the original pot, *oile* in southwestern France or *olla* in Spain.

MAY LECTURE PREVIEW: LUSTRE GLAZES & ITALY



Lustre glazes are iridescent. The key ingredient is most often an oxide of metal such as copper or silver, powdered and mixed with clay. The mix is applied to a previously fired glaze. The piece is then re-fired just hot enough to soften the glaze and fuse it with the oxide. After firing, the remaining clay is burnished from the surface. The process is tricky and in pre-industrial days involved high rates of firing loss.

The earliest known lustre glazes appeared in Iraq in the 800s. Usually made with a single color, the technique spread through the Islamic world and reached Italy around 1400 as export ware from Spain.

Iraq, Abbasid Dynasty

Dish fragment, 9th century

Earthenware with gold lustre over ruby-lustre ground
Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, DC (SFCC staff photo)

Outside Spain, the only European lustre glazes before the Industrial Revolution were made in the Umbrian cities of Deruta and Gubbio in the early to mid-1500s. Deruta potters mostly used a yellow or “gold” lustre. Gubbio added a beautiful but difficult red lustre, especially in the workshop of Maestro Giorgio Andreoli (1465-1553). Fashions changed a generation later, in the wake of Chinese export porcelain. Yellow-to-brown lustres survived as a local product in eastern Spain, but the red lustre disappeared.

Workshop of Maestro Giorgio Andreoli, Gubbio

Detail: Dish with Cupid & Grotesques, c. 1525-30

Earthenware, underglaze cobalt, and yellow & red lustres
Museo Internazionale delle Ceramiche, Faenza (SFCC staff photo)



Around 1800, Staffordshire potters invented strongly colored, broadly applied lustres. Soon after, nationalists all over Europe revived local design traditions from the Middle Ages and Renaissance; patriots and forgers could be hard to tell apart. Spain and Italy both had historic traditions of lustre ware, but Italy had the more developed ceramics industry.

Josiah Wedgwood & Sons, Etruria, Staffordshire

Oval compote, c. 1810-20

Earthenware with so-called “Moonlight” lustre, height 5 ½”
northeasternauctions.com, October 30-31, 2010, Lot 443 (\$20 hammer)

The old Ginori ceramics factory at Doccia, near Florence, began to make translucent, historically based gold and red lustres in 1854-55, largely on commission from a dealer who then sold some of the work as high-priced antiques. The unmarked dish shown at right, based on designs from the 1520s, may be one of them. However awkward the situation, the publicity was valuable. At the 1855 Paris Exposition, the Marchese Ginori worked hard to establish credit for the factory's work and donated examples to the Sèvres museum.



Ginori Factory (probably), Doccia, Florence
Bowl or plate, c. 1855-65

Tin-glazed earthenware with overglaze lustres, diameter 23.5 cm
The British Museum, London (museum photo)



By around 1880, the Ginori factory and ceramists such as Ulisse Cantagalli (1839-1901) introduced a wider range of designs, especially in relationship to the English Arts and Crafts Movement; Cantagalli knew and traded ideas with William De Morgan. The Cantagalli basin at left is shaped like 16th-century Iznik ware, the graduated lustre colors recall early Deruta, and the exterior motifs are based on the Andreoli workshop. A new generation, however, led Italian Art Nouveau: most brilliantly in ceramics, Galileo Chini.

Figli di Giuseppe Cantagalli, Florence
Basin, c. 1880-05

Tin-glazed earthenware with overglaze lustres, diameter 40.5 cm
The British Museum, London (museum photo)



Galileo Chini (1873-1956), Florence
Detail: Dish with Female Faces, c. 1900

Earthenware with overglaze lustres
Museo Internazionale delle Ceramiche, Faenza (SFCC staff photo)