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CONTENTS AND ABSTRACTS

Bow Jewels of the Golden Age: In Fashion in the Low Countries

MONIQUE RAKHORST

The bow jewel in the Rijksmuseum collection is one of the finest examples of its kind. The provenance of this piece of jewellery is unclear, as is generally also true of the other extant bow jewels. The strong resemblance to a number of ornament prints has often led to the suggestion that the Rijksmuseum's bow brooch, and bow jewellery in general, was a French concept that came about in the late sixteen-fifties or early sixties, but seventeenth-century Dutch portraits and inventories tell a different story. The bow jewel set with pearls and precious stones was part of the fashion scene in the Netherlands many years before it became in vogue in France. Bow jewels could be purchased from jewellers in the Low Countries in the early sixteen-thirties and at the end of the decade they were worn at court in The Hague. Amalia of Solms-Braunfels already owned several diamond bows in 1640, and in a portrait made a few years earlier the princess wears a pearl bow at her breast. The women at court were not alone in wearing bow jewels – the aristocracy and the wealthy citizens in the Republic followed their example. The bow jewel became popular in France around 1660, but the fashion did not start there – it began thirty years earlier in the Low Countries and remained popular for the whole century.

Feuchère Designs in the Rijksmuseum

ESTHER VAN DER HOORN

The Rijksmuseum recently acquired various works on paper relating to the Feuchère family of bronze founders, who had a workshop in Paris during the late eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth centuries. Amongst these materials is an edition of Léon Feuchère's publication *L'Art Industriel: recueil de dispositions et de décorations intérieures, comprenant des modèles pour toutes les industries d'ameublement et de luxe ...* It concealed a hundred preliminary drawings for the volume's plates, with designs for an array of objects of applied art in various neo-styles. The present article compares the publication and the inserted drawings. The latter are also compared to other drawings related to the Feuchère family that the Rijksmuseum acquired. In the process, it becomes clear that underlying Léon Feuchère's design process was the aspiration to conceive of object and ornament in harmony. The article suggests that this aspiration was related to concerns surrounding the industrialization and commercialization of the production of applied arts.

Wenzel Jamnitzer's Centrepiece and the Goldsmith's Secret
JOOSJE VAN BENNEKOM

This article focuses on the 'Merkelsche Tafelaufsatz', a large centrepiece made by the Nuremberg-based Wenzel Jamnitzer in 1549. The piece is known for its numerous life casts of small creatures and flowers – real plants and animals placed in a mould with material that was heated, causing the original to be calcined. The void thus created was then filled with silver. Earlier research based on a contemporary French treatise on the subject illustrates how these life casts, especially the animals, could have been made. This article focuses on the casting of the flowers. An experiment recreating the intricate aquilegia in the crowning piece shed light on the casting method the goldsmith and his workshop used to achieve the delicate petals and fragile pistils and stamens. The plants and animals on the centrepiece are identified, and other techniques involved in creating the centrepiece as a whole, are described and examined. The cast ornaments, the paint on some of the life casts and the reinforcement of the main figure are discussed. The article concludes by demonstrating that the dedication cartouche, always thought to have been left empty, must have borne an inscription as some of the letters from it have been reconstructed with analytical techniques.

Recent Acquisitions

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