

The temporary new home of The Frick Collection

## Frick Announces Major Gift of Decorative Arts and Pastels to be Shown in 2023

### *The Gregory Gift* Exhibition to Beautifully Complement Frick Holdings of Limoges Enamel, Ceramics, Pastels, Gilt Bronze, and Other Media

February 16 through July 9, 2023

(New York, November 30, 2022) – The celebrated holdings of decorative arts objects amassed by Henry Clay Frick have been significantly enriched in recent decades by gifts from other collectors. In 1999, Winthrop Kellogg Edey’s bequest added to the museum’s holdings an important group of European clocks and watches, and in the last decade or so, gifts from Dianne Dwyer Modestini (2008), Melinda and Paul Sullivan (2016), Henry Arnhold (2019), and Sidney R. Knafel (2021) have reshaped the Frick’s holdings of European ceramics with significant groups of Du Paquier and Meissen porcelain, French faience, and Italian maiolica. A remarkable bequest in 2020 from the collection of **Alexis Gregory** builds on this tradition by enhancing the museum’s existing holdings and introducing to the museum new types of objects. Beginning in February 2023, visitors can enjoy a special exhibition of these works, shown by the Frick for the first time together.



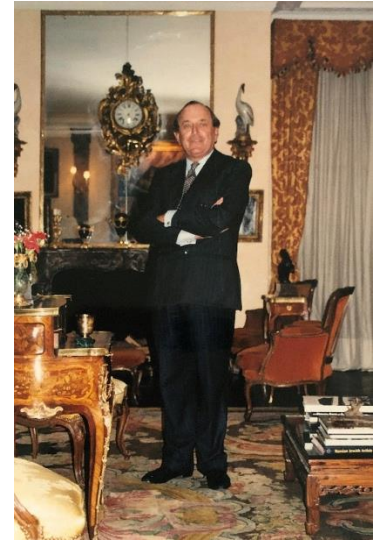
*The Gregory Gift* (February 16 through July 9, 2023) will feature the twenty-eight acquisitions in a variety of media and forms, curious luxury objects that, shown together, suggest a fine collector's cabinet or *Kunstkammer*. Among them are fifteen Limoges enamels, two clocks, two ewers, a gilt-bronze sculpture, a serpentine tankard, an ivory hilt, a rhinoceros horn cup, a pomander, and two stunning pastels by Rosalba Carriera. The exhibition is organized by **Marie-Laure Buku Pongo**, Assistant Curator of Decorative Arts, and will be accompanied by a catalogue and complementary education programs.



Comments Ian Wardropper, Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Director of the Frick, “Alexis Gregory had one of the finest collections of Renaissance and Rococo decorative arts in this country. His deep affection for the Frick led to his bequest of a selection of a superb group of objects, and we are gratified to mount this exhibition in his memory.” Buku Pongo adds, “This generous and important gift to The Frick Collection opens new areas of research and lays the groundwork for exciting projects. From research into the context of their creation to technical analyses expanding our knowledge of how these objects

were produced, the exhibition at Frick Madison will celebrate Alexis Gregory’s generous gift and The Frick Collection’s commitment to the display of European decorative arts.”

Gregory built his career in book publishing, establishing the celebrated Vendome Press, a publisher of significant volumes on French culture and art. His contributions to and engagement in the arts included serving on art committees at several cultural institutions in the United States, including the visiting committees of European Paintings and European Sculpture and Decorative Arts at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. His history with the Frick began with frequent visits to the museum as a youth. On one occasion, Gregory left the boarding school he was attending with a classmate to visit the museum and managed to convince his friend that he lived in its mansion, as everyone they encountered on staff seemed to know him extremely well. At Harvard, he studied with leading art historians. Those close to him often described him as a Renaissance man, as he spoke several languages, wrote books, traveled the globe, and collected art. These pursuits went hand in hand, as collecting art allowed him to research objects and travel around Europe to find new acquisitions. The purchase of his first Renaissance bronze at the age of eighteen marked the starting point of his collection.



Gregory collected widely, from paintings and works on paper to bronzes and sculptures. In the 1980s, his deep interest in European decorative arts prompted him to exchange one of the Impressionist paintings he had inherited from his parents for an assortment of bronzes, sculptures, and Limoges enamels, as well as a watercolor. He later expanded his collection with additional sculptures, Italian bronzes, and Limoges enamels, continuing throughout his life to acquire objects from the United States and Europe. Gregory’s collection echoes, in many ways, the *Kunstkammern* created by princes during the Renaissance, where they would not only display enamels, faience, carved ivories, automatons and clocks, and precious and mounted metalwork, but also show exotic natural specimens.

A Saint-Porchaire ceramic ewer, at left, joins two such objects already in The Frick Collection.

This addition is particularly significant as only about seventy Saint-Porchaire works exist today. The ewer is part of a limited experimental production that still poses many questions and is represented in a few museums, among them, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Victoria and Albert Museum, and the Musée du Louvre.

Other highlights from the gift include a fine group of Limoges enamels, including a significant number of grisaille examples, which strengthens the Frick's holdings of mostly polychrome enamels. Grisaille refers to a technique developed in the sixteenth century that was often used by enamellers including the famed Pierre Reymond (1513–after 1584). The Gregory gift includes multiple enamels by Reymond and his workshop, as well as objects by Jean de Court (act. 1541–83) and broadens the representation of these artists at the Frick. A large dish enameled on copper with at its center a Saxon silver coin engraved by Hans Biener (ca. 1556–1604), is the first of its kind to enter the collection. It belongs to a rare production in sixteenth-century Venetian workshops, and only about three hundred pieces exist today. (Of these, only about fifty have painted coats of arms or coins, making this example quite rare.)



Carved ivory and rhinoceros horn objects also enter the collection for the first time. A fine hilt in ivory, possibly made by Johann Michael Maucher (1645–1701)—one of the most important ivory carvers and sculptors at that time—will shed more light on ivory carving and production in southern Germany during the seventeenth century.



The gilt bronze sculpture at left represents Louis XIV and is attributed to Domenico Cucci—one of the most talented cabinetmakers of the seventeenth and early eighteenth century—and his workshop. This bronze is likely one of the few remaining remnants of an elaborate cabinet made for the king, around 1662–64. In 1883, the Musée du Louvre tried unsuccessfully to acquire the bronze, which mostly remained in private hands before being acquired by Gregory in 2007. Gilt bronzes and other objects designed by Cucci and produced in the Gobelins Manufactory (which made sumptuous furnishings and objects for French royal residences and as lavish diplomatic gifts) are mostly held in private hands. Besides the Frick, only a few collections, including the Château de Versailles, hold remnants of cabinets made by Cucci and his workshop.

Two clocks, one made by the British jeweler and goldsmith James Cox (ca. 1723–1800) and the second by Johann Heinrich Köhler (1669–1736), jeweler at the court of Dresden, diversify the Frick's holdings of important clocks and watches and are key examples of their respective types. Both jewelers worked for powerful patrons: Köhler for Augustus II (“the Strong”), Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, and Cox for the Chinese Qianlong Emperor. Cox crafted automatons with musical movements, also called “sing-songs,” which were exported to China, India, Persia, and Russia. Examples of their work are still on view in the Grünes Gewölbe (Green Vault) in Dresden and the Forbidden City in Beijing.

Gregory's bequest also brings to the Frick several works by women. Opportunities were rare for female artists in Europe, and the work created by women artists is much sought after in today's market. An enameled medallion, at right, by Suzanne de Court (act. ca. 1600), the only known female artist to lead a Limoges workshop during the sixteenth century, joins a notable pair of saltcellars signed by de Court already in the Frick's collection. Two portraits by the celebrated Venetian pastel artist Rosalba Carriera (1673–1757), one of which is illustrated on page 1, significantly enhance the museum's holdings in this medium.



This exhibition is generously funded by the Alexis Gregory Foundation.

All photos of artwork are by Joseph Coscia Jr. Images: James Cox (British, ca. 1723–1800), *Musical Automaton Rhinoceros Clock*, ca. 1765–72, gilt bronze, silver, enamel, paste jewels, white marble, and amber, 15 9/16 x 8 3/8 x 3 1/2 in. (39.5 x 21.3 x 8.9 cm), The Frick Collection, gift of Alexis Gregory, 2021. Rosalba Carriera (Italian, 1673–1757), *Portrait of a Woman*, ca. 1730, pastel on paper, glued on canvas, 23 1/4 x 18 3/4 x 1/2 in. (59.1 x 47.6 x 1.3 cm), The Frick Collection, gift of Alexis Gregory, 2020. The late Alexis Gregory at home. Saint-Porchaire ware (French), *Ewer (biberon)*, mid-16th century, glazed earthenware, 10 1/4 x 5 1/16 x 5 1/16 in. (26 x 12.9 x 12.9 cm), The Frick Collection, gift of Alexis Gregory, 2020. Pierre Reymond (French, 1513–after 1584), *Jason Confronting the Dragon Guarding the Golden Fleece*, ca. 1567–1568, Limoges enamel on copper, parcel-gilt, Diam.: 7 15/16 in. (20.2 cm), The Frick Collection, gift of Alexis Gregory, 2021. Attributed to Domenico Cucci and workshop, Manufacture des Gobelins, Paris 1662–64, *Figure of Louis XIV*, gilt bronze, on a porphyry base, 13 5/8 x 11 15/16 x 7 1/16 in. (34.6 x 30.3 x 17.9 cm), The Frick Collection, gift of Alexis Gregory, 2021. Suzanne de Court (French, active ca. 1600), *Oval Medallion, Apollo and the Muses*, ca. 1600, Limoges enamel on copper, parcel-gilt, 4 1/4 x 3 1/2 in. (10.8 x 8.9 cm), The Frick Collection, gift of Alexis Gregory, 2021

## INTERACT

   @FrickCollection  
#FrickMadison

## BASIC INFORMATION

Website: [frick.org](http://frick.org)

Building project: [frickfuture.org](http://frickfuture.org)

Bloomberg Connects app: [frick.org/app](http://frick.org/app)

Frick Madison visitor address: 945 Madison Avenue at 75th Street, New York, NY 10021

Museum hours: Thursday through Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; closed Monday through Wednesday. See website for holiday schedule.

Admission: Timed tickets are strongly recommended and may be purchased online. \$22 general public; \$17 seniors and visitors with disabilities; \$12 students. Admission is always free for members. Pay-what-you-wish admission is offered Thursdays from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Please note: Children under ten are not admitted to the museum.

COVID-19/health and safety policies: [frick.org/visit/guidelines](http://frick.org/visit/guidelines)

Ticket purchases: [frick.org/tickets](http://frick.org/tickets). For questions: [admissions@frick.org](mailto:admissions@frick.org)

Group museum visits: Available for groups of ten or more. Virtual private tours and online school visits are also offered. See [frick.org/visit](http://frick.org/visit) for more details.

**Public programs:** A calendar of online and in-person events is available on our website.

**Shop:** Open during museum hours as well as online daily at [shop.frick.org](http://shop.frick.org).

**Coat check:** Available in the Frick Madison Lobby. Visitors are not permitted to carry oversized items into the galleries.

**Refreshments:** A light menu is available from The Sister Yard during museum hours.

**Subway:** #6 local to 77th Street station; #Q to 72nd Street station. **Bus:** M1, M2, M3, and M4 southbound on Fifth Avenue to 75th Street and northbound on Madison Avenue to 74th Street.

**Museum mailing address:** 1 East 70th Street at Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10021

**Photography:** Allowed only in the Frick Madison Lobby.

**Reading room:** Access is offered by appointment Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. For further information, visit [frick.org/visit/library](http://frick.org/visit/library).

**#387**

For further press information, please contact us at [communications@frick.org](mailto:communications@frick.org).