

**AUSTRIAN or SOUTH GERMAN
SCHOOL**

***Saint Michael Overcoming the Forces
of Evil***, 18th century

Terracotta, polychrome decoration,
gilding

Purchase, 1957 (2270.1)

Trophy Carvings (two of a set of four),

18th century

France

Wood, gesso, gilding

Gift of Robert Allerton, 1960

(2680.1 & 2680.2)

Trophy Carvings (two of a set of four),

18th century

France

Wood, gesso, gilding

Gift of Robert Allerton, 1960

(2680.1 & 2680.2)

CARLO BONAVIA

Italy, active 1755–1788

Castel dell'Ovo, Naples, 1788

Oil on canvas

Gift of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation,
1961 (2991.1)

CARLO BONAVIA

Italy, active 1755–1788

***Teverone Cascade*, 1787**

Oil on canvas

Gift of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation,
1961 (2992.1)

NICHOLAS DE LARGILLIÈRE,

1656–1746, France

JEAN BAPTISTE BELIN DE FONTENAY,

1654–1715, France

Helene Lambert de Thorigny,

ca. 1696–1700

Oil on canvas

Purchase, 1969 (3577.1)

Blackamoor, 18th century

Italy

Wood, polychrome decoration, gilding

Gift of Robert Allerton, 1963 (3113.1)

Console Table, mid 18th century

France

Wood, gesso, polychrome, gilding with
marble top

Gift of Anna Rice Cooke, 1935 (4233)

On table:

ROBERT LE LORRAIN

France, 1666–1748

Vertumnus and Pomona, ca. 1704

Bronze

Purchase, 1969 (3580.1)

Attributed to AUGUSTIN PAJOU

France, 1730–1809

Bust of a Man, ca. 1792–1794

Terracotta on marble socle

Gift of Mrs. Frank A. Hecht, 1985 (5359.1)

Attributed to
BERNARD II VAN RISEN BURGH

France, 1700–1766

Bureau Plat (writing table)
Oak, tulipwood and kingwood marquetry
veneers, gilt-bronze mounts

Purchase, 1969 (3579.1)

ADÉLAÏDE LABILLE-GUIARD

France, 1749–1803

Monsieur Meunier, 1798

Oil on canvas

Purchase, 1962 (3067.1)

CHEST OF DRAWERS, ca. 1725

Germany

Walnut, oak, walnut and fruitwood veneers
and inlay, gilt-bronze mounts

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Bradley Geist, 1963

(3170.1)

CLAUDE MICHEL, called Clodion

France, 1738–1814

***Dancing Bacchante with Amour*, 1785**

Terracotta

Purchase, Academy Volunteers Fund, 1981

(4944.1)

FRANÇOIS BOUCHER

France, 1703–1770

Putti with Birds (L'Amour Oiseleur),

ca. 1731–1733

Oil on canvas

Gift of Anita Hecht Trust, 1998 (8915.1)

Blackamoor, 18th century

Italy

Wood, polychrome decoration, gilding

Gift of Robert Allerton, 1963 (3112.1)

Jacob Georges

France, 1739–1814

Side Chair, ca. 1775–1795

Mahogany

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Frederick L. Mandel, Jr.,
1952 (1462.1a)

Chair, 18th century

Italy, Venice

Walnut

Purchase, 1964 (3196.1)

Chair, 18th century

Holland

Wood

Gift of Anna Rice Cooke, 1927 (1240)

FRANÇOIS BOUCHER

France, 1703–1770

Putti with Birds

(L'Amour Oiseleur), ca. 1731–1733

Oil on canvas

Gift of Anita Hecht Trust, 1998 (8915.1)

The hallmark of Rococo design was the use of the curved line, and this writing table exemplifies the French Rococo style in furniture. Of delicate proportions, its form embodies continuous rhythms, for there is not one straight line to be found in it. The table stands on sinuously curved and tapering legs, and the form is sheathed in veneers and marquetry of exotic imported woods. Foliate motifs are set in cartouches on all sides, and sculptural mounts are abstracted from foliate forms. Every projecting edge of the table is trimmed with narrow *ormolu* (gilt-bronze) strips intended to hold the veneer in place. They also enhance the smooth, flowing lines of the piece. Every surface of this writing table bulges and recedes, turns and flows, reflecting the graceful lightness, animation, and elegance of the Rococo. Though no mark is apparent, this table presents stylistic features generally associated with the work of Bernard II van Risen Burgh, a master who produced some of the finest furniture of the mid-18th century.

The demands of a rising middle class in Europe during the seventeenth century caused a significant increase in the production of all decorative arts, especially furniture. The newly affluent consumers sought furnishings with a broader range of artistic and technical quality. This chest of drawers illustrates many characteristics of the late Baroque style in furniture as it developed in Germany in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Unlike the outdated rectangular shapes of the Renaissance, a series of flat, concave, and convex surfaces animate the façade of the chest. The undulating movement across the drawers, top molding, and face of the stand in which the case sits emphasizes the sculptural and spatial aspects of the piece.

A preeminent sculptor in Paris at the end of the 18th century, Pajou produced a large body of work during his long career, ranging from monumental sculpture and portrait busts to small-scale decorative pieces. This head is characteristic of the less grandiose, more personal portraits of Pajou's later years. Pajou presented the subject in an informal aspect fashionable in the late 18th century. The extraordinary control of the arrangement of the garments and the crisp spontaneous working of the details of the shirt collar and wig demonstrate Pajou's genius in the pliable medium of terracotta. Nonetheless these details remain subordinate to the central focus of the work—the sitter's face. Pajou suggested his keen understanding of the subject in his frank and straightforward description of the facial features and in his insightful examination of the sitter's character—nonchalant yet dignified, sensitive, and thoughtful.

Largillière made his reputation as a painter of grandiose, formal portraits of the French nobility and members of the *haute bourgeoisie*, such as this sitter, wife of a wealthy Normandy financier. A masterful technician and brilliant colorist, Largillière portrayed Madame de Thorigny finely attired and framed by a garland of flowers into which she prepares to insert a final sprig of blossoms. By emphasizing the classically grand setting, Largillière also suggested the importance of the woman's social position. Although such elaboration of the sitter's wealth and station was central to 17th-century taste, the portrait also reveals a lighthearted charm that aligns the artist with the spirit of the rococo. The repetition of curving forms energizes the likeness, as does the momentum established by Madame de Thorigny's uplifted arms and eyes, her appealingly tilted visage, and even the circling effect of the flowers. Only her gaze remains at rest. As it directly engages the attention of the viewer, we are invited into the scene to enjoy the moment's enchantment.

As a portraitist, Labille-Guiard enjoyed commissions from her peers in artistic circles as well as royal patronage. This portrait of a citizen now known only as Monsieur Meunier is among her finest works. The soberly dressed sitter holds annotated papers that indicate he is a writer, counsel, or statesman. His intelligent and appealing face conveys the duality and emotion that so fascinated the 18th-century Enlightenment. Analytical detachment and profound feelings are revealed in his hazel eyes, humor and sensuality by the modeling of his mouth. Social distance between sitter and viewer is breached by Meunier's closeness to the picture plane and by his casual disregard for the hair powder that dusts his collar.

Terracotta sculpture was much in vogue during the eighteenth century in France, and the sculptor Claude Michel, known as Clodion, was perhaps the most famous European artist working in this medium. A remarkable modeler, he preferred terracotta to anything else, and the malleability of the clay showed his remarkable gifts as a modeler. Although he executed a few large commissions, Clodion was best known for his small-scale figures and groups based on a repertoire of classical sources including mythological figures, putti, nymphs, and satyrs. In this vivacious group, a bacchante, or female follower of the Greek god of wine, Dionysos, is caught poised on the toes of one foot, lifting her face and extending her arms upwards, her drapery swirling around her lithe form, dancing with a similarly posed putto. This dynamic composition and the meticulous detail and immediacy of the modeling, especially in the drapery, hair, and foliage, exemplify the culmination of Clodion's talents and the playful frivolity of the Rococo style.

Giovanni Antonio Canal was the most famous view painter of the 18th century. The son of a theatrical painter, Bernardo Canal, he perhaps adopted his nickname, Canaletto ("Little Canal"), so as to distinguish himself from his father. Venetian by birth, Canaletto received early training in Rome, where he came under the influence of topographical painters. Returning to Venice, Canaletto's career revolved around depictions of its most well-known urban, architectural, and canal views, here the Grand Canal. Canaletto's views are notable for their smooth and precise handling and an accuracy based on drawings made on the spot as well as with the assistance of the camera obscura. More than mechanical representations, Canaletto's views are suffused with light and air as well as sense of the life of the city as people go about their business. Canaletto's canvases were especially popular among the British aristocrats who, while making the Grand Tour, visited Italy and wished to return to England with a pictorial souvenir. Canaletto's work later influenced Britain's development of outdoor view painting during the nineteenth century.

**GIOVANNI ANTONIO CANAL, called
CANALETTO**

Italy, 1697–1768

***The Grand Canal, Venice: Looking
East from the Campo de S. Vio, ca. 1740***

Oil on canvas

Phoebe Cowles Collection, San Francisco