

Contents

AUGUST 2000 NO 2 VOL 82



HOUSES

- 34 • **TOP DECK** Enjoy views of the sea from the terrace of a Regency house in West Sussex.
- 66 • **LIFE IN FOCUS** Strong vision has transformed a pebble-dashed London house into a spacious family home.
- 74 • **SECOND EDITION** Books and paintings are the two vital elements in this elegant Chelsea apartment.
- 132 • **NATURAL RESOURCES** A simple beach house on the Belgian coast echoes the muted colours of the seaside.

GARDENS & GARDENING

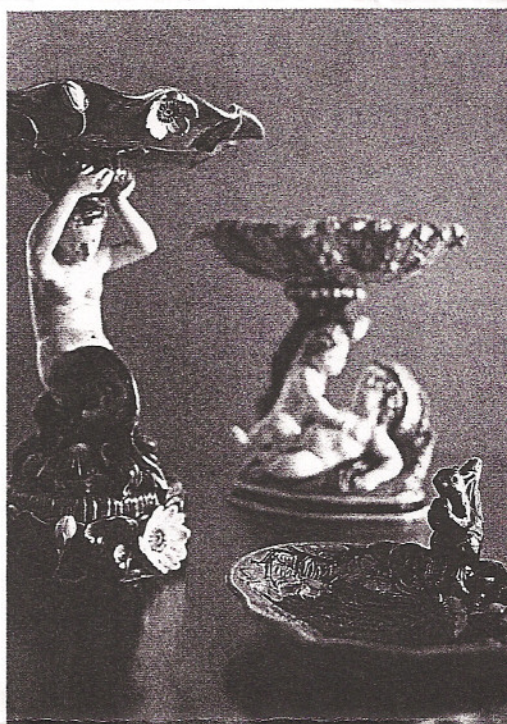
- 86 **FORMAL TRAINING** Tessa Hobbs' lengthy apprenticeship comes to fruition in a beautifully balanced Suffolk garden.
- 116 • **FUCHSIAS** Our guide to growing these delicate ballarina-skirted flowers.
- 121 **GARDEN CUTTINGS** News and events for the coming month.

DECORATING

- 49 • **DESIGN FOR LIVING** What's new in the shops; folding furniture that looks too good to put away; modern white china; and ready-made colour schemes.
- 60 **HOW WE TRANSFORMED AN ATTIC BEDROOM**
- 78 • **A PLACE IN THE SUN** Make the most of the precious days of summer with the best in outdoor furnishings.
- 108 • **NIGHT LIGHTS** Clever garden lighting ideas for when the sun goes down.

- Featured on the cover

See our September issue for more of the beautiful house pictured on this month's cover.



Savour the charms of a seaside Regency house on page 34. Learn all about the colourful and eccentric art of majolica on page 44. And experience the generous proportions of a refurbished house in south London on page 66...





All you need to know about MAJOLICA

AS VICTORIA O'BRIEN DISCOVERS, THIS COLOURFUL POTTERY, WITH ITS UNUSUAL AND SOMETIMES BIZARRE SUBJECTS, MAKES A REFRESHING CHANGE FROM MODERN MINIMALISM

STYLING LUCY BERRIDGE • PHOTOGRAPHS VERITY WELSTEAD

In an era that worships streamlined shapes and neutral colours, the over-the-top charms of majolica pottery are an ideal choice for the style rebel. Majolica is a term for any low-fired, tin-glazed pottery. The technique of transferring colourful glazes on to pottery was supposedly brought to Italy around the 12th century from the island of Majorca; pieces referred to as maiolica (rather than majolica) date from this period, and usually have flat, painted decoration, often mimicking Renaissance painting subjects, on display plates and tableware.

In contrast, majolica earthenware, also covered in bright lead glazes, was made in vast quantities in England, France and the United States during the 19th century, and is more likely to have moulded and three-dimensional relief decoration. Pierced trellis patterns, bands of flower heads or fruits, intertwined branches, oak or vine leaves and even animals are recurring themes.

European, especially French, producers such as Sarreguemines and Gien made majolica dining pieces fashionable; jardinières, umbrella stands and garden seats were also popular, often in the form of monkeys holding cushions on their heads. Despite the craze for majolica, however, by the turn of the last century its bright, garish colours had fallen out of favour, and laws restricting the use of lead glazes prevented the production of domestic articles in majolica after the 1920s.

WHAT'S AVAILABLE

Victorian majolica was made in huge amounts, so many pieces have survived. Until the 1980s, it was considered a garish example of the period's bad taste, but in the last 20 years has become more collectible and prices have risen.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

The best pieces nearly always include an impressed monogram, factory name or pattern number. Manufacturers like Minton, George Jones and Wedgwood are all quality English Victorian producers. French



FROM LEFT Mermaid tazza by Minton, c1870, £2,500-£3,500, Sotheby's; Cherub centrepiece by Copeland, c1865, £2,000; hazelnut dish by George Jones, c1870, £1,500; both Nicolaus Boston Antiques.

OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT Snake paperweight, School of Paris, Palissy style, c1880, £650; game pie tureen by George Jones, c1870, £6,500; bamboo pitcher by Brownfield, c1875, £350; all Nicolaus Boston Antiques. Fish with serpent by Fives-Lille, c1900, £195; asparagus plate by Lunéville, c1880, £425 set of six; both Millers Antiques.

names include Sarreguemines, Lunéville, Salines, Longchamp and Massier.

WHAT TO AVOID

Repairs to the coloured tin glaze will turn yellow after a while; although cracks and chips are to be expected, restoration is best avoided. Portuguese and French factories still make majolica, which can be mistaken for older 19th-century pieces.

HOW TO DATE IT

The heyday of majolica production was from 1870-1900. Date codes, impressed into the bottom of many pieces, give more precise information. Minton's majolica from 1850 to 1920 is always date marked.

HOW MUCH IS IT WORTH?

Asparagus dishes fetch around £300; plates in good condition will cost up to £200. Jardinières, umbrella stands or conservatory seats are more likely to get broken, so examples in good condition cost thousands: £2,000 upwards for a simple garden seat, and over £5,000 for a more decorative one with a monkey figure or pond and bullrushes moulding.

HOW TO CARE FOR IT

Tin glazes tend to be brittle and chip easily. If a piece has been chipped or cracked, or the glaze is crazed, avoid using it, and never put it in the dishwasher. Keep restored pieces out of direct sunlight and complete darkness, as both speed up the yellowing of any resin used in restoring cracks. To clean, lightly dust with a soft brush, and use a dampened cotton bud to get rid of dirt in awkward corners.

WHERE TO BUY IT

Nicolaus Boston Antiques, The Antiques Centre, 58 Kensington Church Street, London W8 4BD, (020) 7937 2237.

Harley Antiques The Comedy, Christian Malford, near Chippenham, Wiltshire SN15 4BS, (01249) 720112.

Millers Antiques, Netherbrook House, 86 Christchurch Road, Ringwood, Hampshire BH24 1DR, (01425) 472062.

Sotheby's, 34/35 New Bond Street, London W1A 2AA. Call (020) 7293 5000 for details of its next ceramics sale, or visit www.sothebys.com for online sales.

Christie's South Kensington, 85 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 3LD, (020) 7581 7611, has regular sales of pottery, including maiolica and majolica.

BOOKS TO READ

Majolica by Mike Schneider

(Schiffer, £12.95). Majolica: A

Complete History and Illustrated

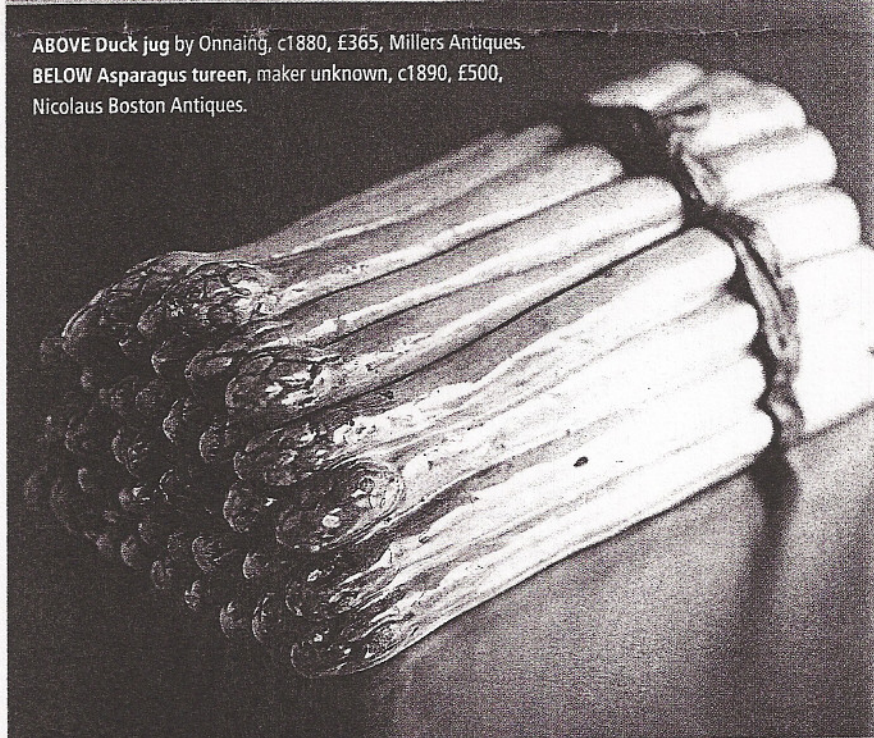
Survey by Marilyn G Karmason and

Joan B Stacke (Abrams, £48). ■



ABOVE Duck jug by Onnaing, c1880, £365, Millers Antiques.

BELOW Asparagus tureen, maker unknown, c1890, £500, Nicolaus Boston Antiques.



Boat's head tureen by Brown, Westhead & Moore, c1875, £4,000, Nicolaus Boston Antiques.

