



The Quarterly Publication of the Majolica International Society

Majolica Matters

www.MajolicaSociety.com

May 2016

Convention 2016, Baltimore, Maryland



**Thursday Aug. 25th through Sunday Aug. 28th 2016
Sheraton Inner Harbor Hotel, Baltimore, Maryland**

Make all your reservations today! Fill out and return the enclosed MIS Convention reservation, then call the hotel for a room and finally, make your travel reservations! That's how easy it is!

There are many advantages to being an early bird. Some events have a participant count limit, so commit now and benefit by being early!

We are going to have a fabulous time, and see so many exciting things! Our convention chairman, Carol Harkess, has scheduled three wonderful member home visits. Each home will display magnificent collections of majolica and other antiques. These three outings will comprise a once in a lifetime, truly memorable Maryland regional adventure.

Summary of Convention Events

Thursday 3:30 pm - 7:30 pm, Home visit and appetizers (Limited to first 35 registrants who RSVP for this event)

Friday: 8:00 a.m. Breakfast with Speaker Presentations

Friday: 10:00 a.m. Visit the Walter's Museum

Friday: Afternoon visit Baltimore Antique Show or other self-interests

Friday: Night - Explore Baltimore - Dinner on your own

Saturday: 8:30 a.m. Breakfast with Speaker Presentations

Saturday: 11:30 a.m. Board a bus to visit a MIS member home majolica collection, other collections and lunch

Saturday: 5 p.m. Majolica Heaven Preview Party

Saturday: 7:30 p.m. Gala Dinner with Keynote Speaker: Ulysses Grant Dietz

Sunday: 7:45 a.m. Breakfast and Business Meeting

Sunday: 11:00 a.m. Majolica Heaven at the Hotel, opens to the public

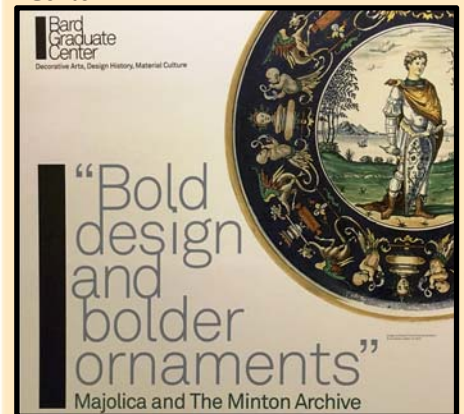
Sunday: Noon - 2:00 p.m. Bus to a MIS home visit in Chestertown, MD

Sunday: 3:30 p.m. Bus leaves residence to return to hotel by 6:00p.m.

**REGISTER NOW FOR
CONVENTION 2016
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND**

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2016 Bard Lecture, Bard Graduate Center **by Wanda Matthes**

Our flight to La Guardia left from Dallas at 9:15 am. Carl Rove, Republican commentator on Fox News, was on our flight from Dallas. This was a big primary day, with voting in Indiana with Donald Trump, Ted Cruz and John Kasich still in the running for the Republican nominee.

When we arrived in NYC, we quickly checked in at our Doubletree Hotel at Lexington and 51st. We called Jerry and Aviva Leberfeld and set a time to meet them at their apartment nearby. We would try to arrive around 5:30 so that we could visit before going to dinner at Jubilee, a nice French restaurant in their neighborhood. Dinner was great and we enjoyed a nice visit with the Leberfeld's. Jerry drove us back to our hotel, which was not far from the restaurant.

The Bard Lecture was to begin at 6:00 pm, so we got up early Wednesday morning and began to explore the city. It was drizzling rain and chilly but we had fun...we went by NBC where one could buy souvenirs and Duane took my picture with a life size Natalie Morales, Matt Lauer, Savannah Guthrie and Al Roker and posted it to Facebook. After walking for a while, we stopped for lunch at Bobby Van's Grill on West 50th Street...got seating at a window table and had a delicious lunch. We arrived at noon to a nearly empty restaurant but, by ten after, the restaurant began to be filled with diners. My salad was the Bobby Van's special salad which was filled with marinated red and green peppers, green beans, shrimp and prosciutto. The dressing was light and I asked them to omit the red onion. Duane drank red wine and I had a couple of glasses of prosecco, served in the small champagne flutes...very elegant! We explored a bit more, and then decided to go back to the hotel to rest a bit before going to the Bard Lecture.



Miranda Goodby, Senior Ceramics Curator starts her presentation. Now available at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQb8b5quOKI>

We took a taxicab to the BARD Graduate Center: Decorative Arts, Design History, material Culture on

86th Street. This event was part of the "Cultures of Conservation" initiative supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. This May 4th event featured Miranda Goodby, Senior Curator of Ceramics at the Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent Museums. Her talk was entitled, "Bold design and bolder ornaments: Majolica and the Minton Archive". The lecture was from 6:00-7:30 pm followed by a brief question and answer period.



Miranda Goodby, Senior Curator of Ceramics at the Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent Museums



Miranda's lecture gave immense credit to the Minton factory art and the business successes to chemist, designer, and art director Leon Arnoux, "the man who made Minton's"

Miranda recommended that we go to the web site, Minton Archives for more information. At the end of her lecture there was a period for questions and answers from the audience. Before the close of the event, I was able to issue an invitation to interested participants to come to the MIS 2016 Convention in Baltimore, MD the last weekend in August where they would have an opportunity to see, first hand, many of the fabulous pieces, including the nearly six foot peacock which Miranda had discussed. One question to me was, "What is the MIS"? I explained that this was the Majolica International Society (by the way, Andrew Morrall, from the Bard Graduate Center had told the audience that the lecture was sponsored by the Majolica International Society in his introduction of Miranda). I also pointed out that this lecture was called the Joan Stacke Graham Lecture Series and that Joan was seated in front of me at the lecture.



Miranda Goodby compared the 1855 Paris Exhibition page (left) with a more modern photo out of the city museum of Stoke-on-Trent archive (right), taken as the museum exhibit was being constructed around the same seven foot tall renaissance jardinière.

The lecture was captured as a quality 90 minute video, by BGCTV staff, and is available to share with the public and MIS members who were unable to attend live, at the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQb8b5quOKI>

We spotted Jodie Wilkie, from Christie's and got an opportunity to speak to her briefly. Jody is international specialist head of Christie's European Ceramics and Glass department. In her current position, she is responsible for overseeing worldwide sales of English and Continental porcelain, pottery and glass and supervises sales of Chinese export porcelain held annually in New York. It was wonderful to see her there.

Following the lecture, Phil English instructed the Board members and our guest from Bard and the Walter's Museum in Baltimore, to walk around the corner and

board the small bus which he had rented to transport us to dinner at the famous Gallagher's Steak House on 52nd street. Members of the MIS Board, who had attended the lecture entertained Miranda, members of the Bard and the Walters Museum in Baltimore, at dinner after the lecture in order to have time to visit with them and plan for future events with these two groups. Details will be announced soon...

Among our guest were Susan Weber, founder and director of Bard Graduate Center; Andrew Morrall, Professor and Director of Doctoral Studies, Early Modern Northern European Fine and Applied Arts and Director of Doctoral Studies along with Earl Martin, Associate Curator, at the Bard Graduate Center. Also in attendance was Ellie Hughes, Deputy Director for Art & Programs at the Walters Museum in Baltimore who provides strategic direction and leadership for a program of collection installations, special exhibitions, conservation and technical research of objects, and education/public programs that engages diverse audiences and builds support for the Walters. She oversees a division encompassing the departments of curatorial (which includes exhibition planning/ design and registration), conservation, and education/public programs, and serves as a member of the museum's senior management team. Also from the Walters Museum was Jo Briggs, Associate Curator of 18th- and 19th-Century Art and Manager of Curatorial Fellowships. Jo Briggs has written a book on the Victorian Period, called *Novelty Fair* This book is currently available on Amazon. Jo and Ellie Hughes will be part of the team to set up an exhibition of majolica at the Walters Museum in the spring of 2020.

Also in attendance was Nicolas Boston, majolica authority extraordinaire, who now makes his home in Ireland. Nick will be working with Susan Weber and her staff in writing a book on majolica, as well as, setting up an exhibition of majolica at the Bard in 2019.

Phil and Deborah English have been the driving force in reaching out to both the Bard College of Decorative Arts and to the Walters Museum to present these exhibitions of Victorian Majolica in the near future. Kudos to Phil and Deb for the progress they have made! We hope to see you in Baltimore for the MIS Convention where more details of these exciting museum exhibition events will be unveiled.

Another very exciting event coming up in June of 2016 for Duane and me, along with Joan Stacke Graham, will be that we will be part of a tour to London, Staffordshire and Brighton sponsored by the American Ceramic Circle, where we will have an opportunity to spend time at the Victoria and Albert Museum, see Miranda again at the Potteries Museum, visit the

Gladstone Museum, the Wedgwood Museum and see various private collections of ceramics. We will also travel to Brighton to see the Royal Pavilion. The Royal Pavilion is an exotic palace in the center of Brighton with a colorful history. It was built as a seaside pleasure palace for King George IV. This historic house mixes Regency grandeur with the visual style of India and China.

Visit the Minton Archive on the web at:
<http://www.themintonarchive.org.uk/>

Sign up for email notifications and join the fun!

Or visit the Museum at:

Stoke on Trent City Archives, City Central Library
Bethesda Street, Hanley, Stoke on Trent, UK

Joan, Duane and I can hardly wait! We hope to have a lot of information to share with all of our Majolica International Society members in the near future.

The Minton Archive was generously gifted to the City in March 2015 by the Art Fund. Since then work on this enormous archive has been taking place at Stoke-on-Trent City Archives, where they have collected the entire archive together, arranged it and fitted it on their shelves.

The Minton company records form part of the archive collection of Royal Doulton, which preserves records of more than twenty companies including such famous names as Adderley, Booth, Davenport, Paragon, Ridgway, Royal Albert, Shelley and more. The Minton Archive is the name given to the whole of this collection.

The Minton part of the collection alone has been the focus of the initial stage of work already completed and made accessible to the public at Stoke-on-Trent City Archives. The full Minton company catalogue, alongside an ever-growing selection of highlighted records, is also accessible on the site - start exploring.



Miranda's lecture included great insight and background about Herbert (left) and Colin (right) Minton and their support of the "arts" community via the Minton factory.

Inside vs. Outside, NY Botanical Garden Antique Garden Show

by Donna Reis & Duane Matthes



New York Botanical Garden's Antique Garden Furniture Fair had some majolica representations.

"Antiques for the Garden and the Garden Room" is the country's original, largest, and most important venue for authentic garden antiques. This year's 125 version of Antique Garden Furniture Fair (4/29 thru 5/1) featured playful bee-inspired designs by celebrated interior and event designer Ken Fulk. Fulk created a showpiece featuring items from exhibitors that inspired and enlighten visitors about marrying antiques and modern design with their everyday aesthetic. One could shop thousands of garden antiques from 30 leading exhibitors, extensive collections of ornament art, decorative art, and timeless furniture for the home and garden.

There was also a Specialty Plant Sale featuring an extensive selection of unusual, colorful plants representing some of horticulture's finest growers.

Member, Donna Reis, shared some of her photos of her spring 2016 visit.



NYBG outside was ablaze with tulips



NYBG conservatory in full bloom!



A rare Austin and Seeley composition stone and lead fountain. Three dolphins form the composition stone base with a lead scallop bowl and finial. The shell was beautifully detailed. Circa 1850, English



Massier majolica wall pockets in varied colors and sizes

Obviously there were many beautiful things and something for everyone! Don't miss the NYBG 2017 show.



Massier majolica trifold fruit and nut server with its original Delphin pottery paper sticker on the base

Skinner Auction: Wedgwood and Majolica by Wanda Matthes

MIS member Paul and Elizabeth Lauer's collection of majolica and Wedgwood ceramics goes to auction in two stages.

Skinner Auction
European Furniture & Decorative Arts
Auction 2920M
July 15, 2016 10:00AM
274 Cedar Hill St
Marlborough, MA 01752

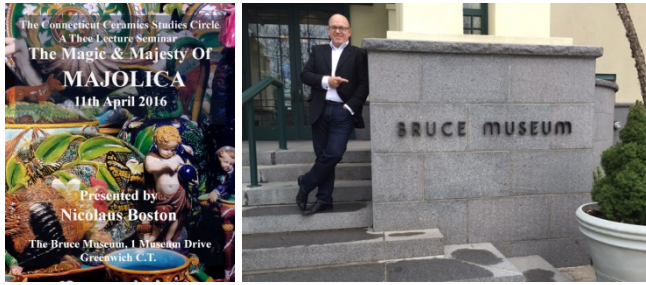
Contact: 508-970-3203
Email: europaean@skinnerinc.com

<http://www.skinnerinc.com/auctions/2920M>

The second half of the collection is scheduled for Skinner Auction on October 7, 2016.

Connecticut Ceramics Study Circle Seminar

by Donna Reis and Duane Matthes



MIS member, Nicolaus Boston, was the April 11, 2016 speaker sponsored by the Connecticut Ceramics Study Circle Seminar at the Bruce Museum

The Bruce Museum, located in downtown Greenwich, Connecticut, was the venue for "The Magic and Majesty of Majolica". This three-part seminar by Nicolaus Boston, international specialist in Victorian-era pottery and porcelain, dealer, curator and author, was sponsored by the Connecticut Ceramics Study Circle. The striking and often humorous wares of Victorian majolica were explored at the CCSC's Annual Seminar.

Mr. Boston's career began at the age of 19 in his family's antiques business in Salisbury, Wiltshire. From 1982 until 2006, he owned and operated two antique ceramics shops in London. He recently transitioned to Ireland where he is currently based. Long a consultant for private and institutional collections, he is a popular speaker on both sides of the Atlantic. His extensive experience as a dealer in Victorian-era pottery and porcelain, traveling for auctions, shows, exhibits, and curatorial assignments, provides solid ground for this exciting topic.

The seminar included three illustrated lectures by Nicolas Boston, an ample box lunch, and a 'show-and-tell' session with a brief summary of each session printed below.

Herbert Minton's Drive for Perfection

A discussion of 16th-century French ceramicist Bernard Palissy, transitioning to England's Herbert Minton in the 19th century. It is a story of the drive for perfection, illustrating how Minton plotted to steal the "cream" of the French ceramics world, finally producing an immense variety of eye-popping and vibrant table wares and decorative objects in his own manufactory.

Victorian Majolica: The Great Dynasties and the Great Designers

The influences of contemporary art and social movements of the majolica period, 1849 – 1900, casting an eye on such figures as the English designer, Christopher Dresser, French sculptors Baron Carlo Marchetti and Albert Carrier-Belleuse, and the English architect A.W.N. Pugin.

A World View: Forms, Shapes and Delights

Was a sampling of pieces from the many 19th-century majolica potteries throughout Europe and America, ending with an illuminating look at the more whimsical shapes and fantastical themes of the era.

Concluding the seminar, Mr. Boston opened the floor to attendees who had brought in a piece of majolica for further discussion or identification.



Nic's presentation included slides on the majolica jardinières and game pie dishes from German factory of Lonitz



Nic's slides compared and documented the colorful oyster plates by the English George Jones pottery



MIS members Ed Flowers, Donna Reis and Joan Stake attended the event to enjoy, learn and support the lecture of Nicolaus Boston and CCSC.

Convention 2016 - Dietz's Domain

by Linda Fowler, reprinted from Park Place

Mr. Ulysses Grant Dietz is the keynote speaker for the Majolica International Society 2016 Convention in Baltimore on Saturday, August 27th.

Ulysses Grant Dietz describing a beautiful antique is in itself a thing of beauty. There's the tale of its history, or provenance, illustrated in some book he may or may not successfully locate that moment in his brimming office at the Newark Museum. Then there's the story of its creator or owner. And, there's background about the times that produced the work.

As the museum's senior curator and curator of decorative arts, Dietz brings a practiced eye to making acquisitions. A dapper guy who dresses like a New England preppie—which he is—Dietz does not let an object's superficial qualities obscure its significance or soul. Considering jewelry, for instance, he might discern that some aspect of a piece—its genesis, its place in a design movement—is being drowned out by stones that practically scream their magnificence.

That's the problem with jewelry: "It's precious," he says. "So people don't stop and look at it as art, which is one of my latest missions, to get people to really look at jewelry for its design, not for the rocks." Dietz's office is profuse with leaning towers of paper, assorted worn furnishings, and nineteenth-century artifacts. Posters of his exhibitions cover the walls. A visitor peels a stray business card from the bottom of her shoe. The 54-year-old curator is wearing one of his signature bow ties and owlish glasses. Usually in relentless good humor, he sometimes blurts out, "Gosh!," even though it's easy to imagine him tossing off bon mots with his colleagues; during our conversation, he makes casual references to "stuff," "a biggie," and "stupid things." Dietz oversees the 100-year-old museum's American and European household objects, a collection that ranges from a 1770s teacup to an Arts and Crafts-style window from a Minnesota bank. Widely known for his expertise, he gets calls and e-mails from curators, dealers, and everyday treasure hunters seeking input in the realms of furniture, jewelry, ceramics, and silver—even clothing and quilts, since the museum has no curator of costumes and textiles.

A sharp appraiser who is also a sentimental softie, Dietz turns to a Beatrix Potter calendar from July 1980 to jog memories of his earliest experiences on the job. "On my very first day as a curator, a man came to see me about Jelliff furniture," he recalls. John Jelliff & Co. of Newark was the state's best-known maker of Renaissance Revival furniture during the nineteenth century. "Two weeks into my career," he continues, "I went to Plainfield, and we were given an incredible

quilt, which is probably the greatest one of its kind in the United States." The medallion-pattern quilt, created from silks by Mrs. C.S. Conover in 1855, was in pristine condition; these days it comes out only for special exhibitions.

One of his first duties back then was getting rid of "things we had no business taking in" and politely turning away well-meaning benefactors bearing gifts. Yet, today the museum's storage and exhibition spaces are still packed. "People think of us as a little museum, when in fact we're a big museum stuck in a little box," Dietz says. Excluding the science collections, the museum owns 110,906 items, of which 106,106 are in storage. "A museum's job is to protect objects first," he explains. "It takes objects out of the world and keeps them safe."



This drive to preserve extends to his rich family heritage. Dietz, who grew up in Syracuse, New York, is a great-great-grandson of President Ulysses S. Grant. Living up to that pedigree has meant campaigning for the upkeep of Grant's Tomb in New York and preserving ancestral anecdotes, like the one about his maternal grandmother, Edith Root—daughter of Elihu Root, secretary of state under President Theodore Roosevelt—who risked scandal by smoking cigarettes at Mardi Gras with Teddy's daughter, Alice. Or, how Grant, strapped for cash, had to borrow heavily from W.H. Vanderbilt.

The Dietz family business, from the mid-1800s until the 1990s, was lighting: whale-oil lamps and kerosene lanterns, then automotive lights and reflectors on Winnebagos. Not a hint of romance to this trade, Dietz thought, until he discovered an R.E. Dietz Co. catalog from the 1860s. It later inspired his master's thesis on decorative lighting of the mid-nineteenth century. A prep school education was expected, and he enrolled at Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire. At 15, he asked his father to take him on a two-week driving tour of Great Britain's country houses. As an adolescent, he avidly clipped magazine photos of grand residences, studied their floor plans, and drew schematics of his own. Initially, he was more interested in a house's

bones than its contents, but his carefully mapped vacation engendered his future career. For two summers, while Dietz attended Yale, he volunteered to catalog the collection at the 1808 Lorenzo mansion, a historic site that he could see from his family's cabin on Cazenovia Lake near Syracuse.

The teenager thought he might become an architect, but "that was, like, not going to happen—I can hardly add." After Yale, his love for posh interiors propelled him to the Winterthur program at the University of Delaware, where he earned a graduate degree in early American culture, then proceeded directly to his one-stop career at the Newark Museum.

Dietz's domain at the museum includes the hushed and stately Ballantine House, the 1885 residence of the wealthy Newark brewery family, which is attached to the northeast corner of the museum. In 1994, his exhibit "House & Home" reinterpreted the manse by telling the story of domestic life from the Colonial era to the present through the display of decorative objects.

Every December, Dietz richly decorates the Ballantine House for the holidays—as they were celebrated in the 1890s. Greenery and garlands abound on the house's warm, mahogany-paneled walls. (The Ballantine servants would have gone in search of Jersey-grown holly for decoration.) Dietz mines the museum's array of fine silver and china for an open-house Christmas-eve tea, set in the parlor. Under the tree, lavished with antique ornaments and tin candleholders, sit a lovable bear or two and gift packages wrapped in papers of the period. Children hunt for little decorative birds hidden in the house.

Typically, the Christmas decor has included a dinner setting; this year, the dining room was occupied by Nigerian artist Yinka Shonibare's banquet-table-length installation, "Party Time: Re-imagine America"—a rakish depiction of a nineteenth-century dinner run amok, attended by eight headless dignitaries. ("We can hardly put elf hats on his figures," Dietz deadpans.) "This job drew me because there was this great house," he says, "but there's a whole collection in storage that I've been able to build on and expand and play with and exhibit very year it's something new."

So what's new? In a second-floor room, the curator recently opened the Lore Ross Jewelry Gallery, which includes pieces from the collection dated 1600 to the present.

"What drives us here is we want to tell a story, and we want objects to tell that story really well. That's an old tactic that Mr. Dana used," he explains, referring to John Cotton Dana, who founded the museum in 1909. "If you put a masterpiece there, and you surround it

with objects that tell the rest of the story, then people come for the masterpiece, but they learn from everything else."

Dietz's current exhibit, "100 Masterpieces of Art Pottery, 1880-1930," brings out many of the museum's superb pieces, including Japanese-inspired Rookwood vases and one-of-a-kind works from the Royals (Worcester and Copenhagen). Other wares illustrate the development of styles or techniques. Dietz ventures that it's the cultural importance, educational value, and diversity of these "modest objects" that sets Newark's collection apart. A link to Newark's manufacturing or artistic heritage makes a compelling reason for the museum to consider acquiring the piece.

If only! He remembers paying a hefty sum for a fabulous walnut sideboard carved by Alexander Roux in the mid-nineteenth century, then beating himself up some months later when a silver-plated tea table made at the Tiffany & Co. factory in Newark for the 1893 Chicago World's Fair came on the market. Alas, he could not afford to purchase both.

"It really killed me because that was the ultimate Newark object," he says, somewhat relieved that it ended up at the Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute in Utica, New York. Yvonne Markowitz, the Rita J. Kaplan and Susan B. Kaplan curator of jewelry at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston (the only curatorship of its kind in the country), says little was known about Newark jewelry makers, particularly at the end of the nineteenth century, until Dietz mounted the 1997 exhibition, "The Glitter and the Gold: Fashioning America's Jewelry."

"The marketplace went crazy afterwards," she says. "And now there are collectors who just collect Newark pieces. Even myself. I was pretty unaware of all the activity that took place in Newark, so Ulysses has really been opening new doors and making people inside and outside the United States understand that very important role of Newark."

Amelia Peck, the Marica F. Vilcek curator of American decorative arts and manager of the Henry R. Luce Center for the Study of American Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, takes graduate students to the Newark Museum each year to hear Dietz lecture. "I think of Ulysses as an expert in American jewelry, pottery, nineteenth-century American culture, interpretation of historic houses, and the history of the White House," says Peck. "He knows a great deal about every aspect of his collection."

Dietz lives in Maplewood, which reminds him of his childhood environs. His ideal house is a mid-nineteenth century Italianate villa, but he and his

longtime partner, software engineer Gary Berger, settled for a 1930s Tudor—decorated “in 1920s Grandma,” Dietz says. The living area is beautifully appointed with a passed-down parlor grand piano, R.E. Dietz fixtures, and family portraiture. (“Gary gets a little creeped out by all my dead relatives,” he admits.) Despite the formality, it’s not a museum—it’s an active household where no one blinks when a drink splashes on the Oriental rug. The couple’s children—Grace, 14, and Alexander, 15, chatter as they sprawl on the furniture and feed biscuits to the dog.

Scanning a list of Dietz’s many writings—scholarly books and catalogs about furniture, jewelry, and art pottery—it’s hard not to notice the incongruous 2000 novel, *Desmond: A Novel About Love and the Modern Vampire*, in which one of the lead characters is an out-of-work curator.

One of Dietz’s recent books, *Dream House: The White House as an American Home*, written with Sam Watters and published in September, serendipitously ties his ancestry to a house he has always loved. Not surprisingly, his favorite presidential period begins with the Grants—he calls it the Mansion Era—when the White House “finally owns up to its potential” as a showcase rather than a cavernous, middle-class dwelling.

“Ironically, Julia (Grant), who lived in a log cabin and grew up in a real vernacular house out in the West, looked around her and said, ‘So this is what people are doing now. I’m going to turn the White House into a house that’s worthy of its scale,’” Dietz says admiringly of his great-great-grandma. “And the White House finally becomes comfortable in its skin in terms of scale and richness.”

Back at the museum, Dietz ponders the dream acquisition that’s been most elusive to him. In fact, it may exist only in one of the museum’s paintings. In the background of an 1858 portrait of New Jersey Governor Marcus L. Ward’s children is a carved, Gothic arm chair whose markings tie the Ward family to England’s Queen Anne. The museum was built on the site of the Ward house, and Dietz is mentally tortured that “some church in New Jersey has it sitting in a back room somewhere.”

“This is a chair any museum would kill for,” he says with a sigh. “It’s like the greatest Gothic Revival chair in America and it only exists in a painting....But at least we have the painting.”

See more at: www.parkplacemag.com

House tour: From Warhol to Majolica, Artwork Fills Every Spare Space

By Keith Marshall

Photos by Chris Granger

Nola.com | The Times-Picayune

Editor’s notes: In October 2014 our society convention attendees were treated to a visit to Ann Barnett’s New Orleans home. This reprinted article gives us a deeper view into her home and also the home of her daughter Holly. Enjoy what you find here but visit the link for all the photos we could not include!

Reprinted from:

http://www.nola.com/homegarden/index.ssf/2016/05/house_tour_mother-daughter_gal.html

Nature abhors a vacuum. So does Ann Barnett, co-founder with her late husband, Howard, of the French Quarter’s Hall-Barnett Gallery, which her daughter, Holly, now directs.



Ann Barnett, with her daughter, Holly

Neither mother nor daughter has restricted her fascination with art to the gallery. They’ve each filled their homes with works by artists they’ve represented, as well as flamboyant decorative pieces purchased around the world, finely crafted furniture and one-of-kind paintings by internationally acclaimed artists.

Sparring with Andy Warhol

The two female statues flanking the front steps of Ann Barnett's rose-hued, circa-1920 Uptown house belie the whirlwind of color and texture within. Stepping into the foyer is like entering a Turkish bazaar, awash with objects jostling for prime position.

"I can't stand to see an empty space," said Ann, 85, pointing with feigned horror to a tiny space on a wall where a sliver of paint was visible between a grouping of framed inlaid-marble panels. "I have to fill it up right away."

An art-lover since childhood, Ann nurtured her passion during the years when she and her husband lived in New York City. It was there, in the early 1980s, that she met Andy Warhol and fought with him over a Majolica plate in a Madison Avenue antique store.



This Andy Warhol of Ann has its own story

She doesn't recall who won that tussle, but Warhol painted the double portrait of Ann that now hangs in her living room. A third panel was in the works when Warhol died, but it was never found.

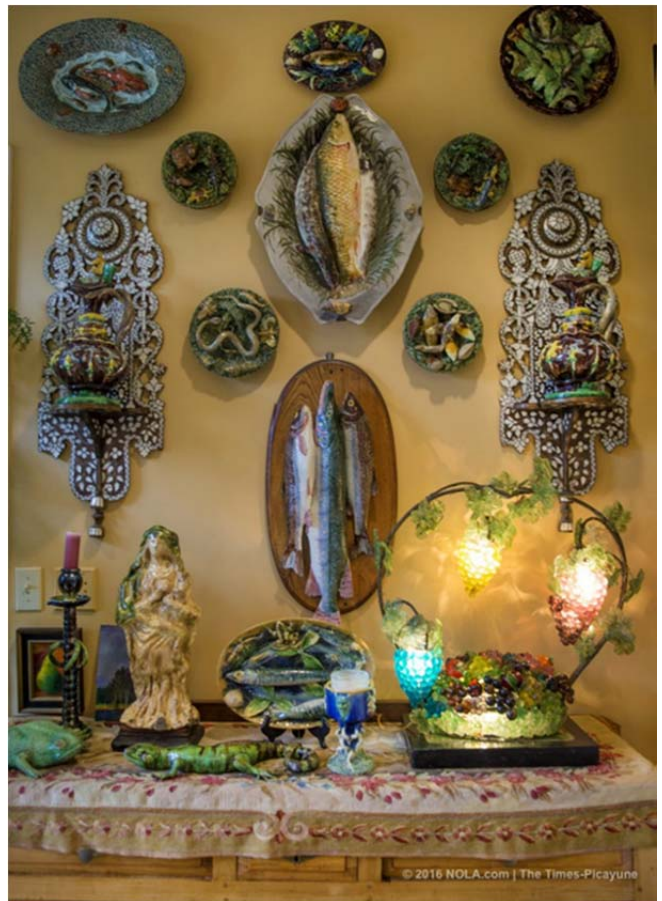


Ann's bedroom was off limits during the MIS visit but Keith Marshall and Chris Granger share a quick glance from their visit

Other pieces of Majolica, including a favorite clock, now fill Ann's breakfast room, along with fantastical

plates by 19th-century French followers of ceramist Bernard Palissy, who specialized in the depiction of mythologically grotesque snakes.

In the den, which is an extension to the house that the Barnetts added in the 1980s, Howard Barnett's ceramic sculpture — a rainbow-colored fantasy of ice cream cones — sits atop a coffee table. Her husband, Ann explained, took ceramic classes at Tulane University and crafted an homage to one of his favorite things, ice cream.



Fantastical plates by 19th-century followers of ceramist Bernard Palissy

Ann's entire interior is a riot of art and color. There are sculptures made of bones, a sinuous vase, a chandelier by noted glassmaker Dale Chihuly, a collection of tortoise-shell boxes, inlaid furniture and artfully crafted lamps, including one shaped like a peacock with an illuminated, jeweled fan.

An artist herself, Ann paints pastoral landscapes — and whatever else comes to mind — in a glassed-in semicircular gallery that once was a screened porch. Sitting on a perch near the entrance is a taxidermist's delight: a peacock purchased last year on a trip to France.

Just off the den, the peach-hued master bedroom, with its coffered ceiling, is filled with glass cases displaying diverse collections.

The spacious backyard also is a showcase of sculpture by local artists, many of whom have taught at Tulane. But the yard's most prominent feature is a towering, pedimented portal designed by architect Steven Bingler. Topped with impressive ceramic capitals, crafted by North Shore artist John Hodge, it lends a taste of pre-Hellenic Greece to the home.

"You couldn't just leave them plain," Ann said of the columns.



Art fills every space of Ann's home



A collection of tortoise-shell boxes, inlaid furniture and artfully crafted lamps



"I'm a gypsy," said Ann's daughter, Holly Barnett

Global pursuits

"I'm a gypsy," said Holly Barnett, 57, as she walked through the low-ceilinged, art-filled living room of her Uptown Craftsman-style bungalow, stiletto heels pecking against the hardwood floor.

"I've spent most of my adult life in Manhattan, but I've also lived in Los Angeles, Italy, Connecticut, Mississippi, and the last four years in New Orleans, the longest I've lived anywhere since I was 21 years old. I was married to an artist, and we moved around a lot."

Much like her mother's grand decorating gestures, Holly's home is filled with eclectic selections. "In the past 13 years I've built two homes from the ground up and renovated two, but I'm here to stay for a while. Ironically I ended up on the street my dad and grandmother lived on," she said.

Holly recalled the day her mother battled Andy Warhol for the Majolica plate. "Vito Giallo, who gave Andy his first (non-pop-art one-man) show had an antique shop on Madison Avenue," Holly said. "All the maids would discreetly bring stuff from Park Avenue for him to sell for their employers. In the 1980s, Andy would go there every afternoon.

"When he and my mother stopped fighting, he told her, 'I want to do your portrait.' Just before he died, he wanted me to co-host a talk show he was planning with Jerry Hall," she said. "Too bad that never happened."



These two photos show Holly's kitchen that features deep green and yellow colors

Travel has been a constant in Holly's life. "Since I was 21, I've moved every three years," she said.

One pillar of stability has been a revolving disco ball that now hangs in the living room.

Just inside the front door, another work of art that's followed her everywhere dominates the living room: local artist Blake Boyd's wall-size homage to New York graffiti artist Leonard Basquiat.



Blake Boyd's wall-size homage to New York graffiti artist Leonard Basquiat

"It's a trope on Basquiat's style," she said, "and people think it's by him. When I had it in Connecticut, I just

couldn't live with it. It disturbed me, and I hung it in the garage. Now, when my eyes fall on it, it makes me happy."

Texture and color abound in Holly's house, and not just in the artwork. "African chairs. I love beaded things," she said. "I got a lot of beaded things in India." And almost all of it made it to New Orleans in 2013, when she began renovating this house.

"After living here a while, I added a master bedroom and bath and reused all the old windows and door frames to maintain consistency within the house; and I've always had really chirpy kitchens," she said, referring to the yellow walls on which more art is displayed.

Artwork hangs from the ceiling of the master bathroom, where an elaborate marble chair sits inside the spacious shower enclosure.

But nothing remains static in Holly's nesting place. She keeps adding to and rearranging bits and pieces.

"I used to lock myself in my room and change everything around. Now, when I get spurts of creativity, I'll just stay up late and change things around," she said.

"I get inspired by Mom. She's so creative, and I'll ask her what she thinks. I'll tell her, 'You know, last night, I was thinking of you and couldn't go to sleep.'

"Then we'll discuss things. And, you know what, we usually agree."



Ann Barnett's home front entry

Again please visit the whole story and all the photos at: http://www.nola.com/homegarden/index.ssf/2016/05/house_tour_mother-daughter_gal.html

Wilhelm Schiller and Son

by Wanda Matthes

Quoting from, *European Majolica*, by D. Michael Murray, he states that Wilhelm Schiller and Son were the best known and most prolific of the Bohemian makers of majolica. Their production began with the production of faience and earthenware in 1829 in Bodenback, Bohemia under the firm name of Schiller and Gerbing. Schiller and Gerbing marked their wares with an impressed mark of S& G. Murry states that he has not personally seen any majolica marked with the Schiller and Gerbing mark. After the dissolution of Schiller and Gerbing in 1885, the company became, Wilhelm Schiller and Son and Gerbing and Stephan. A majority of majolica appears to have been marked with the letters WS & S contained in a raised cartouche with the balance being marked with the letters WS & S impressed directly into the clay.

Wilhelm Schiller and Son produced many match boxes and smoke sets, as well as, a few very important works such as the standing goat pictured on page 52 of Murray's book and The Elephant centerpiece, pictured on page 46 of his book.

I shall concentrate on these two pieces but will also share photographs of some of the items we, Antiques from Trilog, have purchased and sold over our twenty years of selling majolica.

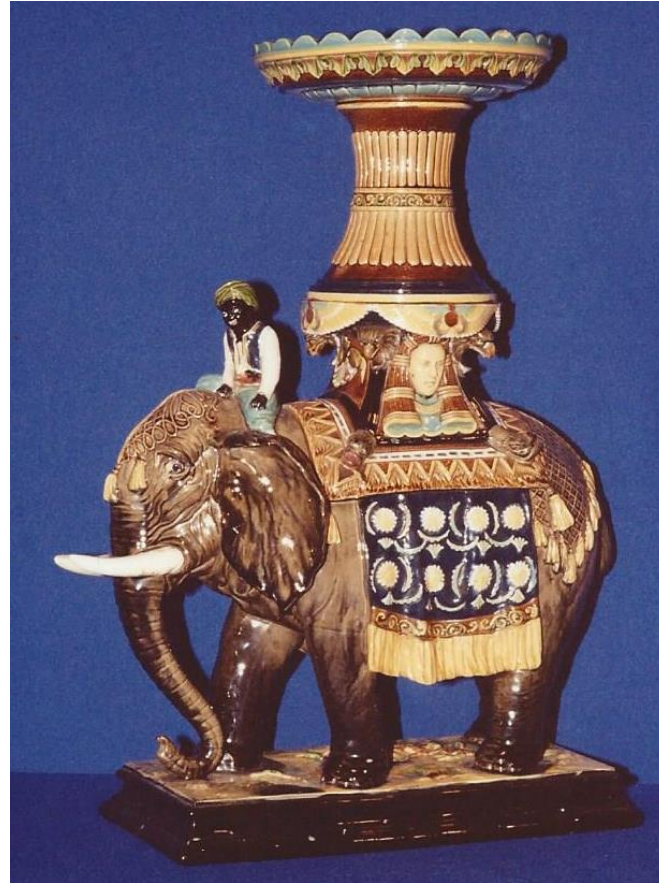
This rare goat figure was a recent purchase which I used in a table setting for my Easter table. He stands 18"H x 18"L 10" W. He is marked on both his belly and on his saddle blanket. Murry's photo was courtesy of well-known MIS member and dealer, Pam Ferrazzutti, who resides in Canada. Murray's book provides values for the pieces he pictures. The goat is plate 124 and its value is stated as, "too rare to value".



**Wilhelm Schiller and Son figural Goat with Paniers
18" high, by 18" long**

The elephant centerpiece, plate 106 in Murray's book, stands 21.5" high and 12 ¼ long". It is marked 'W S & S'. This piece was sold at Majolica Auctions. Murray values this piece at \$3,500 when this book was printed in 1997.

Michael Strawser was kind enough to share the photo of the elephant which Murray used in his book.



**Wilhelm Schiller and Son Elephant
centerpiece, 21 ½" high, by 12 ¼" long**

In looking for another piece, I discovered detailed photos of the elephant on pages 104-105 from *Victorian Majolica*, By Leslie Bockol. Bockol gives the country of origin as Austrian and her photos are attributed to Joseph Conrad Antiques, Atlanta, Georgia.

This piece features a stately elephant wearing a highly decorated blanket and head piece, being ridden by a blackamoor. This figure is in typical dress, with yellow turban and vest and white shirt. He is wearing the clothing of a common man, not elegantly dressed as we find other blackamoor figures which have been a popular subject in decorative arts for centuries. Atop of the elephant is a howdah, which serves as a vase. This howdah is decorated on each side with an Egyptian or Arabian face, suggesting that this might be the face of a ruler and the blackamoor riding the elephant might have been his servant.

If you have pieces by Wilhelm Schiller in your own collection, we would love for you to share those with us for a future Majolica Matters.



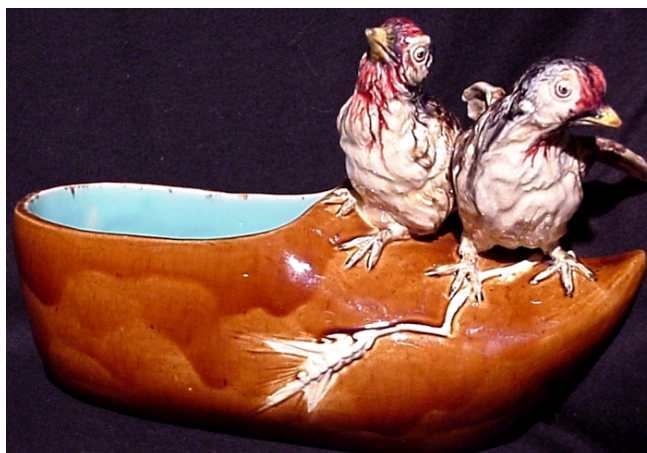
Wilhelm Schiller Pitcher - Fauna with Bird



Wilhelm Schiller - Floral Candlestick



Wilhelm Schiller Jardinière - Swans in Reeds



Wilhelm Schiller - Planter Shoe with Birds

Following are a few of the marks we have seen on Schiller items:





The goat was part of our table scape for Easter 2016 along with an entire herd of majolica bunnies

Please send your comments and material for the newsletter to:
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A Very Special Coffee Table by Duane Matthes

Editor's note: This is the disclosure of a very special Coffee Table made by Thomas Forester for his Sons and reprinted from the Thomas Forester web site with their images.



Editor's note: The entire table appears to be 100% ceramic with some gilt applied to the top rim and pedestal.

This table is the only survivor of three that Thomas Forester made for his three sons when they joined the

firm in 1883. There were also two vases made for his two daughters at the same time but no one knows the whereabouts of either of those.



Editor's note: The table details show off the blossom covered branches and swallows that we have always loved in Forester's other more common majolica creations.

Forester perhaps made twenty of these tables to end up with three perfect ones. It would have been necessary to fire each table at least four times for the manufacture and the decoration, with a risk of loss with each firing.

This example is owned by Mr. Ian Forester, who is the great-great grandson of Thomas. Ian Forester kindly allowed these photographs to be taken, following his and his table's appearance on the Antiques Roadshow on Sunday, May 15, 2016.

It is truly a unique piece of beautiful art produced by the skilled craftspeople of that era. Documents from the pottery showed that the table had been produced but it was not known previously that any of the tables had survived. The overall diameter of the top is 25" (64cms), the center decorated panel is 22" (56cms) and the overall height is 29" (74cms).

If you have time explore:
<http://thomasforester.com/>

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<http://majolicasociety.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/2016ConventionRegistrationForm.pdf>

Sarreguemines – “WHAT - IF”

by Duane Matthes

As a Facebook friend of the Sarreguemines museum of France, I see photos of many wonderful ceramics and community art, but their timeline post of this bathroom rendering caught my eye one day. I asked myself, “Did it ever, really exist and if so, does it continue to exist today?” I wondered, “WHAT-IF” it really got built, and does it still exist today? Or, is this design rendering, just an artistic fantasy and never practical or economical to create?”



Looking back in time, Wanda and I were able to visit the town of Sarreguemines and see two Sarreguemines factory architectural designs while we were sightseeing in France with Jean Defrocourt and Philippe Meunier, several years ago. The following photos are just a few examples of Sarreguemines architectural art which were indeed designed, and built, and continue to be available for our enjoyment a century later!



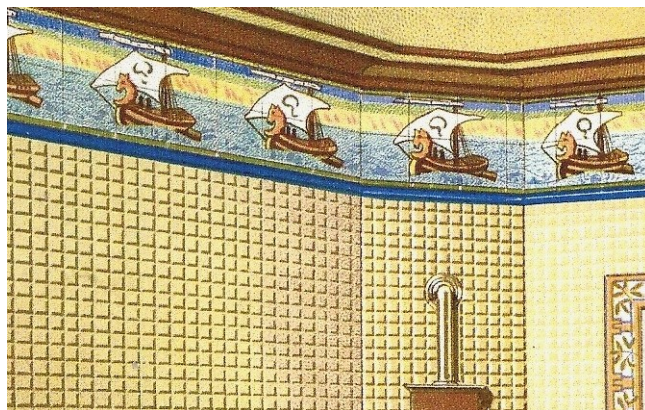
Across the Saar River from the Sarreguemines museum is the Casino of Faienciers showing off its beautiful majolica tile façade.



One of the main exhibits of the Sarreguemines museum is this wall of tiles and ceramic sculptures in the Winter Garden Room

So, your assignment, “Team MIS”, is to find this gorgeous tile bathroom! The design rendering photo is on the internet, and maybe that’s the only place we will ever find the photo and the actual bath. But... perhaps it exists in a French or German bed and breakfast cottage and one of us will stumble into it as we take a break from a long European countryside excursion. One can only hope!

“WHAT - IF !!!”



Not sure my master bath needs any of these cute little Viking boats circling the ceiling!

For more on the art of Sarreguemines Museum:
<http://www.sarreguemines-museum.eu/>

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