

# Recent acquisitions (1994–2007) of sculpture and decorative arts at The Frick Collection, New York

WITHOUT A GENERAL endowment for acquisitions, The Frick Collection has nonetheless been fortunate in obtaining – through gift and occasional purchase – works of sculpture and decorative art, an area of collecting that began under the attentive eye of Henry Clay Frick (1849–1919) himself. Frick focused on these acquisitions only towards the end of his life. He purchased many works from J.P. Morgan's estate following the collector's death in March 1913 and is known to have visited Morgan's collection when it was on view at the Metropolitan Museum of Art between 1914 and 1916. Frick's interest in sculpture and the decorative arts is also documented by his plans for a sculpture gallery to be designed by Thomas Hastings, the architect of the mansion at 1 East 70th Street. Frick postponed this extension owing to the exorbitant cost of construction during wartime; regrettably, he died before revisiting the project (see C.B. Bailey: *Building The Frick Collection: An Introduction to the House and Its Collections*, New York 2006, pp.85–91).

The Collection's recent acquisitions have been seamlessly integrated into the installation of sculpture and decorative arts, with important holdings in Italian, French, German and Netherlandish sculpture, eighteenth-century French furniture, Limoges enamels, Chinese and French porcelains, gilt bronzes, European timepieces from the sixteenth to the nineteenth

century, as well as eighteenth-century English silver, Flemish tapestries and Indian and Persian carpets. As befits a house museum, works of sculpture and decorative art are displayed at the Frick as one would expect in a domestic setting, with porcelains and bronze statuettes set atop pieces of furniture and with works of art from different regions and periods installed adjacent to one another and not necessarily grouped by school.

Exhibiting sculpture and the decorative arts forms an essential part of the Frick's programming: recent exhibitions such as *The Art of the Timekeeper: Masterpieces from the Winthrop Edey Bequest* (2001–02); *Willem van Tetrode (c.1525–1580): Bronze Sculptures of the Renaissance* (2003); *European Bronzes from the Quentin Collection* (2004–05); *Renaissance and Baroque Bronzes from the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge* (2005); and *Gardens of Eternal Spring: Two Newly Conserved Seventeenth-Century Mughal Carpets in The Frick Collection* (2005) attest to our interest in studying and exploring these works more fully. Exhibitions such as *Rococo Exotic: French Mounted Porcelains and the Allure of the East*, currently on view (to 9th September), and *Collecting History: Early Meissen Porcelain in the Arnhold Collection* (to be shown in 2008 from 11th March to 15th June) also offer the opportunity to examine other fine examples of the decorative arts through a study of their manufacture and historical context.



1. *Pietà with two mourning putti*, by Massimiliano Soldani-Benzi (1656–1740). Probably 1715. Terracotta on original ebony base, 29.5 by 54.9 cm. (2006.2.03; gift of The Quentin Foundation). The Florentine Baroque artist Massimiliano Soldani-Benzi was an accomplished sculptor, medallist and goldsmith. This elegiac terracotta was probably created as a finished model for translation into bronze. It is the only model of this composition – in any medium – to survive. This work is probably the terracotta shown by Soldani at the Florentine Academy's exhibition at the Church of the Annunziata in 1715. See D. Allen: 'A Gift from The Quentin Foundation: Soldani's Terracotta Pietà', *The Frick Collection Members' Magazine*, Winter 2007, pp.2–5.





II. *Diana*, by Jean-Antoine Houdon (1741–1828). With a seal stamped on the base: ACADEMIE/ROYALE/DE PEINTURE/ET SCULPT/ HOUDON/SC. Before 1793. Tinted plaster cast, 61 cm. high. (2006.2.01; gift of Mr Frederick R. Koch, 2006). While Houdon produced the life-size *Diana the huntress* in a variety of media, including plaster, bronze, marble and terracotta (such as the sculpture purchased by the Frick in 1939), this plaster reduction of it is one of only two known casts to bear the wax seal of Houdon's studio. For a detailed discussion of Houdon's *Diana*, see A.L. Poulet, ed.: exh. cat. *Jean-Antoine Houdon: Sculptor of the Enlightenment*, Washington (National Gallery of Art), Los Angeles (J. Paul Getty Museum) and Versailles (Château de Versailles) 2003–04, pp.210–15.





III. 'The Dance of Time': three nymphs supporting a clock, by Claude Michel, called Clodion (1738–1814; sculptor), and Jean-Baptiste Lepaute (1727–1802; clockmaker). 1788. Terracotta, brass, gilt brass, silvered brass, steel and glass, 103.5 cm. high. (2006.2.02; purchased through the Winthrop Edey bequest, 2006).

This recent purchase is an important addition to the collection both as a masterpiece of sculpture by the eighteenth-century French sculptor Clodion and an outstanding achievement in horological design by Lepaute, whose family firm was clockmaker to Louis XV and XVI.

Lepaute's pendulum clock with its rotating annular dial and transparent glass globe design is a significant addition to the Frick's clock collection, which grew considerably with Winthrop Kellogg Edey's remarkable bequest of clocks and watches in 1999. For

a detailed account of this piece, see A.L. Poulet: 'The Frick Collection Acquires Clodion's *Dance of Time*', *The Frick Collection Members' Magazine*, Fall 2006, pp.2–5.





IV. *Portrait of Madame His*, by Jean-Antoine Houdon (1741–1828). 1774–75. Marble, 80 by 45.1 by 71.8 cm. (2007.2.01; gift of Mr and Mrs Eugene Victor Thaw). Joining the Frick's outstanding ensemble of portrait busts is this strikingly graceful marble likeness of Madame His, made by Jean-Antoine Houdon in 1774–75 and exhibited in the Paris Salon of 1775. A recent gift to the Collection, the sculpture represents Marie-Anne Damaris Dumoustier de Vastre, the wife of a Protestant German banker, Pierre-François His, who lived and worked in Paris. Houdon was on close terms with his subject, who later served as one of his future wife's witnesses at his marriage to Marie-Ange-Cécile Langlois in 1786. For further information on the sitter, see A.L. Poulet, ed.: exh. cat. *Jean-Antoine Houdon: Sculptor of the Enlightenment*, Washington (National Gallery of Art), Los Angeles (J. Paul Getty Museum) and Versailles (Château de Versailles) 2003–04, pp.98 and 133.





V. *Portrait of Etienne Vincent-Marniola*, by Joseph Chinard (1756–1813). c.1809. Terracotta, 64 by 64 by 38 cm. (2004.2.01; purchased, 2004). This splendid portrait bust of Etienne Vincent-Marniola, an ambitious member of Napoleon's government who held positions such as Préfet of Po, in northern Italy, and Conseiller d'Etat before his death at the age of twenty-eight, was The Frick Collection's first major acquisition by purchase in nearly a decade. For a discussion of this sculpture, see C.B. Bailey: 'The Frick Collection Purchases Joseph Chinard's Portrait Bust of Etienne Vincent-Marniola', *The Frick Collection Members' Magazine*, Winter 2005, pp.8–11.





VI. *Leopard attacking a bull* and *Lion attacking a horse*, by Giovanni Francesco Susini (c.1575–1653). c.1630–40. Bronze, 24.2 by 30 cm. (horse); bronze, 11.9 by 27.5 cm. (bull). (2002.2.02 and 2002.2.03; gift of Walter A. and Vera Eberstadt, 2002). Cast by the Florentine sculptor Giovanni Francesco Susini, these pendant bronzes feature predatory cats brutally felling their respective quarries. Exquisite in their technical production and anatomical detail, these are the first animal ensembles to enter the Frick's collection of Renaissance and Baroque bronzes. Giovanni Francesco's figural groups coupling lion and horse with leopard and bull are rare, and only two known pairs survive (the other is in the Liechtenstein Collection, Vaduz). For an account of these sculptures, see D. Allen: 'Important Gift of Italian Sculpture Placed on View in the Living Hall', *The Frick Collection Members' Magazine*, Fall 2003, p.6.



VII. *Sea monster*, by Severo Calzetta da Ravenna (before 1496–1525/38). Signed on the upper ring of a socket set into the sea-monster's back beneath the seashell: O[PUS] SEVERI·RA·. Early sixteenth century. Bronze, 11.4 by 24.7 cm. (1997.2.103; gift of Mr and Mrs Eugene Victor Thaw in honour of Charles Ryskamp, Director of The Frick Collection, and in memory of Ruth Blumka, 1997). This fantastic creature is the only known fully signed bronze by Severo, who headed a workshop specialising in the production of small bronzes. As such it has become the touchstone for attributing works to Severo, including the masterly *Neptune on a sea monster*, which was purchased by Henry Clay Frick in 1916 from the estate of J. Pierpont Morgan. Although the inset shell functioned as an inkwell, Severo's innovative designs allowed for interchangeable components; thus the figure may have previously held a candlestick or lamp. See B.F. Davidson: *The Frick Collection: An Illustrated Catalogue IX: Drawings, Prints, and Later Acquisitions*, New York 2003, pp.439–43; *idem*: *Severo and the Sea-Monsters*, New York 1997; and R.E. Stone: 'Severo Calzetta da Ravenna and the indirectly cast bronze', *THE BURLINGTON MAGAZINE* 148 (2006), pp.810–19.





VIII. Barometer clock, attributed to Isaac Thuret (1630–1706) or Jacques Thuret (1669–1738), clock-makers. Case attributed to André-Charles Boulle (1642–1732). Dial and movement signed: I·THURET·A·PARIS. Paris, c.1690–1700. Ebony, tortoiseshell and brass on walnut and oak, 107.3 by 58.7 by 26 cm. (1999.5.148; bequest of Winthrop Edey, 1999). The design of this magnificent time-piece was published in 1724 as a work of the master furniture-maker and *ébéniste du Roi* André-Charles Boulle, who most likely executed the elaborate case. Beneath the dial a bronze Chronos seizes a female figure, representing Time unveiling Truth. See W.J.H. Andrewes: exh. cat. *The Art of the Timekeeper: Masterpieces from the Winthrop Edey Bequest*, New York (Frick Collection) 2001–02, p.15.



IX. Table clock, by Pierre de Fobis (1506–75). Base signed: PIERRE·DE·FOBIS; case panels cast with initials: I·M. France, probably Aix-en-Provence, c.1532. Gilded brass, 12.8 by 5.6 cm. (1999.5.129; bequest of Winthrop Edey, 1999). In 1999 Winthrop Kellogg Edey (1937–99), a collector and horology expert, left The Frick Collection an important bequest of twenty-five clocks and fourteen watches, dating from about 1500 to 1830. Additionally, he bequeathed his reference library on the history of timekeeping as well as funds for maintaining and developing the collection (see no.III). This clock by the French clockmaker Pierre de Fobis is one of the earliest surviving spring-driven timepieces. See W.J.H. Andrewes: exh. cat. *The Art of the Timekeeper: Masterpieces from the Winthrop Edey Bequest*, New York (Frick Collection) 2001–02, p.2.

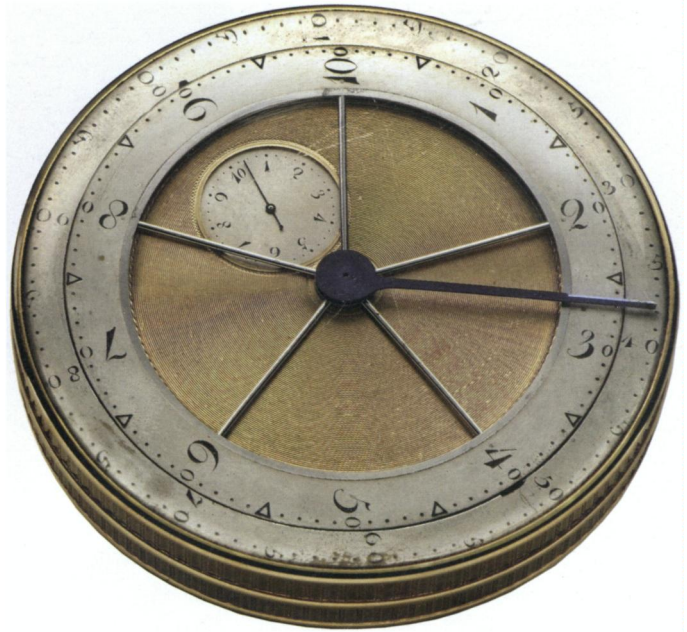


X. Table clock with astronomical and calendrical dials, by David Weber (active 1623/24–1704). Signed: David Weber – in Augsburg; case mounts marked: H·G·M. Augsburg, probably 1653. Gilt-brass on silver, 59.4 by 25.5 by 25.1 cm. (1999.5.144; bequest of Winthrop Edey, 1999). Crafted by the Augsburg clockmaker David Weber, this piece meets all the requirements for a guild masterpiece and may have been created by Weber for his acceptance into the Augsburg guild in 1653. See W.J.H. Andrewes: exh. cat. *The Art of the Timekeeper: Masterpieces from the Winthrop Edey Bequest*, New York (Frick Collection) 2001–02, p.5.





XI. Portrait medal of the Duke of Alba (1508–82), by Jacques Jonghelinck (1530–1606). Dated on the truncation of the obverse: 1571. Silver (cast), 3.95 cm. diameter. (1994.2.100; gift of Stephen K. and Janie Woo Scher, 1994). Jonghelinck, who was appointed official sculptor, metal-caster and seal-engraver to Philip II, designed this elegant portrait medal of Don Fernando Álvarez de Toledo (1508–1582), third Duke of Alba and governor general of the Spanish Netherlands, in 1571. The Flemish artist also executed a bronze bust of the duke that year, which was acquired by Henry Clay Frick in 1916. Although the obverse of the medal contains a burning candle – symbolising Don Fernando’s life consumed by service to God and king – he was a tyrannical ruler infamous for his extreme cruelty. See S.G. Galassi’s entry in *The Frick Collection: An Illustrated Catalogue IX: Drawings, Prints, and Later Acquisitions*, New York 2003, pp.444–47; and S.K. Scher: exh. cat. *The Currency of Fame: Portrait Medals of the Renaissance*, New York (Frick Collection) 1994, pp.357–58.



XII. Double-dial desk watch showing decimal and traditional time, by Abraham-Louis Breguet (1747–1823) and Antoine-Louis Breguet (1776–1858). Movement rim signed: BREGUET no.13; dial signed: BREGUET ET FILS. Paris, started c.1795, completed after 1807. Gold and enamel, gilt brass, brass and steel, 7.3 by 7.3 by 2 cm. (1999.5.154; bequest of Winthrop Edey, 1999). This clock features the decimal system of timekeeping that was introduced during the French Revolution and decreed official in November 1793 but abolished soon after. It also includes a traditional twelve-hour dial, made by Antoine-Louis Breguet after he joined his father’s shop in 1807. See W.J.H. Andrewes: exh. cat. *The Art of the Timekeeper: Masterpieces from the Winthrop Edey Bequest*, New York (Frick Collection) 2001–02, p.19.



XIII. *Christ in the garden of Gethsemane* and *The mocking of Christ*, by the workshop of Pierre Reymond (c.1513–c.1584). Mid- to late sixteenth century. Enamel on copper, both 20.3 by 15.9 cm. (2005.4.01 and 2005.4.02; gift of Dr and Mrs Henry Clay Frick, II, 2005). Frick purchased these two Limoges enamel plaques in 1916 from J. Pierpont Morgan’s estate; after his death they remained in the Frick family and were given to the Collection in 2005. These works join the Frick’s collection of forty-four enamels, the majority of which had also been owned by Morgan. Set in nineteenth-century gilt-wood frames, these ensembles comprise central plaques featuring scenes from the Passion of Christ encircled by small roundels with depictions of other New Testament subjects. The composition of *Christ in the garden of Gethsemane* is very close to a signed work by Pierre Reymond in the Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg.