

## Introducing... 'Chinoiserie'

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<b>Dates</b>	Tuesday 19 and Wednesday 20 October 2021
<b>Times</b>	14.00-16.00 GMT
<b>Location</b>	Zoom Webinar
<b>Tutor</b>	Jane Gardiner
<b>Level</b>	All Levels

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Manufacture de Sèvres, *Cup and Saucer*, 1779 (detail)

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### Course Description

This course introduces the fascinating subject of 'chinoiserie' – a term used to describe a style of art which flourished in 18th-century Europe, inspired by but often freely interpreting the art and culture of China and Japan. There are many superb examples to be explored in the Wallace Collection, from snuff boxes to porcelain and furniture.

We'll begin by examining the opening up of trade routes between Europe and East Asia in the late 16th century, as well as the establishment of the East India Trading Companies and the craze for all things 'exotic', particularly porcelain and lacquer, which followed. This had an enormous impact on European taste, and we'll explore the ways in which designers took inspiration from the subjects depicted on these imported goods to create a whimsical, sometimes fantastic and thoroughly European style. We'll learn that this would have an impact on every branch of interior design and the decorative arts throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, and which can still be felt today.

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## **Session One**

In our first session we'll concentrate on the impact of Chinese porcelain on European taste, collecting and display. We'll explore how, when the very first Chinese porcelains found their way to Europe, the beauty and fragility of the material led to their being mounted with precious metal and treasured alongside other rare objects such as ostrich eggs and rock crystal vessels. Many porcelains were housed in 'Cabinets of Curiosities' and exchanged as diplomatic gifts between European rulers. We'll learn that this early and exclusive ownership of Chinese porcelain proliferated in the 17th century with the opening up of trading routes between Europe and Asia, leading to a widespread fashion for housing and displaying collections of Chinese 'blue-and-white', and spawning a whole range of European imitations.

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## **Session Two**

We'll begin our second session by looking at the fashion for lacquer furniture, both Chinese and Japanese, which spread throughout Europe in the 17th century - a taste which continued throughout the 18th century and beyond. We'll consider the European attempts to imitate this exotic material, and the growing fascination with the subjects and scenes depicted on both the porcelain and the lacquer. We'll discover how European adaptations, often extremely fanciful and depicting magical landscapes, buildings, flora and fauna, and figure subjects, began to appear in every branch of the decorative arts, even finding their way into garden design and architecture to create a new and entirely European style, now known universally as 'chinoiserie'.

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## **Course Tutor**

Jane Gardiner gained a Master's degree from the University of London and trained at the Victoria & Albert Museum. She was a Senior Lecturer at Sotheby's Institute of Art for 17 years, becoming a Deputy Director of Sotheby's UK. She has lectured for the National Trust, the Art Fund, London University, Buckingham University, l'Institut d'Études Supérieures des Arts, The Arts Society, on cruise ships, and at antiques fairs and interior design conferences in America.

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## **Previous Skills, Knowledge or Experience**

None required. This course is designed as an introduction to the subject.

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## **Joining Information and Format**

This course will be taught through Zoom Webinar. For more information, including instructions on how to download and use the system, please visit [www.zoom.us/support](http://www.zoom.us/support).

Each course session duration is 120 minutes, including a five-minute break and time for Q&A with the tutor.

Tickets are for both dates. Ticket holders will be emailed the Zoom link, Webinar ID and Passcode 24 hours in advance of the first course session, which should be retained for accessing both sessions of the course.

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**Course Recording**

This course will be recorded. Within 48 hours of each course session, ticket holders will be emailed a link to view the recording, which will be available for one week only.

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