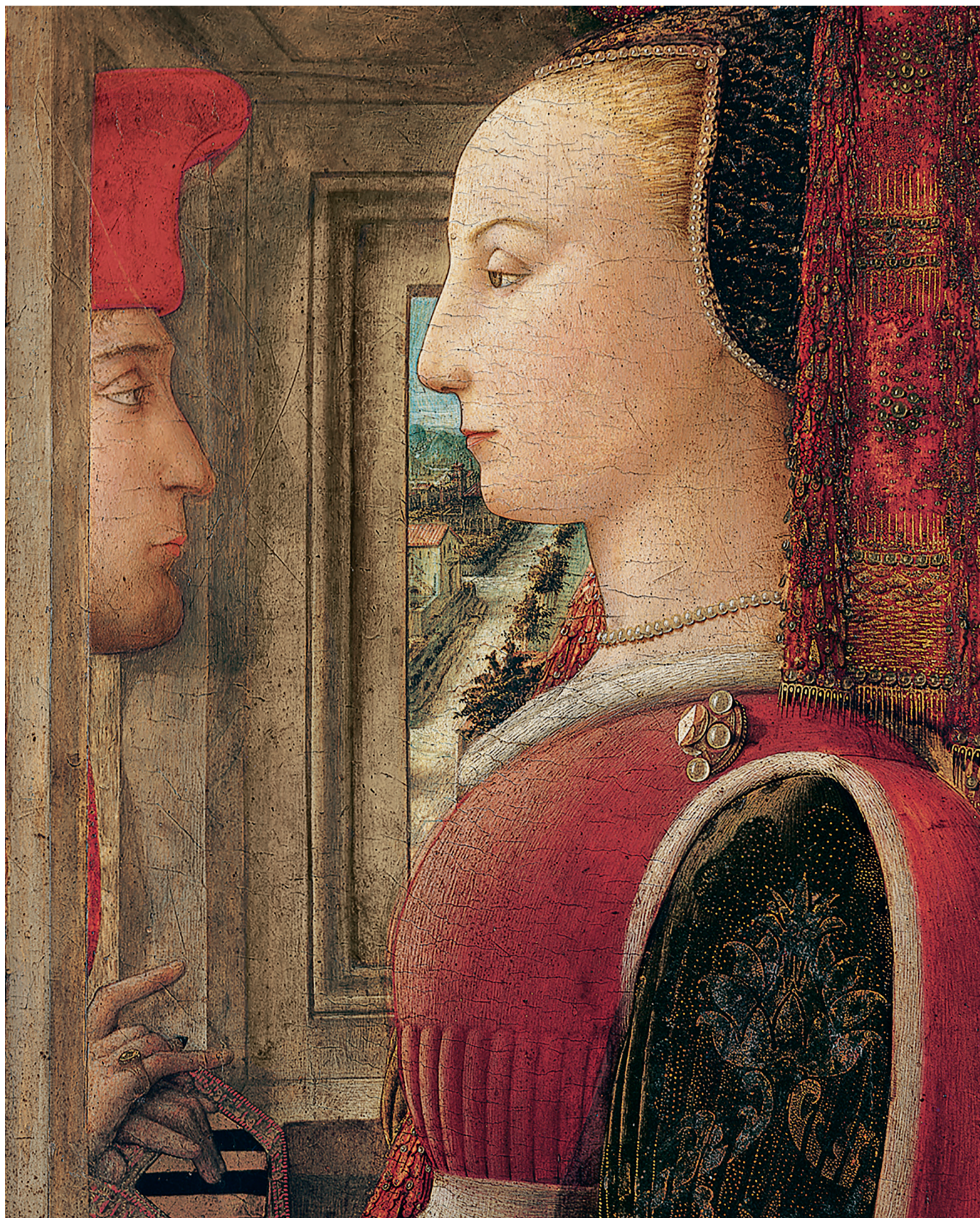


METROPOLITAN
MUSEUM

JOURNAL 51



METROPOLITAN
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JOURNAL 51

VOLUME 51 / 2016

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NEW YORK

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The *Metropolitan Museum Journal* is published annually by The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

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Manuscripts submitted for the *Journal* and all correspondence concerning them should be sent to journalsubmissions@metmuseum.org. Guidelines for contributors are given on p. 6.

Published in association with the University of Chicago Press. Individual and institutional subscriptions are available worldwide. Please direct all subscription inquiries, back issue requests, and address changes to: University of Chicago Press, Journals Division, P. O. Box 37005, Chicago, IL 60637-0005, USA. Phone: (877) 705-1878 (U.S. and Canada) or (773) 753-3347 (international), fax: (877) 705-1879 (U.S. and Canada) or (773) 753-0811 (international), email: subscriptions@press.uchicago.edu, website: www.journals.uchicago.edu

ISBN 978-0-226-43804-7
(University of Chicago Press)
ISSN 0077-8958 (print)
ISSN 2169-3072 (online)

Library of Congress
Catalog Card Number 68-28799

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Typefaces: Calibre, Lyon, and Harriet
Printed on Creator Silk, 150 gsm
Separations by Altimage New York
Printed and bound by Verona Libri,
Verona, Italy

Front cover illustration: Unidentified artist (Senegalese). Detail of Portrait of a woman, 1910s. See fig. 1, p. 180.

Back cover illustration: Dihl et Guérhard (French, 1781–ca. 1824; Manufacture de Monsieur le duc d'Angoulême, until 1789). Detail of *Vase with Scenes of Storm at Sea*, ca. 1797–98. See fig. 1, p. 112.

Illustration on p. 2: Fra Filippo Lippi (Italian, ca. 1406–1469). Detail of *Portrait of a Woman with a Man at a Casement*, ca. 1440. See fig. 1, p. 64.

Illustration on pp. 8–9: Detail of the Metropolitan Vase. Guatemala or Mexico. Maya, Late Classic, 7th–8th century. See fig. 7b, p. 47.

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MANUSCRIPT GUIDELINES FOR THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM JOURNAL

The *Metropolitan Museum Journal* is issued annually by The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Its purpose is to publish original research on works in the Museum's collection. Articles are contributed by members of the Museum staff and other art historians and specialists. Submissions should be emailed to: journalsubmissions@metmuseum.org.

Manuscripts are reviewed by the *Journal* Editorial Board, composed of members of the curatorial, conservation, and scientific departments.

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ABBREVIATIONS

MMA The Metropolitan Museum of Art
MMAB *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*
MMJ *Metropolitan Museum Journal*

Height precedes width and then depth in dimensions cited.

METROPOLITAN
MUSEUM

JOURNAL 51







Stormy Weather in Revolutionary Paris: A Pair of Dihl et Guérhard Vases

Scenes of weather-borne turbulence unfurl around a pair of hard-paste porcelain vases acquired by The Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2014 (fig. 1). Produced by the Parisian manufacturer Dihl et Guérhard during the 1790s, the restrained amphora shapes evoke Classical antique forms rediscovered and adopted by French designers in the second half of the eighteenth century. Any sense of Neoclassical stability is undone, however, by the grisaille vistas painted in bands around the circumference of both vases. On the vase at left in figure 1 (2014.68.1), a panoramic coastal scene conjures the tempestuous ports depicted by the marine painter Joseph Vernet and imitated by countless artists on canvas and in prints. Seen from a vantage point on shore, three large ships heel in the wind-whipped water, the surface of finely rendered waves fading into the distant horizon. In the foreground, a man and a woman brace themselves





against the gale. The muzzles of two cannons have been set into the shore as bollards for mooring boats. Rotating the vase to the left, one can see, beyond a castle ruin atop a rocky precipice, a lighthouse marking the entry into what appears to be a prosperous coastal town.

On the other vase, one would expect to find visions of calm after a storm, as Vernet often did in his pairs of port scenes.¹ Instead, the effects of similarly stormy weather are shown on land (fig. 1; 2014.68.2). Leafless trees loom in the foreground of both vases, operating as visual obstructions rather than as *repoussoir* elements that would typically draw the gaze into the composition of a painting on canvas. The trees also seem to be bracing themselves against the wind and gripping large rocks. They look so lifelike that the eye combs the barren branches in search of profiles or spectral presences, recalling the silhouettes of royals and revolutionaries hidden in propaganda prints that circulated after the Terror (fig. 3). This effect is not incidental for, much like political silhouette prints, the Dihl et Guérhard vases were produced during the French Revolution, a period of large-scale political, cultural, and social upheaval that overturned, among other things, the ancien régime patronage system, which had supported much of the production of French porcelain.

A date of about 1790–95 that has heretofore been assigned to the vases makes it seem fairly obvious that the rugged landscapes point to the political turbulence of the period. This raises a number of interesting questions: What are these exquisitely painted yet obscure land- and seascapes doing on a pair of fragile luxury objects virtually emblematic of ancien régime elite taste? Who might have painted such ambiguous images and, furthermore, who would risk buying them? Finally, what did it mean to paint and produce porcelain in revolutionary Paris inside a combined factory and showroom located just steps from the Temple, where Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette (both d. 1793) were imprisoned?

The vases are evidence of Dihl et Guérhard's remarkable artistic output during the final decade of the eighteenth century in France, and they shed light on the ways in which the end of the Terror in 1794 signaled the return of the luxury market as well as a number of widespread innovations in the decorative arts. I would

amend the attributed production date of about 1790–95 to Dihl et Guérhard's more vibrant period of 1795–1800 (possibly even 1797–98), when the factory was at the height of its powers and was believed to have eclipsed the National Porcelain Manufactory at Sèvres (formerly known as the Royal Porcelain Manufactory) in the scale, quality, and affordability of its productions.

With the exception of Régine de Plinval de Guillebon's pioneering work in 1972, the literature on both Dihl et Guérhard and the Paris-based porcelain firms known collectively as *porcelaine de Paris* that emerged at the end of the eighteenth century remains limited. This can be attributed at least partially to the privileged place of Sèvres as a porcelain manufactory that enjoyed royal patronage and prestige and that maintained a virtual monopoly over porcelain production in France from its establishment in 1740. The scarcity of archival records pertaining to the Paris-based firms also poses considerable difficulties. Nevertheless, private firms such as Dihl et Guérhard are vital to understanding the transformations that took place in the design culture of French porcelain production during the Revolution, especially since it was considered one of the finest producers of hard-paste porcelain in Europe.²

Dihl et Guérhard's rapid response to changing tastes and clientele and its move to a prime location near the Temple prison enabled it to survive and thrive during a turbulent period, particularly after Paris eclipsed Versailles as the epicenter of political and

fig. 1 Dihl et Guérhard (French, 1781–ca. 1824; Manufacture de Monsieur le duc d'Angoulême, until 1789). *Vase with Scenes of Storm at Sea and Vase with Scenes of Storm on Land*, ca. 1797–98. Hard-paste porcelain decorated with enamel and gilding; left: H. 18½ in. (46.2 cm), right: H. 18½ in. (46.4 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Wrightsman Fund, 2014 (2014.68.1, 2)

fig. 2 Composite image of the landscape around *Vase with Scenes of Storm on Land* in fig. 1

fig. 3 Egid Verhelst (German, 1733–1818). *Zehn geheim verborgene Silhouetten Dumourier, la Fuyet, Marat, Kellerman, Custine, Petion, Barnave, Thouret, Danton, Robespierre*, 1794. Etching, plate 5¼ × 6¼ in. (13 × 16 cm). Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris (FOL-QB-201[136])



cultural authority. Moreover, unlike the more conservative Sèvres manufactory, Dihl et Guérhard marketed itself as an innovator of newly developed production techniques couched in a language of science, industry, and the arts encouraged by the revolutionary government through public exhibitions such as the “Exposition publique des produits de l’industrie française” in Paris in 1798.

In spite of porcelain’s associations with the patronage of such elite individuals as Madame de Pompadour and Marie Antoinette, the medium was not always the stuff of delicate and superfluous decoration. As Glenn Adamson has recently underscored, porcelain production techniques “emerged from a complex web of political ambition, commercial opportunity, artisanal experimentation, and scientific knowledge.”³ Even during an age of enlightened progress and scientific reason, a language of alchemy and arcane knowledge suffused discourses on the difficulties of producing porcelain with the same level of precision and consistency as China. China had at a much earlier date incorporated the kaolin and high-firing kilns necessary to making the translucent white ceramic bodies so prized throughout Europe.⁴ Despite the technical virtuosity displayed in the Metropolitan’s vases, the disconcertingly stormy landscapes decorating them break with the conventions of landscape painting. In other words, the pictures on the vases transform what ought to be objects of pleasure and delectation into polemical vessels that would introduce a sense of tumult into any private collector’s home. This effect was not incidental but was tied to the forms of visibility that emerged within the charged atmosphere of revolutionary France.

The Dihl et Guérhard vases at the Metropolitan, which lack factory marks,⁵ were in the collection of the

Paris antiques dealer Bernard Baruch Steinitz until 2001, when they were sold to the collector Philippe Sacerdot, from whom the Museum acquired them in 2014.

Conceived as items for display rather than as part of a more functional service, they are made of hard-paste porcelain molded into the shape of amphorae and decorated with enamel and gilding; both are approximately 18¼ inches (46.4 cm) in height. Each piece terminates at the top in an outturned rim and at the bottom in a black-painted square porcelain base. The vases are composed of three distinct parts (fig. 4), each pierced in the center to allow them to be fastened together with an iron rod secured by a screw beneath the base.

Another, much larger Dihl et Guérhard piece (39⅝ in. [100.5 cm] high) at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, is also made in a multiple-component format (fig. 5).⁶ Its decoration, much like the Metropolitan’s vases, is composed of a principal band of grisaille painting surrounded above and below by grotesque ornament. On the London vase this ornament is painted in grisaille on a gold ground, whereas on the New York pieces the grotesque ornament is painted in black on a vibrant yellow ground. The necks of the Museum’s vases feature a vertically ordered motif of Greek palmettes and peacock feathers, which give way to acanthus-themed grotesques and floral swags and terminate in peacocks perched on flowers above the gold band bordering the stormy landscape and seascape scenes. Below those scenes are avian, architectural, and floral motifs, and pairs of birds on floral arrangements in baskets hanging from ribbons that are set between winged female herms draped in Greek chitons. The foot of each vase is decorated with foliage and ivy and terminates on a rounded cushion covered with a pattern of gilded oak leaves bundled with ribbon.



fig. 4 Vase with *Scenes of Storm at Sea* in fig. 1 shown disassembled

fig. 5 Etienne Charles Le Guay (French, 1762–1846), painter; Dihl et Guérhard. Vase, ca. 1790–95(?). Hard-paste porcelain, painted in enamels and gilded. H. 39 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (100.5 cm). Victoria and Albert Museum, London (309:1, 2-1876)



Toward the end of the eighteenth century, the control over French porcelain production held by the Sèvres manufactory was affected by a gradual loosening of regulations, which led to the proliferation of small, private porcelain factories centered in Paris.⁷ While a royal decree in 1766 prohibited such independent firms from producing works with gilding and three-dimensional ornaments, private workshops in Paris found ways of circumventing the rules.⁸ Thus, when the Conseil du Roi issued a decree in 1784 banning Parisian porcelain factories from operating within 15 leagues (more than 80 km) of Paris because they were consuming too much wood during a particularly difficult winter, the private firms complained to the comte d'Angiviller, director general of the Bâtiments du Roi. Among the most vociferous complainants was Dihl et Guérhard, which succeeded in maintaining its factory inside city limits and continued to use wood to fire its kilns.⁹

The company was established on February 25, 1781, through an *acte de société* signed by the porcelain modeler Christophe Erasmus Dihl, the Parisian bourgeois Antoine Guérhard, and Guérhard's wife, Louise Françoise Madeleine Croizé, in order "to handle the manufacture and marketing of any porcelain that may come from the factory which Sieur Dihl proposes to establish."¹⁰ An emigrant from Neustadt in the Palatinate who arrived in France in 1778, Dihl, a

modeler, had a specialist's knowledge of the chemical processes needed to run a porcelain factory. However, his foreign status and lack of capital made it impossible for him to set up his own factory inside Paris. As part of the agreement with the Guérhards, Dihl would be in charge of production while they would act as the entrepreneurs, supplying the 8,000 livres needed to establish and operate the new factory. Antoine Guérhard's social status as an official bourgeois of Paris enabled the company to be established inside the city; Madame Guérhard was manager of the firm, overseeing the company's books and the day-to-day running of the factory as well as the sale of its products. In 1782 the factory obtained the protection of the duc d'Angoulême, nephew of Louis XVI, enabling it to stamp its wares "Manufacture de Monsieur le duc d'Angoulême," a mark that can be found on its early productions. Angoulême's name was bestowed more as a kind of brand franchise licensed to the firm than as an expression of his patronage (he was six years old at the time), but its royal imprimatur gave the company greater financial security and publicity than that enjoyed by the countless smaller manufacturers in Paris that did not have the privilege. Dihl et Guérhard achieved rapid success, employing twelve sculptors and thirty painters by 1785.¹¹

Following a new deed of partnership in 1787, the decision was made to move the cramped factory on rue de Bondy to a larger space, which led Dihl et Guérhard to purchase the Hôtel Bergeret, a property located at the junction of the rue du Temple and the rue Meslay, around the corner from the Temple prison and the present-day Place de la République. Now destroyed, the *hôtel* had been inhabited by the amateur and collector Pierre Jacques Onésyme Bergeret de Grandcourt. The large residential space included several formal rooms intended for the display of artwork, including a gallery illuminated by seven windows.¹² The *hôtel* included a garden and a courtyard as well as several boutique spaces fronting the street; it was converted into a multi-functional space with a formal site for displaying the company's wares, residential areas for the Guérhards and for Dihl, and a factory for production. The shop was clearly impressive, for a stream of elite patrons visited the firm, from the baronne d'Oberkirch and the duchesse de Bourbon in 1786 to Gouverneur Morris of New York, who purchased, beginning in 1789, a number of pieces for the table on behalf of George Washington.¹³

The factory produced three principal types of objects: pieces for the table, pieces for the toilette, and display objects.¹⁴ Although Dihl et Guérhard productions were seen as highly refined in terms of shape and



fig. 6 Jacques François Joseph Swebach-Desfontaines (French, 1769–1823), artist; Pierre Gabriel Bertaux (French, 1737–1831), engraver; Jean Duplessi-Bertaux (French, 1750–1819), printer. *Incendie du Cap Français, le 20, 21, 22 et 23 Juin 1793, ou 2, 3, 4 et 5 Messidor An 1^{er} de la République*, 1802. Etching and engraving, 9½ × 11¾ in. (24 × 29 cm). Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris (QB-370[44]-FT4)

color, the early pieces typically reflected the prevailing taste at Versailles, which tended toward delicate Rococo vessel shapes updated with Neoclassical motifs. They incorporated floral designs, particularly patterns with delicate cornflowers, roses, and pansies; richly decorated border ornaments; grisaille paintings; and an ample use of gilding.

The political changes that swept through Paris beginning in 1789 did not signal Dihl et Guérhard's demise, as they did the Sèvres manufactory's, but instead fueled the firm's success. The year 1793 in particular marked a turning point for Dihl et Guérhard: on April 28—roughly four months before the start of the Reign of Terror—Antoine Guérhard died, leaving his widow and Dihl in charge of the factory, which retained the company name. At the end of that summer, the factory saw the sudden influx of ceramic workers from Niderviller, in Lorraine, after the faïence and porcelain manufactory there was confiscated as French national property when its owner, the comte de Custine, was guillotined on August 28, 1793¹⁵ (on the etching in fig. 4, Custine is listed as one of the ten silhouetted portraits). Niderviller specialized in a playful, hybrid style of plate influenced by both German and French manufacturers. On December 26, 1797 (6 Nivôse An VI), Dihl and Madame Guérhard married and renewed the deed to

the company, extending the partnership to April 1, 1829, a date that would ultimately mark the decline of the factory.¹⁶

While the nominal protection of the duc d'Angoulême ensured Dihl et Guérhard's success during the ancien régime, the firm's ability to survive and thrive during the French Revolution can be attributed to other factors. The world of Parisian porcelain in the last decade of the eighteenth century was fiercely competitive, and Dihl et Guérhard had to compete not only with rival producers such as Locré, Schoelcher, and Nast, but also with independent painter-decorators known as "chambrelans," who would buy blank ceramic wares from larger producers, decorate the objects in their homes, and sell them to private clients.¹⁷

Unlike other small Paris firms and home-based decorators, Dihl et Guérhard established an export market for key consumer bases in Russia and England.¹⁸ In 1789 the company signed a six-year agreement with John and Joseph Flight, British entrepreneurs and owners of the Worcester Porcelain Factory, who agreed to purchase 50,000 livres worth of merchandise per year to sell at their newly acquired warehouse in Coventry Street.¹⁹ Dihl et Guérhard's income from foreign trade provided a financial cushion at a time when the flight of *émigrés* decimated their local clientele and a



fig. 7 Jean Louis Demarne (French, 1752–1829); Dihl et Guérhard. *The Park at Saint-Cloud by the Seine*, 1809. Painted glass. Cité de la Céramique, Sèvres (MNC27065)

currency crisis, precipitated by the devaluation and consequent inflation of the new national paper currency known as the *assignat*, destabilized the Parisian luxury market. Ultimately, however, the firm's reliance on foreign markets would lead to its insolvency following the Continental Blockade of 1806, by which Napoleon sought to embargo British goods to bolster French producers.²⁰

Another reason for the company's success in the 1790s was the rise in the scale and quality of production, largely caused by the arrival of skilled ceramic workers from Niderviller. Plinval de Guillebon has suggested that Dihl et Guérhard could have employed as many as three hundred workers as a result of this inflow,²¹ but the extent to which the newcomers' presence changed the work culture of the factory and likely also affected its stylistic output has not been considered. Among the most prominent artists from Niderviller to work at Dihl et Guérhard was Charles Gabriel Sauvage *dit* Lemire (1741–1827), a modeler and sculptor of biscuit porcelain who took a number of molds from Niderviller when he moved to Paris about 1792.²² One suspects that it was largely owing to Lemire that other Niderviller workers found employment at Dihl et Guérhard. At a time when

Paris was hostile to royalty and aristocrats, domestic and foreign alike, the arrival of Lemire and others from Niderviller indicated that the city may have been regarded as a place for foreign workers to find employment, especially after the dismantling of the guilds in 1791 loosened regulations on the luxury trades in Paris. In addition, Dihl asked the French government in 1796 to allow members of his family to come to Paris from Lammsheim, a region then occupied by the Austrians;²³ the international influence within the factory must have been considerable.

Dihl et Guérhard sought to establish its own style in the context of the Revolution rather than imitate productions of the royal manufactory at Sèvres. Its pieces began to feature vibrant-colored grounds, as well as panoramic scenes painted in grisaille—quite different from the formats of Sèvres porcelain vases, which typically showed a more prominent front separated by handles from a less important back side of the vessel.²⁴ Dihl et Guérhard's distinctive look became more pronounced during the Directory (1795–99), when the company began experimenting with shapes of vessels, glazes, style and content of decoration, and the ways in which the decoration was arranged on the vessels. The results were clearly successful, for in a letter of May 10, 1800, Charles Jean Marie Alquier, newly appointed French ambassador to Spain, wrote to Foreign Minister Talleyrand, requesting that alternative diplomatic gifts be sent to Spain since “The queen already has in her cabinets a lot of Sèvres porcelain, the forms are old and they displease her; don't you think it would be possible to get her something from the Temple manufactory that would be of a more modern and purer taste?”²⁵

The talented artists working at Dihl et Guérhard included a number from Sèvres, such as Etienne Charles Le Guay and Piat Joseph Sauvage. Artists active in other fields were also associated with the firm, including Martin Drölling, known for his paintings of domestic interiors; Jacques François Joseph Swebach-Desfontaines, a skilled draftsman (fig. 6); and Jean Louis Demarne, a landscape painter who combined rustic genre scenes with scenes of nature evocative of Dutch painting (fig. 7).²⁶ These *petit maîtres* rose to prominence working in minor genres in the context of the Directory, which saw the emergence of a private art market, newly independent and wealthy artists, and experimental themes and media not previously featured in the rarefied world of the French Salon.

A portrait of Dihl painted by Le Guay visualizes the ways in which the sitter conceived of the factory not

only as a commercial space but also as a site of scientific experimentation and technological innovation (fig. 8). Dihl, fashionably dressed, sits at a secretary desk with compartments filled with jars and canisters that contain materials used to create the company's distinctive colors, which are dabbed on a small plaque before him. The uppermost surface of the desk displays factory showpieces, including a biscuit-ware statue of a child reading that was modeled at the factory by Lemire;²⁷ an elegant vase with a glaze imitating tortoiseshell encircled with a band of grisaille decoration painted by Sauvage; and a two-handled cup painted with the same distinctive yellow ground—a trademark color of the factory—that can be seen on the Metropolitan's vases. The use of yellow ground on porcelain probably began in Europe in imitation of Chinese and Japanese porcelain designs, but Dihl's version of the hue has a saturated intensity that distinguishes it from earlier examples produced at Meissen.²⁸ Moreover, achieving stable color grounds for hard-paste porcelain was a relatively new achievement; Sèvres, which initially specialized in soft-paste porcelain, was not able to perfect the technique for applying them to hard-paste porcelain until about 1790.²⁹

Le Guay's portrait of Dihl was painted on a slab of hard-paste porcelain using Dihl's newly formulated colored enamels. The hybrid nature of the porcelain plaque as a singular work of art and a manufactured product is indicated by the signatures of both Dihl et Guérhard and the artist, Etienne Le Guay, on the side of the secretary. Dihl's formula was for paint to be used on hard-paste porcelain that was sufficiently stable to withstand the high temperatures of the kiln without changing color and that would "furnish painters with the means to immortalize their works and to transmit to posterity, without alteration, the most interesting things that history and nature could offer."³⁰ He presented his findings on November 16, 1797, to members of the Institut National des Sciences et des Arts (later the Institut de France), the scholarly body that replaced the royal academies in 1795. The results were published in the January 1798 issue of the *Journal de physique, de chimie, d'histoire naturelle et des arts*, in which Jean Darcet, Antoine François Fourcroy, and Louis Bernard Guyton de Morveau, the three institute members under the chemistry section in charge of filing the report on Dihl, noted that the difficulty of painting in colors on porcelain, similar to enamel painting on other support surfaces such as copper, rested on the fact that the painter could not know what the colors, composed of crushed and pigmented bits of minerals and glass, would look like once they had undergone the heat of the kiln.³¹

There had been attempts to find a type of paint that would achieve "a completely nuanced palette, composed of colors that would not be changed at all by vitrification." It was particularly difficult to render halftones on porcelain, delicate hues susceptible "of being destroyed or of becoming dry and dull in the fire."³² The author of the report was surprised to find that even Sèvres, despite the efforts of countless scientists, artists, and inventors, had not managed to come up with colors that would remain the same after passing through the fire. When the members of the Institut National went to the factory on the rue Meslay to observe Dihl's experiment, they were impressed by the results, whereby the colors that had been painted on the ceramic tablet remained the same before and after firing. This was all the more remarkable, noted the article, because in general porcelain painters were obliged to use two palettes, one for "couleurs dures" and the other for "couleurs tendres." The former colors could withstand high heat, but the latter palette could be subjected only to moderate temperatures because of its fragile tones. Dihl's invention provided a range of stable colors that could survive high firing temperatures, thus providing colors that "promise, for painting in oil, on canvas and on other things, an imperishability and a durability that will be of infinite value for the preservation of the pictures."³³

This was not the first convergence of artistic and commercial interests in a ceramic enterprise. In England in 1777, Josiah Wedgwood began experimenting with methods for firing large but thin earthenware slabs at the request of the painter George Stubbs, who was searching for larger support surfaces for painting with enamel than the small copper tablets he had been using.³⁴ Wedgwood found the process particularly difficult because the larger the ceramic surface, the more possibilities there were for buckling, warping, and other unevenness. Dihl et Guérhard's familiarity with the Flight brothers and reliance on the English market make it easy to imagine that Dihl knew of Stubbs's portrait of Wedgwood in enamel on ceramic³⁵ and sought to emulate this portrait by commissioning Le Guay to do one of him (fig. 8).

Yet whether or not Dihl sought to surpass Wedgwood's earlier experiments for Stubbs in collaborating with Le Guay on his portrait is of less importance than the language of national industry and permanence in which his invention of colored enamels was couched. Moreover, whereas Stubbs's attempts to display his enamel-on-earthenware paintings at the Royal Academy in London generated controversy,³⁶ Dihl's porcelain output was actively



fig. 8 Etienne Charles Le Guay, painter; Dohl et Guérhard. *Portrait of Christophe Erasmus Dohl*, 1797. Enamel on hard-paste porcelain, H. 18 7/8 in. (48 cm). Cité de la Céramique, Sèvres (MNC2931)

accepted and encouraged as a useful scientific production that melded artistry and industry in the name of national progress. For the French government, manufactured products became equally as important as large history paintings and sculptures, since these cultural objects could be exported to the republic's new territories and could expand its commercial interests against those already enjoyed by England, its principal rival in all artistic, economic, and political matters.

In 1798, Dohl et Guérhard was invited to display its porcelain at the first "Exposition publique des produits de l'industrie française." Precursor to the world's fairs of the nineteenth century, the exhibition was held on the Champ-de-Mars to encourage and promote the new nation's industrial arts. Dohl et Guérhard's exhibit was located in arch number 65, between the confectioner Bazenerve, specializing in "Décorations en sucrerie," in arch 64, and Defrance, a mechanic who made "Tableaux en creux, gravé au tour" (pictures in relief, engraved with a lathe) in arch 66.³⁷ One needs to pause to take in the strangeness of this picture when it is compared with the ancien régime world of intimate cabinets, boudoirs, and well-laid tables, in which our minds more readily place sets of porcelain. The

disconcerting image of Dohl et Guérhard displaying its delicate porcelain wares in a temporary outdoor stall on the Champ-de-Mars between a candy maker and a mechanical carver demonstrates the utterly different context in which porcelain objects were contemplated in revolutionary France.

In 1806, when a number of artists working for Dohl et Guérhard such as Drölling displayed works on porcelain tablets at the Salon, art critic Pierre Jean Baptiste Chaussard praised Dohl for expanding the parameters of art, writing that porcelain "is not to be scorned, it opens new prospects to industry and the arts, it gives luxury a tasteful and elegant character, it widens the domain of art."³⁸ At the Salon of 1796, Dohl et Guérhard displayed a porcelain painting of a bather by Le Guay. The following year Dohl et Guérhard exhibited a number of works at the Musée Central des Arts (the newly established museum in the Grande Galerie of the Palais du Louvre), among them works by Le Guay, including "A rather large seascape / Another smaller seascape / A pendant landscape."³⁹

Landscapes were a stock feature of porcelain decoration, which often reproduced themes featured in oil paintings and engravings. However, paired seascape and landscape paintings on porcelain such as those the company displayed in 1797 are particularly significant in relation to the Metropolitan's vases. These vases were produced at a turning point in the meaning and conventions of the genre, when landscape was yoked to a politicized image of nature during the French Revolution. The new government sought to place its authority in a universalizing discourse of nature that would replace the language of sovereign authority, which had formerly been vested in the king's royal body. Volcanoes, thunderstorms, and earthquakes were no longer interpreted as signs of providence, but were marshaled instead by revolutionary rhetoric as evidence that revolution and rupture existed in the natural order of things, and that humanity, too, required radical revisions.⁴⁰ Although dramatic weather patterns had been depicted by artists like Vernet in his series of French ports commissioned by Louis XV from 1754 to 1765, the potential meanings for viewers had changed in light of the context of the Revolution. When the Constituent Assembly commissioned Jean François Huë in 1791 to complete his teacher Vernet's series of ports, the paintings no longer operated as expressions of monarchical stability, but as images in the service of a new republic.⁴¹

The gray-scale scenes on the porcelain vases might readily be situated alongside the prints, calendars, and other provisional forms of reproductive media that

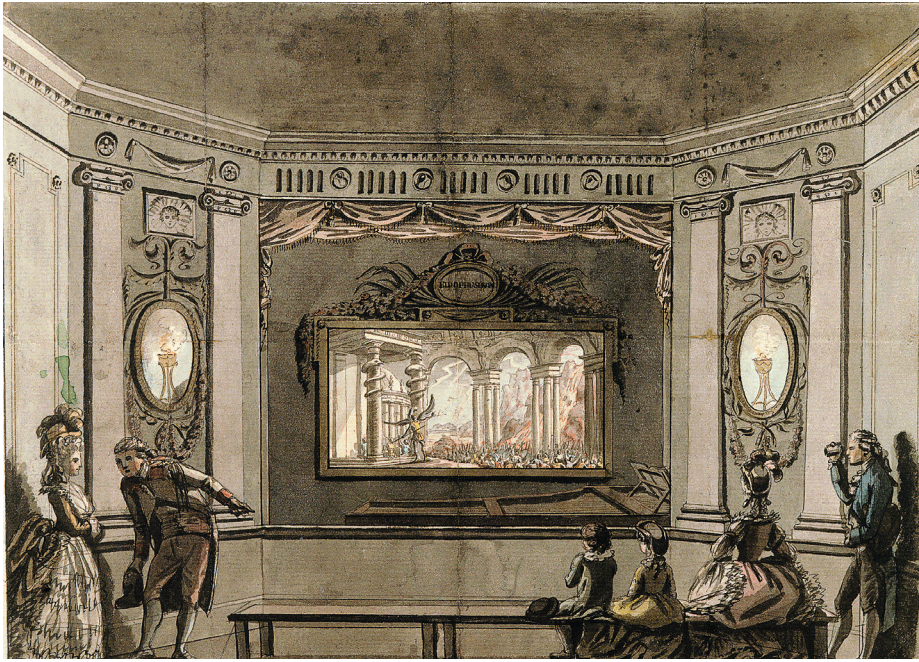


fig. 9 Edward Francis Burney (English, 1760–1848). A View of Philip James de Louthembourg's Eidophusikon Showing Satan Exhorting the Rebel Angels, 1782. Pen and gray ink and gray wash with watercolor, 8¼ × 11½ in. (21 × 29.2 cm). British Museum, London (1963, 0716.1)

proliferated during the French Revolution and which directly influenced the aesthetic changes in the Salon.⁴² The grisaille painting often seen on Dihl et Guérhard wares was a specialty of Piat Joseph Sauvage, who painted classicizing dancing putti and nymphs that evoked the masterful handling of grisaille established during the Renaissance. Art historian Aby Warburg interpreted grisaille as a kind of distancing mechanism through which artists such as Domenico Ghirlandaio momentarily held back pagan antiquity's return to a quattrocento Italy that was still ensconced in a medieval Christian culture.⁴³ By contrast, the grisaille seascape and landscape on the Dihl et Guérhard vases establish an effect of immediacy rather than distance by conjuring the dynamic language of current-event prints. Such prints were used by the revolutionary government both as political propaganda and as a way of reproducing a historical narrative that would make

sense of the rapid concatenation of contemporary events. Several of the artists working in the Dihl et Guérhard factory specialized in designs for engravings and other prints, particularly Swebach-Desfontaines, who provided some of the designs for the *Tableaux historiques de la Révolution française*, which sought to narrate the events of the French Revolution from the uprisings in Paris to the battles abroad (see fig. 6).⁴⁴ The heightened sense of movement in the trees, the lack of narrative focal point, and the landscapes' resemblance to exaggerated silhouette imagery of the period suggest the likelihood that the porcelain painter had in mind experimental forms of ephemera that pushed against the aesthetic ideals of calm grandeur championed during the Enlightenment by philosophers such as Johann Joachim Winckelmann.

The panoramic format of the seascape and the landscape on the Dihl et Guérhard vases evoke the optical viewing machines and devices of wonder that incorporated moving images, which captivated, delighted, and terrified Paris at the end of the eighteenth century. These precursors to the modern cinema were not only the province of people interested in the phantasmagoric, such as Etienne Gaspard Robertson, they were also produced by landscape painters. Particularly influential was the 1781 creation of the painter Philippe Jacques (Philip James) de Louthembourg, called the Eidophusikon, a miniature theater in which the artist created "immersive visual entertainments" that re-created the pictorial and sonorous effects of natural catastrophes for a small, paying audience in his home in London (fig. 9).⁴⁵

In France, the artist and playwright Louis Carrogis de Carmontelle created remarkable painted panoramas, which he called *transparens*. A former military cartographer who worked in the household of the duc d'Orléans, Carmontelle constructed a viewing box, which he set before a window in a darkened room. Long scrolls,



painted on transparent wove paper and affixed at each end to a roller, were pulled through the box by winding the cranks on the rollers, making it appear as though the viewer was moving through the artist's landscapes (fig. 10). Carmontelle's *transparens* entertained an ancien régime audience, for whom boredom was anathema, by visualizing a world filled with pleasures and pastimes, one on the verge of extinction.⁴⁶

While the extreme weather featured in the seascape and the landscape on the Metropolitan's vases evoke Loutherbourg's Eidophusikon, one aspect of Carmontelle's invention is particularly relevant to these scenes: in his long, scrolling views of nature are foreground trees that function both as visual signals indicating that viewers are moving from one moment to the next and as the pictorial means of joining pieces of paper that are held together on the reverse with pieces of silk (fig. 11). In figure 2, too, the landscape on Dihl et Guérhard's *Vase with Scenes of Storm on Land* is unfurled, with trees delineating movement from one moment to the next. Unlike Carmontelle's mostly sunny and verdant landscapes offering picturesque pleasures, however, the Dihl et Guérhard vases present panoramas relentlessly driven by winds that seem politically charged. It is not impossible that the painter of the vases knew of Carmontelle's *transparens*, for in 1794 Carmontelle submitted a proposal to the government for creating window shades using his transparencies, suggesting his attempts to convert a private visual entertainment into an object of public utility.⁴⁷ Beyond the formal resemblances between the sylvan landmarks of the *transparens* and the exaggerated trees of the vases, the incongruous placement of a panoramic format intended to simulate motion on a pair of porcelain vessels creates a highly unstable visual effect.

A further connection between Carmontelle's transparencies and the Dihl et Guérhard vases is suggested by painted-glass panels that the porcelain factory began

producing about 1801 and which were displayed in the factory gallery. On his visit in 1810, the prince de Clary und Aldringen described the exhibit as composed of large glass panels "that produced a surprising effect, when they were placed in the casement windows exposed to the sunlight."⁴⁸ Dihl's experiments were so successful that he engaged the painters Jean Louis Demarne and Jean Baptiste Coste to use these enamels on glass. As can be seen in an example by Demarne at the Sèvres Museum (fig. 7), illusions of motion are created in these lifelike landscapes. Unlike stiffer, more abstracted forms of stained glass, in which colors are separated into individual cells, Demarne's panel was painted both on the back of the glass and on the front, thus trapping and diffusing the sunlight in an altogether novel manner. The art critic Charles Paul Landon noted the "meticulous execution and sparkling effect" of Demarne and Coste's paintings, and exclaimed that "one can execute using [Dihl's] new method, the most precious and the most appealing works by the diverse applications that can be made, through optical illusions."⁴⁹ On the Metropolitan's vases the landscape decoration surrounded by glimmering yellow ground and gilding masterfully advertises Dihl et Guérhard's ability to recreate the pellucid effects of enamel on the white porcelain body.

The French Revolution not only transformed patronage structures and the kinds of themes that could be painted by porcelain producers, but it also provided new modes of perceiving decorative arts objects and sites of display. The use of grisaille to depict turbulent landscapes indicates the extent to which such "low" forms of media as reproductive prints had penetrated the design of objects formerly intended for elite patronage; it also demonstrates how a radical new sense of time transformed porcelain and the ways in which it was read. Thus, we cannot necessarily assume that the vases were commissioned by or made to order for a

fig. 10 Louis Carrogis de Carmontelle (French, 1717–1806). *Figures Walking in a Parkland*, 1783–1800. Watercolor and gouache with traces of black chalk underdrawing on translucent Whatman paper, 18 7/8 in. × 12 ft. 4 3/4 in. (47.3 × 377 cm). J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles (96.GC.20)



fig. 11 Louis Carrogis de Carmontelle. Detail of *Winter* from *The Four Seasons*, 1798. Watercolor and gouache with traces of black ink on silk-lined paper, overall 19¼ in. × 13 ft. 9⅞ in. (50 × 421.2 cm). Musée du Domaine Départemental de Sceaux (82.41.1)



specific client, although Dihl pieces did make their way into the homes of such distinguished collectors as Charles IV of Spain and the novelist and collector William Beckford.⁵⁰

By imaginatively foregrounding trees, which in landscape paintings had typically served as mere background imagery, the Dihl et Guérhard vases achieve a narrative indeterminacy that allowed the factory to produce luxury objects that were, in contrast to commissioned pieces, intended for a future clientele with uncertain political affiliations. The vases do not depict specific events, but the panoramic scenes achieve an effect of suspense, animation, and anticipation since they are on three-dimensional forms, which prevents the viewer from knowing what is happening on the other side of the vase and forces him or her to “perform” a revolution of the object to complete the two-dimensional image. This tension between a two-dimensional image and a three-dimensional form raises questions about the meaning and value of producing novel forms of luxury at a time when a vast number of exquisite and costly things were being

confiscated, auctioned, or destroyed as political acts, and the patrons who had formed the stable consumer base of such possessions had all but disappeared.

In conclusion, I would like to suggest that the vases, probably made about 1797–98 at the height of Dihl et Guérhard’s creative and technical period, may have been decorated by a celebrated artist of the Directory period such as Demarne, who was pleased to paint for the firm on a variety of surfaces and sizes, whether it was display pieces for the factory showroom or works of art for the new national museum in the Louvre. Since porcelain objects could be displayed at booths for industrial goods, perhaps these panoramic-format vases were not intended for the discerning gaze of a single collector or connoisseur but for a multitude of spectators marveling at the effects of seeing two distant horizons at once. For if anything, painting porcelain in revolutionary Paris meant the possibility of making objects for a modern, museum-going public.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My heartfelt thanks go to Luke Syson, Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Chairman, Jeffrey Munger, Daniëlle Kisluk-Grosheide, Denise Allen, and Julia Siemon in the Department of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, and Wendy Walker in the Department of Objects Conservation at the Metropolitan Museum; Florence Tyler at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Anne Dion-Tenenbaum at the Musée du Louvre, Paris; Flora Triebel and Antoine Bourroux at the Musée du Domaine Départemental de Sceaux; and Darby English, Maria Ruvoldt, and Richard Taws.

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NOTES

- 1 For violent seascapes by Jean Pillement, some paired with scenes of calm, see “Jean Pillement: Shipwrecks and the Sublime,” by Katharine Baetjer in the present volume.
- 2 Plinval de Guillebon 1982, p. 177.
- 3 Adamson 2010, p. 20.
- 4 On the secret of Chinese porcelain manufacture and its arrival in France, see Rondot 1999, pp. 19–21.
- 5 On Dihl et Guérhard factory marks, see Plinval de Guillebon 1982, p. 193. See also Dawson 2000, pp. 359–61.
- 6 The attributed date for the Victoria and Albert vase, ca. 1790–95, is unlikely since Etienne Le Guay’s painting in the band around the body probably relates to Jacques Louis David’s monumental *Intervention of the Sabine Women* (Louvre), which was first publicly displayed in 1799.
- 7 See Faÿ-Hallé and Mundt 1983, p. 34.
- 8 Plinval de Guillebon 1972, p. 14.
- 9 Plinval de Guillebon 1982, p. 180.
- 10 Archives Nationales, Paris, Minutier Central, XI, 700, February 25, 1781 (M. Guéret), quoted in translation in Plinval de Guillebon 1972, p. 200.
- 11 Plinval de Guillebon 1988, p. 2.
- 12 Plinval de Guillebon 1982, p. 207. Among the vestiges of Bergeret’s good taste included in the sale of his property at auction on March 7, 1789, were several mirrors, carved wainscoting, and large landscape paintings by François Boucher, all assessed as parts of the fixed property. On Bergeret’s collection, see Bailey 2002, pp. 68–69.
- 13 On Dihl et Guérhard in early American collections, see Frelinghuysen 2002, p. 289.
- 14 Plinval de Guillebon 1982, p. 190.
- 15 Heckenbrenner 2002, p. 10.
- 16 Plinval de Guillebon 1972, p. 202.
- 17 Porcelain production required multiple firings, particularly for pieces that incorporated several types of colored glaze. The first step entailed firing the clay body with or without glaze at a temperature of 1,400° centigrade. The bisque piece would then be decorated with painted enamels and would be fired at a temperature of about 800° centigrade. It was in the realm of decoration where “the greatest anarchy prevailed . . . to the great despair of dealers and collectors” (“La plus grande anarchie règne . . . au grand désespoir des marchands et collectionneurs”); Bloit 1988, pp. 77–78.
- 18 Plinval de Guillebon 1982, p. 186.
- 19 Ibid., p. 194. The Flight brothers were the sons of Thomas Flight, who had purchased the Worcester Porcelain Factory for them in 1783. When John Flight died in 1791, Joseph formed a new partnership with Martin Barr that was known as Flight and Barr; Dawson 2007, p. 11. By 1792, the name of the Dihl et Guérhard firm was known in England, as attested by an advertisement for the auction of the marquis de la Luzerne’s property; Dawson 2000, p. 357.
- 20 On the Continental Blockade’s effects on French artistic production, see Wilson-Smith 1996, especially pp. xx–xxi, 225–48.
- 21 Plinval de Guillebon 1988, p. 3.
- 22 Plinval de Guillebon 2012, p. 56.
- 23 Plinval de Guillebon 1982, p. 183.
- 24 See, for example, a pair of Sèvres vases dated 1789 at the Metropolitan Museum (2008.529, 530) that have, on each side of both vases, a vignette surrounding a small illustration; the vignettes are separated by a pair of gilt-bronze handles. An illustration and documentation may be found on www.metmuseum.org/collection/the-collection-online.
- 25 “La Reine a déjà dans ses cabinets beaucoup de porcelaine de Sèvres, les formes sont anciennes et lui déplaisent; ne croyez-vous pas qu’on pourrait lui procurer de la manufacture Temple quelque chose qui serait d’un goût plus moderne et plus pur?” Alquier to Tallyrand, Aranjuez, 20 Floréal An 8 (May 10, 1800), Correspondance diplomatique “Espagne,” Archives du Ministère des Affaires étrangères, Paris, 658, 345r–v, quoted in Bottineau 1986, p. 189.
- 26 Except for Le Guay, these painters can be found in Louis Léopold Boilly’s *Gathering of Artists in Isabey’s Studio* (1798; Louvre); see Siegfried 1995, p. 97, fig. 69.
- 27 Plinval de Guillebon 2012, p. 59, fig. 42.
- 28 For an example of a yellow-ground Meissen pot with a mounted cover decorated with ship and coastal motifs, see Cassidy-Geiger 2008, p. 352, no. 120.
- 29 Pinot de Villechenon 1997, p. 45.
- 30 “[F]ournir aux peintres le moyen d’immortaliser leurs ouvrages, & de transmettre à la postérité, sans alteration, ce que la nature & l’histoire offrent de plus intéressant”; Delamétherie 1798, p. 358.
- 31 See note 17 above.
- 32 “[U]ne palette toute nuancée, composée de couleurs qui ne changeassent point par la vitrification . . . à se détruire ou à devenir sèches & arides au feu”; Delamétherie 1798, p. 355.
- 33 “[P]romettent, pour la peinture à l’huile, sur toile & sur d’autres corps, une inaltérabilité & une durabilité qui seront d’un prix infini pour la conservation des tableaux”; ibid., p. 361.
- 34 Egerton 2007, pp. 66–71.
- 35 Wedgwood Museum Trust, Barlaston, Staffordshire, England; Egerton 2007, pp. 429–30, no. 218.
- 36 In 1782, Stubbs’s submission to the Royal Academy exhibition of five enamel paintings on Wedgwood earthenware tablets became an issue of contention between the painter and the hanging committee, which may have worried that it was showing work by a “painter on pottery”; Egerton 2007, pp. 70–71.
- 37 Vien et al. 1798, p. 16. On the history of early industrial exhibitions in France, see Colmont 1855, especially pp. 1–40.
- 38 “[N]’est point à dédaigner, il ouvre à l’industrie et aux arts de nouveaux débouchés, il donne au luxe un caractère de goût et d’élégance, il agrandit le domaine de l’art”; Chaussard, *Le Pausanias français* (1806), quoted in Plinval de Guillebon 1982, p. 185.
- 39 “Une marine assez grande / Une autre marine plus petite / Un paysage pour pendant”; 1797, 18 novembre (28 brumaire an VI), Archives de la Manufacture de Sèvres H¹L⁴, quoted in “Liste non exhaustive de tableaux sur porcelaine ayant peints dans la manufacture de Dihl et Guérhard,” in Plinval de Guillebon 1988, p. 14.
- 40 For a discussion of nature, history, and changing conceptions of time during the French Revolution, see Perovic 2012, pp. 87–126.
- 41 On Vernet, Huë, and the marine painting tradition in France, see Pétry 1999, pp. 17–19.
- 42 On the ephemerality of prints and revolutionary politics, see Taws 2013, pp. 1–11.
- 43 For a brief overview of grisaille painting from Pliny to the Italian Renaissance and the painting style’s relationship to Warburg’s *Bildatlas*, see Schoell-Glass 1991, especially pp. 200–206.
- 44 Hould 2002.
- 45 Birmingham 2016, paragraph 2.

- 46 Chatel de Brancion 2008, pp. 11–16. On the broader context of proto-cinematic forms, see Stafford and Terpak 2001, pp. 1–142.
- 47 For a translation of Carmontelle's proposal, see Chatel de Brancion 2008, pp. 129–30, appendix 1, "Report on the transparent tableaux of Citizen Carmontelle, year 3 of liberty [1792]."
- 48 "[Q]ui produisent un effet surprenant, lorsqu'ils sont placées dans les baies des croisées exposées au soleil"; Plinval de Guillebon 1982, p. 185.
- 49 "[S]ont d'un exécution soignée et d'un effet piquant . . . on peut exécuter selon le nouveau procédé, les ouvrages les plus précieux et les plus séduisants par les diverse applications qu'on peut en faire, au moyen des illusions de l'optique"; Landon 1801, p. 56.
- 50 On Dihl et Guérhard cups and saucers in Beckford's collection, see Ostergard 2001, p. 331, no. 49. These objects, decorated with roses, tulips, and other flowers against a gold ground, are marked on the bottom with the manufacturer's name and also, very unusually, with Beckford's armorial devices painted in gold within an oval.

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