

For Immediate Release

**INAUGURAL EXHIBITION OF THE BARD GRADUATE CENTER  
TO EXAMINE THE LOST WORLD OF BIEDERMEIER ERA**

Saturday, October 16, 1993 through Sunday, January 30, 1994

New York -- "Along the Royal Road: Berlin and Potsdam in Porcelain and Painting, 1815-1848," the inaugural exhibition of The Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, presents 70 urban, architectural and landscape paintings and drawings by the painter Carl Daniel Freydanck and 30 presentation porcelains produced at the Royal Porcelain Manufactory (KPM) in Berlin. These porcelains from the Biedermeier era are distinguished by their meticulously-painted decoration -- miniaturized "views" taken directly from Freydanck's original oil paintings.

Together, the luminous canvases and richly colored and gilded porcelains depict the fashionable sights of the royal court of Prussia -- architectural achievements, romantic landscapes and splendid royal palaces -- as they were admired by travelers along the historic road that linked Berlin and Potsdam. In the exhibition, the scenes are arranged sequentially in the order they would have been encountered on the royal road. The presentation at The Bard Graduate Center also features recent photographs of surviving sites, showing them from the identical vantage points painted by Freydanck.

Susan Weber Soros, the Center's founder and director, says, "I'm delighted that our inaugural exhibition explores the intimate relationship that existed between the decorative and the fine arts in the first half of the 19th century, and sets them in the context of social and political issues. As an interdisciplinary exhibition, "Along the Royal Road" is first in a series of initiatives by The Bard Graduate Center designed to promote its overall mission -- to elevate the status of the decorative arts of many nations and cultures and to make them better known to a wide audience."

The Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, a new international study and exhibition center in Manhattan, is the sole U.S. venue

for the exhibition, which has been organized by the Center in collaboration with Charlottenburg Palace in Berlin, the principal lender to the exhibition. Other lenders include several important private and public European collections including the Residenz, Munich; the Landesmuseum, Wurttemberg; and the Kunstgewerbemuseum, Berlin, in Germany.

Drs. Winfried and Ilse Baer, noted curators and porcelain experts at Charlottenburg Palace, are co-curators of the exhibition. Project director is Derek Ostergard, dean of The Bard Graduate Center, and project organizer is Nina Stritzler, curator of exhibitions.

"Along the Royal Road" begins with a view of the now-lost Royal Palace in Berlin, currently in the news as Germans debate whether or not it should be re-constructed following its demolition in 1950. The viewer proceeds along the Unter den Linden, a portion of the royal road, past numerous architectural landmarks -- museums, an opera house, a train station, an observatory and a constellation of royal residences. Several of these favorite royal residences and buildings were commissioned by King Friedrich William III from court architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel, the pre-eminent German architect of the 19th century.

The exhibition ends with images of the Royal Enclosure in Potsdam, a landscaped park and home to the then-ruling Hohenzollern family. In this section may be seen the Palace of Sanssouci and its gardens; the regal New Palace and City Palace; the villa known as Charlottenhof, the private retreat of the Crown Prince and his wife; and the creeper-clad home of court gardener Peter Joseph Lenné, whose landscape designs are still influential today.

#### Royal Porcelain Manufactory (KPM)

The demanding standards of Royal Porcelain Manufactory presentation porcelains date back to the second half of the 18th century, when KPM came under royal protection of Frederick the Great who intended that the Prussian factory rival those of Sèvres and Meissen. Many of the commemorative porcelains on view in "Along the Royal Road" are the result of direct commissions by the Prussian royal family.

Among the exhibition highlights is one such commission, an amphora shape presentation vase, dated 1848, notable for view paintings on both sides: one of Berlin's Royal Palace, now destroyed, and the other of the then-new Opera House, Berlin. The vase is faux-painted to simulate tortoiseshell, and overdrawn with fire-gilded bronze designs.



Freydanck, recently rediscovered by German art historians, was of central importance to the Royal Porcelain Manufactory during the Biedermeier period. His detailed canvases and drawings -- most commissioned individually and painted from life -- were the basis of the designs executed by KPM's rigorously-trained painters for the manufactory's most prestigious wares.

#### Catalogue and Symposia

A fully illustrated, interdisciplinary 247-page catalogue containing eight essays will be published by The Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts to accompany the exhibition. Among the authors are: co-curators of the exhibition and porcelain experts Winfried and Ilse Baer; Theodore Ziolkowski, professor of German language and literature, Princeton University; Guy Walton, professor of fine arts, New York University; and Clemens Alexander Wimmer, garden historian, Berlin. (The catalogue is available from The Bard Graduate Center at a cost of \$45).

A two-day symposium to be held at The Center in January 1994 will examine the cultural, socio-economic and political climate of the Prussian Empire during the Age of Biedermeier. For more information on this symposium, please contact Elizabeth Simpson, Assistant Dean for External Affairs.

Funding for "Along the Royal Road: Berlin and Potsdam in Porcelain and Painting, 1815-1848 has been generously provided by The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany.

The Bard Graduate Center is located at 18 West 86th Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. Admission to the gallery is \$2.

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