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## Celebrating The Early Years of Sèvres Porcelain

**T**he Bard Graduate Center in New York City is the site for the first exhibition to explore Sèvres porcelain from the first half of the nineteenth century. "The Sèvres Porcelain Manufactory: Alexandre Brongniart and the Triumph of Art and Innovation."

Featured are 110 exquisite working drawings and watercolors of Sèvres that have never been seen before in the United States. The exhibition, which remains on view through January 1998, also features finished Sèvres pieces.

The exhibit celebrates the achievements of the Sèvres porcelain manufactory during the years 1800-1847, when it was under the direction of the brilliant Alexandre Brongniart.

Brongniart was inextricably connected to Sèvres for nearly half a century. Through the advantages of birth and education, he was able to spearhead new initiatives in aesthetics and technological innovations at the manufactory while he shepherded Sèvres

teenth century.

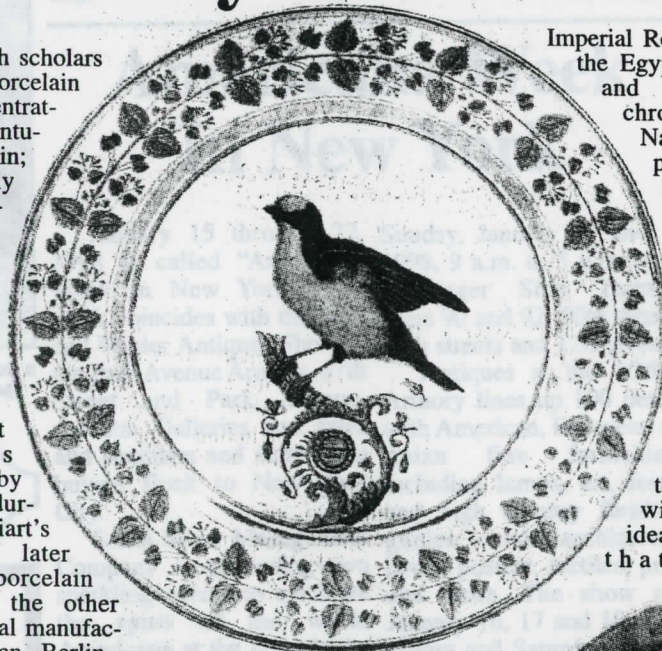
The interest of both scholars and connoisseurs in porcelain has traditionally concentrated on eighteenth-century Sèvres porcelain;

yet in the early nineteenth century the manufactory was responsible for an explosion in technical and artistic advances in the production of porcelain. Most of the significant innovations

introduced by Sèvres during Brongniart's stewardship later influenced porcelain production at the other major continental manufactories in Meissen, Berlin, Munich, and Vienna.

The primary component of the exhibition is 110 exquisite working drawings and watercolors that have never been seen before in the United States.

They are on loan from the archives of the National Manufactory of Sèvres. These are supplemented by approximately twenty unglazed



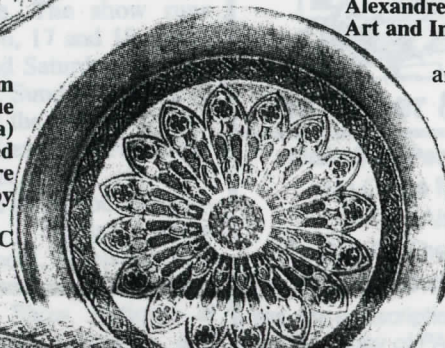
Imperial Rome, images of the Egyptian landscape and architecture chronicled during Napoleon's campaign in Egypt, and the diverse agricultural and industrial products of contemporary France, as well as polychromatic images of the nation's past. This diversity testifies to the wide range of ideas and images that



Watercolor and pencil on thin cardboard drawing for the decoration of a teapot called Their 'Chinoise Ronde', one of over one hundred drawings in the exhibit "The Sèvres Porcelain Manufactory: Alexandre Brongniart and the Triumph of Art and Innovation."

Hard paste porcelain Sèvres plate from the Service 'des Oiseaux d'Amerique du Sud', (Birds of South America) 1819-21. The decoration was painted by Madame Knip. Borders were designed by C.F.J. Leloi and painted by Durosey.

Hillwood Museum, Washington, D.C.



and Founding Dean Derek Ostergard is the project director and catalogue editor.

The exhibition is accompanied by a

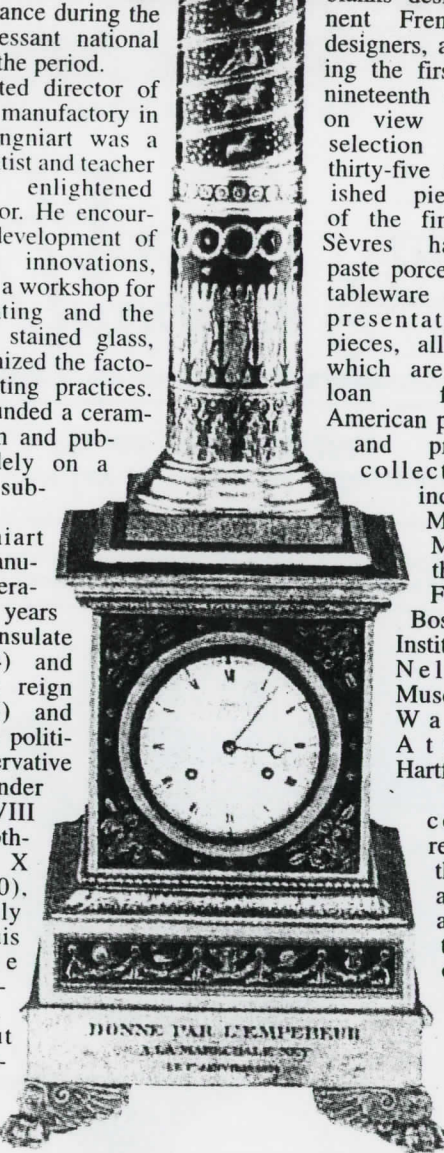




plagued France during the nearly incessant national turmoil of the period.

Appointed director of the Sèvres manufactory in 1800, Brongniart was a gifted scientist and teacher and an enlightened administrator. He encouraged the development of technical innovations, established a workshop for glass painting and the making of stained glass, and reorganized the factory's marketing practices. He also founded a ceramics museum and published widely on a range of subjects.

Brongniart kept the manufactory operative in the years of the Consulate (1799-1804) and Napoleon's reign (1804-1815) and later in the politically conservative years under Louis XVIII and his brother, Charles X (1815-1830), and finally under Louis Philippe (1830-1848). Throughout his administration, the output of Sèvres maintained the international artistic preeminence established in the eight-

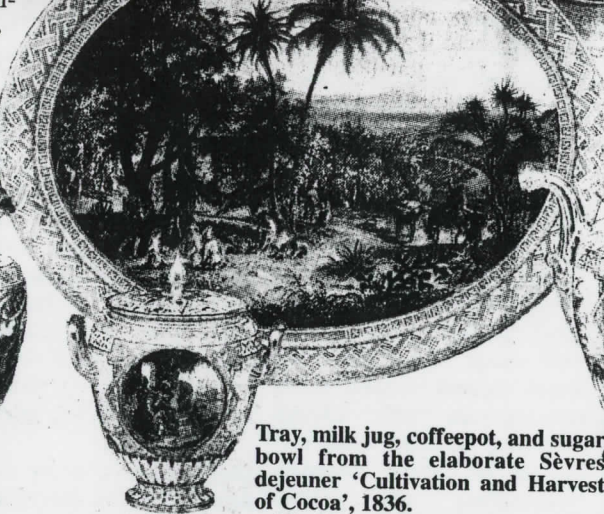


Although unsigned, the design for this early Sèvres Column Clock called Pendule 'à Colonne' (The Journey of the Sun), is attributed to Alexandre Theodore Brongniart.

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

eenth century. Also on view is a selection of thirty-five finished pieces of the finest Sèvres hard-paste porcelain tableware and presentation pieces, all of which are on loan from American public and private collections, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the Detroit Institute of Arts; the Nelson-Atkins Museum; and the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford.

Among the commissions represented in the watercolors and drawings are several of the most extraordinary porcelain dining services made during the first half of the nineteenth century. This remarkably innovative work often depicted such subject matter as the glories of



Tray, milk jug, coffeepot, and sugar bowl from the elaborate Sèvres dejeuner 'Cultivation and Harvest of Cocoa', 1836.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art



Alexandre Brongniart's design for the Sèvres porcelain vase called 'Floreal' was used throughout the 19th century with different handles in different periods.

Paul Abadie

Outstanding Sèvres cup and saucer, made in 1827, is called Tasse 'Gothique' and soucoupe. Private Collection

fully illustrated catalogue published by the Bard Graduate Center in collaboration with Yale University Press. The catalogue provides a comprehensive study of Brongniart's contribution to the development of French porcelain during his celebrated tenure as director of the Sèvres manufactory. In addition, there are a variety of public programs relating to the exhibition, including a symposium, family days, and an open house for seniors.

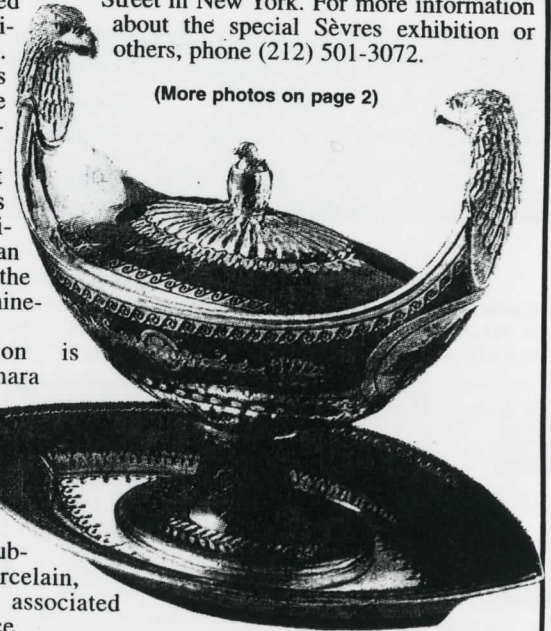
The Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts is located at 18 West 86th Street in New York. For more information about the special Sèvres exhibition or others, phone (212) 501-3072.

(More photos on page 2)

were conveyed through the medium of porcelain. Many of the pieces on view were important commissions for diplomatic gifts that served as symbols of France's domination of European decorative arts in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The exhibition is curated by Tamara Preaud, Archivist of the National Manufactory of Sèvres. The author of numerous articles and publications on porcelain, Preaud has been associated with Sèvres since 1969.

Bard Graduate Center Associate Director



This regal Sèvres sugar bowl, one of four gilded by Charles Boitel in 1812, is from the Service 'Iconographique Grec', 1812-17. Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Baron Cohen