

The Frick Collection: Detail Report



Cup from a Tea Service (one of eleven pieces)

Sèvres Porcelain Manufactory (French, est. 1756)

Date 1767

Medium Soft-paste porcelain

Dimensions 2 3/8 × 3 11/16 × 2 7/8 in. (6 × 9.4 × 7.3 cm)

Credit Line Henry Clay Frick Bequest

Accession Number 1918.9.24

Currently On View

Second Floor, Room 28, Boucher Room

Collections Ceramics

Commentary This piece is part of a tea service consisting of a teapot, a sugar bowl (both named after Pierre Calabre, one of the factory's stockholders), a milk jug, four cups, and four saucers. All the pieces are similarly decorated with polychrome birds in white reserved panels surrounded by a bleu céleste ground spangled throughout with gold dots. The birds were painted by Antoine-Joseph Chappuis (active 1756–1787), who specialized in painting birds and flowers on functional pieces like tea, dessert, and dinner services. In 1767, the year he decorated this tea service, Chappuis was also involved in painting birds on the 108-piece dessert service made for the Russian nobleman Count Kyril Razumovski (now at Waddesdon Manor, in Buckinghamshire, England). Some of the creatures on both services were copied directly from *The Natural History of Birds* and *Gleanings of the Natural History* by the English naturalist and diplomat George Edwards. Introduced to Sèvres in 1765 by the Duke of Richmond, who gave the manufactory his personal copies, these volumes allowed for a more accurate depiction of birds. Edwards's red-beaked toucan is recognizable on one cup while a pink pompadour cotinga and a wall-creeper of Surinam adorn the teapot. Tea services were purchased separately or as part of a larger dessert service.