

The Frick Collection: Detail Report



Dish: Judgment of Paris

Orazio Fontana (Italian, 1540–1571)

Date ca. 1565–75

Medium Tin-glazed earthenware

Dimensions H.: 2 1/8 in. (5.4 cm), diam.: 16 3/4 in. (42.5 cm)

Credit Line Gift of Dianne Dwyer Modestini in memory of Mario Modestini, 2008

Accession Number 2008.17.01

Currently On View

First Floor, Room 14, Enamels Room

Commentary Italian Renaissance maiolica pieces are remarkable for their rich and colorful decoration. The center of this large dish illustrates a narrative scene, or *istoriato*, depicting the Judgment of Paris, one of the most famous Greek myths. At the marriage of Peleus and Thetis, Eris, the goddess of discord, arrives with a golden apple inscribed “for the fairest.” Aphrodite, Hera, and Athena all claim the apple and ask Zeus to judge which of them is fairest. Reluctant to declare a winner himself, Zeus commands Paris, son of Priam, King of Troy, to judge their case. The scene, which depicts the moment when Paris presents the golden apple to Aphrodite, is based on an engraving of around 1517–20 made by Marcantonio Raimondi after a drawing by Raphael. The figures are surrounded by colorful grotesques delicately painted on a white ground, a specialty of the renowned workshop of Orazio Fontana in Urbino, to which the best pieces, including this one, are usually attributed. Source: Vignon, Charlotte. *The Frick Collection Decorative Arts Handbook*. New York: The Frick Collection/Scala, 2015.