

The Frick Collection: Detail Report



Vase Duplessis à Enfants (one of a pair)

Vincennes Porcelain Manufactory (French, act. ca. 1740–1756)

Date 1753–54

Medium Soft-paste porcelain, with later addition of gilt-bronze mount

Dimensions 8 5/8 × 5 7/8 × 5 7/8 in. (21.9 × 14.9 × 14.9 cm)

Credit Line Henry Clay Frick Bequest

Accession Number 1918.9.03

Currently On View

Second Floor, Room 28, Boucher Room

Commentary This vase—one of a pair—is among the earliest pieces of French porcelain in the museum’s collection. The pair was made in 1753, when the porcelain manufactory was located in the royal château of Vincennes, east of Paris. Named after Jean-Claude Duplessis, who invented their unusual shape around 1750, such vases were sometimes produced with chubby little children in relief, as seen here. Symbolic of the four seasons, these figures are almost certainly modeled after drawings by François Boucher. On one side, Summer grasps a sheaf of wheat as Autumn raises to his lips a vine laden with grapes. On the other side, Spring holds a garland of flowers while Winter rests on his companion’s thigh, warming his hands over glowing twigs. These figures were painted by Antoine Caton (act. 1749–98), who only a few years earlier began his long career at the porcelain manufactory. Caton became a prolific genre painter of a wide range of subjects, including military, historical, mythological, and pastoral scenes.

Collection History Duchesse d’Orléans (?). Comte N. P. Chérémteff, St. Petersburg. Duveen. Frick, 1918. Source: *Porcelains in The Frick Collection: Oriental and French*. Volume VII. New York: The Frick Collection, 1974.