

The Frick Collection: Detail Report



Basin

French, Nevers

Date ca. 1660–80

Medium Faience (tin-glazed earthenware)

Dimensions 7 × 23 × 15 1/8 in. (17.8 × 58.4 × 38.4 cm)

Credit Line Gift of Sidney R. Knafel, 2022

Accession Number 2022.17.75

Currently On View

Second Floor, Room 29, Ceramics Room

Commentary This recently discovered basin and the ewer (cat. 18) are the most beautiful known pieces made with the famous dark blue background known as "Nevers blue," invented in the second half of the seventeenth century in Nevers. Their shapes recall silver pieces used at the court of Louis XIV while their painted decoration—with figures wearing turbans, a shepherdess spinning a distaff, and peddlers—is inspired by early seventeenth-century French literature, including the novel *L'Astrée* by Honoré d'Urfé, published between 1607 and 1627. These two exceptional pieces were originally intended for display during a banquet on a credenza, temporarily set up either inside a royal or princely residence, or outside, in a lavish *jardin à la française*.