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A Royal Menagerie: Meissen Porcelain Animals (Getty Trust Publications: J. Paul Getty Museum)



Synopsis

"Heroic" is perhaps the only word to describe the Meissen porcelain animals made for the Elector of Saxony, Frederick-Augustus. They were commissioned in 1728 and modeled and executed by 1735. The great size of the figures presented many technical difficulties in creation and firing. Their mere completion in so many cases was itself a tour de force, making it arguably the most significant commission for porcelain executed in Europe. Presented here are the large figures of animals from the collection of Frederick-Augustus, currently on exhibition at the Getty Museum until January 2002. Frederick-Augustus had long been a collector of Japanese and Chinese porcelain. He created the most ambitious interior for porcelain planned anywhere in Europe, the famous Japanese Palace in Dresden. On the upper floor was a gallery devoted to Meissen porcelain, filled with vases, great dishes, and the animal figures displayed in this beautifully illustrated book.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Samuel Wittwer is curator of the ceramics collections at the Prussian Palaces and Gardens Foundation and of the archives of the Royal Porcelain Manufactory, Berlin.

This is a small but impressive volume of clear photos of examples from the Meissen collection. The gestures and expressions of the animals is exceptional. If you paint, draw, or sculpt animals you will love this book.

Enhanced with 30 color and 17 b/w illustrations, *A Royal Menagerie* is a superbly presented survey of extraordinary 18th-century porcelain animals from Dresden in all its grandeur. The pieces were created between 1730 and 1735 at the Saxon royal porcelain manufactory in Meissen, near Dresden, were commissioned by Friedrich August I, Elector of Saxony. Samuel Wittwer draws upon his many years of experience and expertise as curator of the ceramics collections at the Prussian Palaces and Gardens Foundation, and the archives of the Royal Porcelain Manufactory, Berlin in writing an informative and insightful text. Published to accompany an exhibition at the Getty Museum which will run until January 2002, *A Royal Menagerie* is highly recommended for students and collectors of 18th century porcelain.

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