

Circulations of Asian Objects and Works of Art on the Parisian Art Market (1789-1914)



Ground floor, Galerie d'Iéna - Chinese ceramics, before 1931 © Musée national des Arts asiatiques - Guimet

Informations pratiques

Date of the Workshop

26 May 2023 - Salle Vasari (Paris, INHA)

Submission Deadline

10 December 2022

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This workshop is organised as part of the “Collectors and Dealers of Asian art in France 1700-1939” programme conducted by the INHA.

Throughout the 19th century, Asian objects and works of art circulated on the Parisian market. Some arrived via the main ports of Marseille and Le Havre while others were put up for sale after spending many generations on the mantelpiece of a private *hôtel particulier*. These objects were then sold, exchanged, commented on, studied, and sometimes entered museums. The diversity of these objects is remarkable as their range includes porcelain, prints, bronzes, fabrics, books and engravings, from Japan and elsewhere, some recently produced and some centuries ago.

Following the French revolution, the Parisian art market underwent a new boom. Gradually, it became organised, as demonstrated by the law establishing auctioneers (1801) and the importance of the Drouot auction house in the second half of the century. The art market also exhibited at major events, such as the Expositions universelles in Paris (1855, 1867, 1878, 1889, 1900). During the 19th century, the contacts between France and Asia were marked by colonial conquests, the military presence, as well as French diplomatic, trade, and missionary activities on the continent.

With the ambition of exceeding the monographic approach and the inventory of the collections that were developed by the research programme “Collectors and Dealers of Asian art in France 1700-1939”, the workshop will be dedicated to the Asian art market in Paris, approached through the perspective of the circulation of objects. Indeed, contrary to the modern period where the question of their arrival on the capital’s market has been well studied, both in terms of its supply and the mode of consumption (notably their transformation by the mercantile merchants, their purchase by the aristocracy, their integration in the interiors), the situation of these objects and Asian works of art in Paris in the 19th century is not well-known. The study of their circulation invites us to consider the different actors who made these exchanges possible. While the Parisian dealers seemed to be the leading figures, this designation encompassed various realities, as well as numerous intermediaries, both foreign and French. The merchants and dealers were joined by individuals and institutions with multiple motivations. These actors and these objects evolved in spaces that need to be situated: at times, their geography includes the origins, the means of circulation, as well as the spaces in which buyers operated in Paris. In the end, the contacts created with the objects went beyond the Parisian market place, in which many foreign buyers participated during the 19th century.



Lefèvre (draughtsman) and Thurwanger (lithographer), *Décor* famille rose v^e époque, lithograph reproduced in Octave Du Sartel, *La porcelaine de Chine*, Paris, Vve A. Morel, 1881, PL. XXVII.
Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

This workshop will focus on several topics:

- **Dealer networks:** Who were the intermediaries of the Parisian dealers, how were they organized and what are the informal and formal exchanges that took place for purchases? How was the market supplied (provenances, belligerent and diplomatic relations, supplies from old collections)?
- **Aesthetic reactions:** Collectors, artists and writers saw and commented on the objects that were on the market. How were these objects in circulation perceived by the art world? Which words should describe the links with artistic productions from this period (inspiration, transformation, reuse, staging of Asian objects and works of art)?
- **“Cultural heritage status”:** What status was given to Asian objects and works of art that circulated on the market? What processes (heritage, market structuring, development of expertise, evolution of knowledge, questions of authenticity and financial value) were able to influence this perception?



Anonymous illustration from Octave Du Sartel, *La porcelaine de Chine*, Paris, Vve A. Morel, 1881, p. 149. Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

The talks, which will be about 20 minutes long, may focus on one or more of these topics and may be given in English or in French. Although Japanese and Chinese objects and works of art have been the main subjects of studies of Asian art in Paris to date, this workshop is an opportunity to discuss the presence of other productions on the market within the geographical limits of INHA's research project (from Eastern Siberia to Southeast Asia, including India and East Asia). Due to the lack of research available on the period lasting from 1789 to the 1850s, proposals dealing with this period are encouraged.

The workshop will be held in person in Paris (INHA, salle Vasari) on May 26, 2023. Travel expenses will be covered by INHA for speakers who do not reside in Paris.

Presentation proposals, whether individual or collective (by proposing a panel of two to three speakers) should be sent to the following addresses before **December 10, 2022**: yongsong.zheng@inha.fr and pauline.guyot@inha.fr. The proposal should include a title and an abstract of 3000 characters, accompanied by the speaker's presentation (with a bibliography). Please send the file as a single document with the title formatted as follows: 'Proposal_FirstName_LastName_Institution'. The speakers whose proposals are accepted will be asked to share the final text for their presentation with the organizers three weeks before the workshop.

Organising Committee

Lucie Chopard (AMU), Pauline Guyot, Yongsong ZHENG (INHA)

Scientific Committee

Pauline d'Abrigeon (Fondation Baur, Genève)
 Ting Chang (Nottingham University)
 Lucie Chopard (AMU)
 Elizabeth Emery (Montclair State University)
 Antoine Gournay (Sorbonne Université)
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