

Asia In Amsterdam

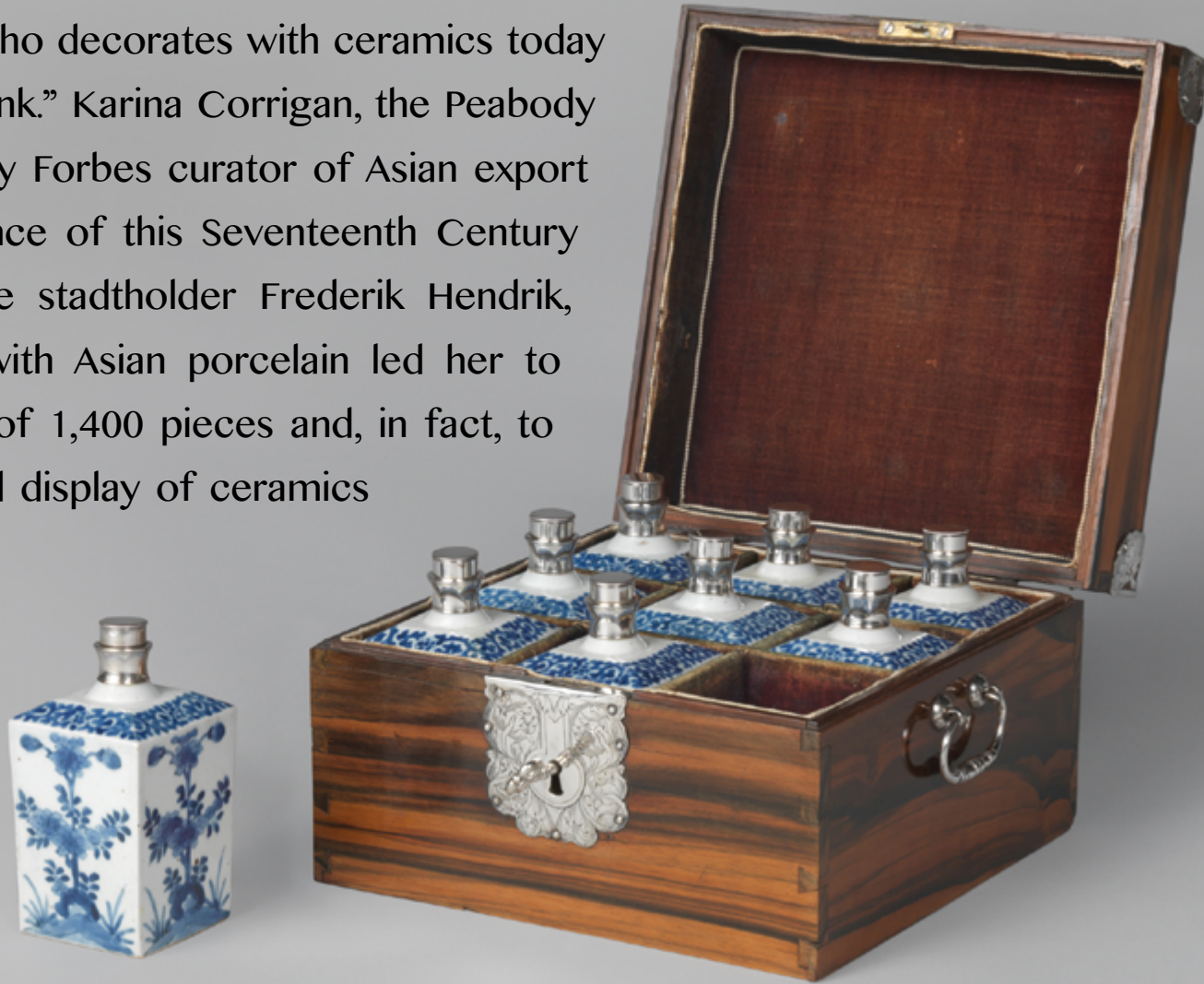
The Culture Of Luxury In The Golden Age



By Kate Eagen Johnson

SALEM, MASS. — “Anyone who decorates with ceramics today has Amalia van Solms to thank.” Karina Corrigan, the Peabody Essex Museum’s H.A. Crosby Forbes curator of Asian export art, underscored the influence of this Seventeenth Century tastemaker, the wife of the stadtholder Frederik Hendrik, whose early enthrallment with Asian porcelain led her to form a personal collection of 1,400 pieces and, in fact, to popularize the grouping and display of ceramics in home design.

This object represents the importance of gift-giving in the establishment of trade relations in Asia. The flasks originally held spice oils. Cellaret, 1680–1700, Batavia (Jakarta, Indonesia) with flasks, 1680–1700, Arita, Japan. Calamander with silver mounts and velvet lining, and porcelain. Rijksmuseum.



From 1655 to 1657, Joan Nieuhof was part of a Dutch envoy to the Chinese court. An illustration from a 1665 book by Nieuhof inspired the decoration of this plaque made in Delft, the Netherlands, 1670–1690. Tin-glazed earthenware. Rijksmuseum.



Van Solms is one of myriad intriguing figures encountered in “Asia in Amsterdam: The Culture of Luxury in the Golden Age” on view at the museum to June 5. The exhibition was co-organized by PEM and the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. (The Rijksmuseum mounted a version of the exhibition in late 2015.) All are encouraged to partake of this astonishing array of splendid objects, 200 in number and drawn from more than 60 collections, as well as the provocative stories these works represent.

Charting the impact of international trade and resulting cross-cultural fertilization has been a recurring theme among art museum exhibitions of late, and it is an especially appropriate one for the

This Dutch delftware form for holding flowers pays obvious homage to Asian design in its pagoda-inspired shape and blue and white color scheme. Flower pyramid, about 1690, Delft, the Netherlands. Tin-glazed earthenware. Rijksmuseum, on loan from the Koninklijk Oudheidkundig Genootschap.





Peabody Essex Museum to explore. PEM can trace its origins to the East India Marine Society founded in 1799. The multipronged mission of that association, comprised of Salem captains and supercargoes who had sailed around the Cape of Good Hope or Cape Horn, included the collection and display of “natural and artificial curiosities” acquired on far-flung voyages...

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As installed at PEM, the exhibition features 15 examples of household textiles and garments from a Dutch collection of India chintz acquired by the museum in 2012. Palampore, 1710–1750, Deccan, India. Cotton embroidered with silk and metal-wrapped threads. Peabody Essex Museum. —Fotostudio John Stoel photo

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