

of Fresnes on page 80). The identity of the person who commissioned the famous *Lady and the Unicorn* and its precise meaning will only be revealed through the discovery of other documents.

Anne-Sophie Laruelle, *University of Liège*

*Maiolica: Italian Renaissance Ceramics in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.* Timothy Wilson.

With Luke Syson. Highlights of the Collection. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art; distributed by Yale University Press, 2016. xii + 380 pp. \$75.

This intelligent and lavishly produced catalogue of the maiolica holdings of the Metropolitan Museum, part of its Highlights of the Collection series, is an excellent resource for Renaissance scholars across disciplines. The maiolica in the Met's Lehman Collection is well known from Jörg Rasmussen's 1989 catalogue. This volume instead examines examples from the departments of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts and Medieval Art and the Cloisters. As Wilson notes in an essay on the collection history, maiolica was part of the Met holdings within a few years after the museum's founding. The provenance of the collection is especially impressive, with pieces coming from Stefano Bardini, Alessandro Castellani, Robert Langston Douglas, Andrew Fontaine, J. P. Morgan, Mortimer Schiff, Arnold Seilgmann, Elia Volpi, and Horace Walpole, among others. These pieces range from so-called archaic wares to pharmacy jars to *istoriato* to Medici porcelain (not truly porcelain, though not maiolica, or tin-glazed earthenware, either). The 118 entries in this catalogue date from ca. 1275 to 1680, from the major Italian centers as well as France, where the style spread by the sixteenth century.

Among the most impressive examples are the sculptural, which required great skill and precision to fire successfully. One is an astonishing eight-figure Lamentation group over two-feet high and five-feet wide (no. 11), and the other a nineteen-inch-high maiolica inkstand with Apollo and the Muses (no. 106); successfully firing such complex pieces required great skill and precision. Other entries examine pieces with coats of arms from services that have been scattered through the centuries, such as that of the Florentine Strozzi and Ridolfi (no. 44) and Pucci (no. 57), as well as Matthias Corvinus and Beatrice of Aragon, king and queen of Hungary (no. 26). Some of the entries detail previously unpublished maiolica: an unattributed *albarello*, or drug jar, dated 1543 and labeled *mostardo* (a type of fruit compote), is painted with a self-referential still life of apothecary items (no. 93), while another, a tall two-handled example from the workshop of Antonio Patanazzi, is one of perhaps a dozen previously removed from the Roccavaldina pharmacy in Sicily (no. 105).

But this volume goes well beyond a standard catalogue. In addition to Wilson's essay on the collection history, there are two more preliminary essays, an introduction by Wilson, and an essay on function by Luke Syson. Wilson's introduction makes the critical point—which unfortunately still needs to be made, even today—that maiolica was a vital art form in the Renaissance. The hierarchy that places paintings, sculpture, and architecture above all other art, dating back to Giorgio Vasari and reiterated over the centuries, is a faulty but persistent construct. Wilson's introduction ably demonstrates maiolica's complexity and influence, while the catalogue shows its great diversity. Syson's essay tackles the similarly lingering notion that maiolica was decorative rather than functional. Although some of the larger plates have piercings in the foot ring to facilitate wall hanging (nos. 34 and 85), there is no reason to assume the plates were not also used at table. The diverse shapes—many of which made the objects quite difficult to paint—and carefully calculated compositions have been seen as evidence that maiolica was meant to be admired rather than used. But these very same reasons can be used to argue function, as Syson does in his essay and Wilson does in many of his entries. For example, the jars with what seems to be tare weight scratched on the undersides (nos. 30 and 36) enabled pharmacists to easily calculate the contents.

Each object is represented by at least one large-scale color photograph, and more when the undersides or additional views, details, or *comparanda* are relevant; one entry includes an evocative photograph of the potter's thumbprint (no. 16). Wilson's catalogue sets a high standard, incorporating the most up-to-date scholarship with a vivid and readable text to demonstrate the great importance of maiolica in Renaissance life, as well as its connections to contemporary painting, sculpture, works on paper, glass, metalwork, and textiles. This interdisciplinary examination emphasizes the movement of people, objects, shapes, and designs across Europe and at times further afield; in doing so, it goes well beyond a specialist catalogue and will find a wide and enthusiastic audience.

Jacqueline Marie Musacchio, *Wellesley College*

*Orfèvrerie gothique en Europe: Production et réception.* Élisabeth Antoine-König and Michele Tomasi, eds.

I libri di Viella. Arte; Etudes lausannoises d'histoire de l'art 21. Rome: Viella, 2016. 304 pp. €40.

---

Museum curators, archivists, collectors, and individual researchers have long studied goldsmithery (Günther Schiedlausky, "Betrachtungen zur Geschichte des Schrifttums über Goldschmiedekunst," in *Studien zur europäischen Goldschmiedekunst des 14. bis 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Renate Eikermann et al. [2001]: 380). More recently, university schol-