

Porcelain Collection

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Within the exhibitions, which the Castle Museum Arnstadt holds, handcrafted exhibits from the first half of the 18th century, put the strongest accents. Especially for the presentation of the porcelain collection, Prince Günther I of Schwarzburg-Arnstadt instructed the sculptor Heinrich Christoph to prepare the southern wing of the "New Palace" and set up a mirror and porcelain cabinet, which was substantially completed in 1735.

Remarkable is the completeness of the East Asian porcelain collection, which can still be admired inside the Castle Museum at the original places. The collection includes pieces from the period including Günther's life (reigned 1720-1740) and several older exhibits.

Inventory lists from 1753 and 1786 give a good description of both the equipment and the pieces of art placed in the room. Through a lined with green taffeta curtains of glass door you went from the images in the china cabinet cabinet, both rooms were lined with green painted canvas.

As a proliferating ornament the white and gold carvings of acanthus leaves cover the areas between the pilasters and result in a total 763 sheet-like consoles which are used to hold the porcelain. The corners of the long side with the entrance door are decorated with two fireplaces. In order to complete the look of the arrangement heraldic shields were attached.

The porcelain collection in changing epochs

Considering the principles of the established treasures of art, it appears that the character of the room apparently changed during the 18th century.

Besides large amounts of porcelain from 1753, numerous articles of ivory, amber, agate, marble, tortoiseshell, wood, glass, a microscope and curiosities like an ostrich and horn of a unicorn are presented. Up to the end of the 18th Century, the cabinet has been substantially reduced to porcelain, faience, terracotta and steatite work. Nevertheless will the visitor be impress by the wealth of East Asian porcelain that as available in 1753. In addition to a suitcase with 21 pieces of Viennese porcelain, about 40 parts of service and 70 figures from Meissen, some famous "Böttger stone work" can be discovered right next to around a thousand porcelains from China and Japan.

Astonishing 200 tea cups, 160 coffee cups and about 130 chocolate cups with saucer, which convincingly demonstrate the new Baroque fashion of tea, coffee and drinking chocolate. The eight sets of large and medium vases have given the porcelain cabinet an impressive feature. In order to combine the large amount of items, the porcelain had to be placed on, under and around the tables, on ledges and also directly on the floor.

Chinese and Japanese Porcelain

Since the porcelain was always considered as part of the cabinet, it has survived numerous clearance operations. Despite only a few losses, until the present day, the total stock has been maintained successfully. The main proportion of artifacts consists of Chinese porcelain from around 1700. Some pieces even date back to the second half of the 17th century until about 1740

The most impressive pieces belong to the Kangxi period (1662-1722) and are mostly blue and white porcelain, porcelain from the green family, powder blue sprayed and gold decorated vessels, pieces glazed in different colors and exhibits from the "Blanc-de-Chin-figurines" from

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Dehua, mostly with European cold enamel.

The Yong-zheng period (1723-1735) is mainly represented by some porcelains of the pink family. Porcelains from Japan, although the smallest group in numbers in the inventory of the porcelain cabinet, are very striking due to the great vase sets representative for the Imari style. Few pieces with Kakiemon décor complete the inventory of the Japanese porcelain.

Böttger Stoneware and Early Meissen Porcelain

Considered as part of the porcelain cabinet of Günther I, the exhibition also includes a collection of Böttger stoneware and early Meissen porcelain, for example a five-piece vase set with the AR Brand. This set was designated to the personal use of the Elector of Saxony and King of Poland and an indication of the close relationship between the prince of Schwarzburg and August the strong. A perfect addition to the collection is the exclusive one-off-a-kind "bust of Proserpina" as part of Giovanni Lorenzo Bernini's marble sculptures "The Rape of Proserpina".

As putative creator of the Böttger Stoneware, the sculptor Benjamin Thomae from Dresden is to be addressed. Other notable individual pieces are three rolling jugs with chinoiserie (produced 1723-1727), painted by none other than Johann Gregorius Höroldt, the greatest master of German porcelain painting.