
EXTRAVAGANT INVENTIONS

THE PRINCELY FURNITURE OF THE
ROENTGENS





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WOLFRAM KOEPPE

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY

Reinier Baarsen, Mechthild Baumeister, Daniela Meyer,
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DIRECTOR'S FOREWORD

Extravagant Inventions: The Princely Furniture of the Roentgens offers a fascinating study of the eighteenth-century German cabinetmakers Abraham Roentgen and his son David. Conceived and executed by Wolfram Koeppé, Marina Kellen French Curator in the Metropolitan Museum's Department of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, this project represents two significant achievements: the exhibition is the first large-scale monographic loan show in America devoted to a Continental European *ébéniste* of the ancien régime, and this book is the first comprehensive English-language treatment of the Roentgens and their oeuvre in nearly fifty years.

In its halcyon days during the 1780s, the Roentgen workshop was at the forefront of a dramatic shift in the evolution of eighteenth-century furniture making. Abraham and David Roentgen pioneered the use of standardized furniture elements that could be ornamented and adapted according to the wishes of their clientele. The resulting objects were not only astoundingly beautiful, but also ingenious. Many of them literally unfold to reveal at the turn of a key or the push of a button a wealth of hidden compartments, secret drawers, and mechanical and musical devices. This inventiveness, as well as superb marquetry scenes and lavish gilt-bronze ornamentation, would come to be recognized as hallmarks of the Roentgens' work, which was sought after by royalty throughout Europe, from Frederick William II of Prussia and Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette of France to Catherine the Great of Russia.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art is proud to own eight objects by the Roentgens. Among them—and the first to enter the collection in 1941—is a rolltop desk with the monogram DR (for David Roentgen), a rarity in surviving Roentgen pieces. Further, the Met's Thomas J. Watson Library maintains a substantial collection of documents from the Roentgen family estate, previously available only to experts but now accessible to all on the Museum's website. This exhibition brings together the Metropolitan's holdings with works from European and

American institutions as well as private collections, most of which have never been displayed in America. Many of these objects are traveling for the first time from the princely palaces for which they were originally made.

To undertake a project as ambitious as this one was a monumental challenge. We thank all the institutions and individuals who made their works available for research; the superb group of participating curators and conservators who provided a variety of perspectives on the Roentgens, their furniture, and their methods; and especially those who allowed their treasures to travel. Without the generous loan of multiple objects from the Roentgen-Museum, Neuwied; the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich; the Hessische Hausstiftung, Museum Schloss Fasanerie, Eichenzell/Fulda; The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; the Philadelphia Museum of Art; the Chatsworth House Trust and the Trustees of the Chatsworth Settlement; and the Kunstgewerbemuseum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, to name a few, the exhibition would not have been possible. We are especially grateful to have received the Kunstgewerbemuseum's magnificent secretary cabinet made for Frederick William II of Prussia, which is leaving Berlin for the first time ever. Another crucial loan is a unique piece from the Musée des arts et métiers in Paris that features Marie Antoinette playing a dulcimer. News of its arrival at Versailles in early 1785 created a sensation; it is now considered an important survivor of the French Revolution.

Over the years, The Metropolitan Museum of Art has benefited enormously from the remarkable generosity of Anna-Maria Kellen and her late husband, Stephen. We thank especially Marina Kellen French for her continuous encouragement and the Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Foundation, whose support made this exhibition and catalogue possible.

Thomas P. Campbell
Director
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Abraham Roentgen and his son David were possibly the most successful eighteenth-century cabinetmakers in Continental Europe. *Extravagant Inventions: The Princely Furniture of the Roentgens* is devoted to the special talent of each as well as their combined ability to exploit the natural characteristics of a wide variety of woods and to transform them into sumptuous works of compelling artistic significance. From the opening of their firm in 1742 to its closing in the early 1800s, the Roentgens pursued advancement in woodworking techniques, including inlay and marquetry; in design; and in efficient production methods. David's brilliant marketing and business strategies included research into the personal tastes of potential affluent patrons throughout Europe who indulged in lavish consumption of material goods even as the period's economic and political crises multiplied. The Roentgens' meticulously detailed variations on several basic designs radiated a highly individual flair that both enhanced the grandeur of an interior and created a majestic visual statement, one that could not be missed by any visitor of means.

The art historian Mimi Hellman (2004, p. 23) remarked that "social seduction in eighteenth-century France was impossible without furniture. Objects [such as chairs and tables] were like extensions of the body, part of a wardrobe that, correctly worn, could turn the activities of elite existence into dances of artful persuasion."

Roentgen furniture was included in exhibitions as early as 1865, when a piece labeled "David" was shown at the Union Centrale in Paris. Another table associated with David, bought in 1874 by the South Kensington (today the Victoria and Albert) Museum, was among the earliest Roentgen acquisitions by a major museum. In a little-known survey of 1887, Alois Riegl (p. 467), one of the founders of modern art history, praised the exquisite Roentgen marquetry, observing that the extensive manufactory was prescient to have created some of the earliest forms of the French Empire style. More recently, the furniture scholar Simon Jervis (1990, p. 144) characterized David as "perhaps the greatest [cabinet-maker] of all time." While David's fame is justly deserved, one of my aims for this project has been to elucidate the accomplishments of Abraham, who established the roots of the Roentgen oeuvre, developing much of the ornamental language as well as the intriguing designs and early mechanical implements that David would later perfect.

This volume presents the first comprehensive overview of the Roentgens in English in nearly fifty years, and it was a truly collaborative venture. I have greatly depended on the scholarly foundations laid by the late Hans Huth and the late Josef Maria Greber, as well as by Dietrich Fabian and especially Georg Himmelheber. The expertise of the superb curators and conservators who participated in this project is a tribute to the objects themselves. Their research, observations, and discoveries have amplified our understanding of Roentgen furniture and bolstered the Metropolitan Museum's educational mission to provide a lasting contribution to our knowledge of European furniture in the eighteenth century. We are thankful to the preeminent scholars who contributed to this publication: Bernd Willscheid from the Roentgen-Museum, Neuwied; Reinier Baarsen at the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; Bertrand Rondot from the Château de Versailles; Achim Stiegel from the Kunstgewerbemuseum, Berlin, and Tamara Rappe of the Hermitage. I give special thanks also to our conservation colleagues for their essays: Mechthild Baumeister at the Metropolitan, Hans Michaelsen in Potsdam, and Daniela Meyer and Hans-Werner Pape from Berlin.

The furniture of the Roentgens has fascinated me since my high school years. The "Roentgen fever" of my early mentors, the art lecturer Princess Margarete von Isenburg-Birstein and the conservator Count Alexander zu Münster, was highly contagious, as was their passion. The delight I feel when encountering objects by the Roentgens has not diminished in the past thirty-five years, and one of my greatest pleasures during the preparation of the exhibition was the experience of examining personally so many of their works.

My goal for the exhibition was to assemble about sixty of the best pieces ever created by Abraham and David Roentgen, representing the full scope of their careers and not only showcasing their individual designs, but also revealing how each item characterizes what makes their work so special. Whereas a single key can unlock the labyrinthine wonders in many of these imaginative masterworks, a ring of keys from around the globe was needed to open the gates of collaboration necessary for this ambitious endeavor.

Despite the constraints of distance and condition, we were able to include such superlative examples as a magnificent secretary cabinet made for a Prussian king, arguably the most expensive

and complex piece of furniture ever made, now in the Kunstgewerbemuseum, Berlin; for this I thank Michael Eissenhauer and Sabine Thümmeler. Another coup is the arrival in the United States of the famous automaton of Queen Marie Antoinette. The celebrated object is today a treasure of the Musée des arts et métiers in Paris, whose Director, Serge Chambaud, allowed it to travel. Special thanks are also owed to His Eminence Karl Cardinal Lehmann, Bishop of Mainz, who gave his special dispensation for the inclusion of the unique rotating tabernacle. I thank His Grace Peregrine Andrew Morny Cavendish, Duke of Devonshire, for lending the Chatsworth ensemble to an exhibition for the first time. Bernd Willscheid, Director of the Roentgen-Museum in Neuwied was especially generous, as were Renate Eikelmann, Director General, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich, and Taco Dibbits, Director, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg, supported us in many ways. In addition to texts supplied by Tamara Rappe, Head of Western European and Applied Arts, Mikhail B. Piotrovsky, Director, as well as Marina Lopato, Nathalia Guseva, Sergey Androsov, and Mikhail Guryev were gracious and helpful. Heartfelt gratitude is extended to Marie-Josée and Henry Kravis, Ruth Stanton, and all our lenders, named or anonymous (see p. xi), for sharing their cherished objects with our visitors.

Exhibiting furniture requires a range of special precautions, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art is one of the few institutions with the resources to take on such a challenge. Many at the Museum have contributed to this exhibition and catalogue. Foremost are Thomas P. Campbell, Director, and Philippe de Montebello, Director Emeritus, who enthusiastically endorsed the project from its inception. Luke Syson, Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Curator in Charge of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, lent his enduring encouragement following the departure of former department head Ian Wardropper, now Director of The Frick Collection.

Among the many other Metropolitan Museum staff members who have taken part in this endeavor, I thank in particular Jennifer Russell, Associate Director for Exhibitions; Martha Deese, Senior Administrator for Exhibitions and International Affairs; Emily Rafferty, President; Nina McN. Diefenbach, Vice President for Development and Membership; Sharon H. Cott, Senior Vice President, Secretary, and General Counsel; and Kirstie Howard, Assistant Counsel. Chief Registrar Aileen Chuk worked tirelessly to coordinate the details of the many loan objects. Harold Holzer, Senior Vice President for

Government Relations and Public Affairs, worked with Elyse Topalian, Vice President for Communications, and Mary Flanagan, Senior Press Officer, to provide information to visitors and media worldwide. Peggy Fogelman, Frederick P. and Sandra P. Rose Chairman of Education, and her staff, developed public programming.

Much gratitude is extended to the indefatigable Linda Sylling, Manager for Special Exhibitions, Gallery Installations, and Design, who, together with Patricia A. Gilkison, Associate Manager for Special Exhibitions and Gallery Installations, led the exhibition team: Exhibition Design Manager Daniel Bradley Kershaw realized the highly creative installation, with the coordination of Taylor Miller, Associate Building Manager, Exhibitions, and Lighting Design Managers Clint Ross Collier and Richard Lichte. Graphics were provided by Norie Morimoto, Graphic Designer. Pamela T. Barr, Senior Editor, edited the labels and other exhibition texts.

The volume has been superbly shepherded by the Museum's Editorial Department. Publisher and Editor in Chief Mark Polizzotti, Chief Production Manager Peter Antony, Associate Publisher and General Manager Gwen Roginsky, Managing Editor Michael Sittenfeld, and many others ensured that the catalogue was produced at a high standard. Book designers Miko McGinty and Rita Jules ably fitted complex material into an elegant layout. Production Manager Sally E. Van Devanter, aided by intern Briana Parker, brought accurate color to the many reproductions gathered by Image Acquisition Associate Crystal Dombrow. The authors are especially grateful to Senior Editor Harriet Whelchel for her expertise and for coordinating many details of the manuscript. The notes and bibliography were compiled by the incomparable Jayne Kuchna, who corralled an enormous amount of past research for an English-speaking audience. Their efforts were augmented by those of Ellyn Allison and Margaret Aspinwall. Mechthild Baumeister and Marijn Manuels, Conservators, Sherman Fairchild Conservation Center, reviewed the conservation essays. Kenneth Soehner, Arthur K. Watson Chief Librarian, and his associates Linda Seckelson, Museum Librarian, and Robyn Fleming, Assistant Museum Librarian, made the resources of the Watson Library available.

I was fortunate to have the expertise of distinguished colleagues at the Museum: in the American Wing, Peter Kenny, Curator and Administrator; in the Department of Drawings and Prints, Drue Heinz Chairman George R. Goldner; Perrin V. Stein, Curator; and their colleagues Stijn Alsteens, Curator; Catherine Jenkins,

Associate Curator; Femke Speelberg, Assistant Curator; and David del Gaizo, Principal Departmental Technician; in Objects Conservation, Lawrence Becker, Sherman Fairchild Conservator in Charge; Linda Borsch, Conservator; Daniel Hausdorf and Susana Caldeira, Assistant Conservators; Frederick Sager, Senior Conservation Preparator; and the Department of Scientific Research. Barbara Bridgers, General Manager for Imaging and Photography; and Chief Photographer Joseph Coscia, Jr.; along with their colleague Peter Zeray, Senior Photographer, handled photography of Museum objects on a very tight schedule.

I am grateful to the endlessly supportive staff of the Department of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, notably our Senior Administrator Erin E. Pick and Collections Manager Denny Stone, as well as James D. Draper, Daniëlle O. Kisluk-Grosheide and Jeffrey Munger, Curators; Alisa Chiles, Collections Management Assistant; Marina Nudel, former Research Associate; Melissa Smith, Assistant for Administration; Elizabeth Sullivan, Research Associate; Juan Stacey, Supervising Departmental Technician; Jacob Goble, Departmental Technician; Ellenor Alcorn, Elizabeth Cleland, Clare Vincent, and Melinda Watt, Associate Curators.

Tamara Schechter, Research Associate, Department of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, not only was a member of the author's team mentioned above, contributing thoughtful catalogue entries, but she also accomplished countless research and other tasks with the greatest bravura. Tamara was indispensable to this project.

To be an onlooker to the work of the Media Department was a privilege. As nearly all furniture by the Roentgens is metamorphic and often can be literally transformed to serve a multitude of purposes, the animations and film clips they created bring these objects to life and illustrate their function. I thank Senior Media Producer Paco Link and Christopher A. Noey, Senior Producer and General Manager for Film and Video, as well as Stephanie Post, Senior Digital Asset Specialist, and Staci Hou, Media Production Coordinator.

I have benefited enormously from the zeal and perspicacity of the following friends and colleagues: Nigel Bamforth; Ilsebill Barta-Fiedl; Marc Bascou; Christian Baulez; Manfred Bogner; Mirco Bonfiglioli; Francesca Bonny; Antonia Boström; Bruce A. Brown; Maggi Bult; Jens L. Burk; Charles Cator; Alistair Clark; Claudia Clark; Sarah D. Coffin; Brian Considine; Christine Cornet; Donna Corbin; Gerhard and

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Above all, I extend my sincere gratitude to the Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Foundation for providing the decisive support for the exhibition and the accompanying catalogue. I am most grateful to Marina Kellen French, whose visionary enthusiasm and encouragement made this endeavor possible.

Wolfram Koeppel
Marina Kellen French Curator
European Sculpture and Decorative Arts
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

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FROM ROCOCO PLAYFULNESS TO NEOCLASSICAL ELEGANCE

ABRAHAM AND DAVID ROENTGEN
AS EUROPE'S PRINCIPAL CABINETMAKERS

WOLFRAM KOEPPE

Europe in the second half of the eighteenth century was characterized by wars, famines, and a shift toward the modern nation from the centuries-old system of independent feudal lords, absolute princes, tiny city states, and various ecclesiastical establishments. The opulence of powerful monarchs contrasted with new ideas generated by the Enlightenment. This period also saw both the dawn of the Industrial Revolution as well as the devastation caused by social and political revolution. All of these events affected and were reflected in the applied arts and other examples of material culture, as can be seen in the production of French cabinetmakers like Jean-François Oeben (1721–1763) and Jean-Henri Riesener (1734–1806), and of great masters on the British Isles such as John Channon (1711–1783) and Thomas Chippendale (1718–1779).¹ Yet the furniture produced by Abraham Roentgen (1711–1793) and his son David (1743–1807) in the small independent German region of Neuwied is deserving of special acclaim.

The annual income of the Roentgen workshop at its height in the 1780s often equaled that of the Meissen porcelain manufactory. About two thousand objects have been produced by the Roentgens, of which nearly half can be identified.² The refinement of detail and proliferation of secret drawers and hidden mechanical devices were hallmarks of the Roentgens' success. Yet significant aspects of the Roentgens' oeuvre have been neglected. Although various decorative characteristics, which were often individualized to match the clients' preferences, can be traced through all of the workshop's stylistic phases, technical innovations were not necessarily dictated by the change of the outer decoration. The role of Abraham in establishing basic forms, mechani-

cal implements, and workshop practices has not been fully appreciated.

The average craftsman in eighteenth-century Europe was anonymous and bound by the austere rules of social hierarchy as defined by political borders or by vast, growing urban centers. For those born into the lower ranks of society, the only recognition that might be hoped for was a note in a church register or in some civil record. In the case of the Roentgens and their family, however, much more material exists by comparison, including contemporary portraits of Abraham and David—as well as of their wives (see figs. 1, 5, 15, 17). This was a rare occurrence for the *ancien régime*, a period from which only six or seven portraits of cabinetmakers are known.³

ABRAHAM ROENTGEN: BALANCING FAITH, FURNITURE-MAKING, AND ROCOCO EXTRAVAGANCE

Although David left a wealth of information with extensive primary documentation, Abraham remains less completely understood than his son because of the paucity of surviving documentary evidence related specifically to him. A few letters, applications for building permits, workshop inventories, signed invoices, and secondary sources have filled some gaps,⁴ and we do know that Abraham began under the tutelage of his father, a cabinetmaker in Mühlheim, near Cologne. He left Germany as a journeyman about 1731 and spent about two years in Holland before moving to London, where he joined dozens of other gifted craftsmen and artists, most of whom are lost to history. The harsh circumstances of his life there left its imprint on his personality.

During this period, Abraham developed an antenna for the taste of the aristocracy and the

FIG. 1. Unknown artist.
David Roentgen. ca. 1785.
Oil on canvas, 21 $\frac{5}{8}$ ×
18 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (55 × 46 cm).
Roentgen-Museum,
Neuwied (Inv. no. 3525)



FIG. 2. A. Gaebler after Voit. German furniture workshop, with a rolltop desk visible at right. ca. 1785. Engraving. Private collection

new moneyed nobility and urban patricians. After Paris, which culturally dominated nearly all of Europe, London was the place where fashion evolved before moving across the continent, courtesy of the obligatory grand tour of continental Europe, and especially the Mediterranean, to which the English elite were devoted. Furniture that was to be sold successfully in this environment had to be inventive and *à la mode*, and it was here that Abraham perfected his skills and absorbed the new trends, such as the use of mahogany and surface decor with brass inlay as practiced by several English masters, including John Channon (see cats. 1, 2). Even more important was his firsthand experience of the systematic division of labor within, and even among, workshops, which enabled craftsmen to specialize in the production of certain parts of a piece, thereby accelerating the manufacturing process (see fig. 2).⁵

In London Abraham joined the Moravian brethren, a devout Protestant community, before returning to Germany in 1738 and marrying Susanna Maria Bausch (1717–1776) one year later in Marienborn near Frankfurt am Main. The couple was to move to North Carolina to do missionary work with Native Americans on behalf of the Moravian community.⁶ Yet their

plans were ill fated: before crossing the channel, Susanna delivered a stillborn daughter, and Abraham decided to leave his gravely ill wife behind and to continue the voyage. After a brief encounter with pirates, the ship made its way to the safety of the Irish harbor of Galway, where the captain sought potential new passengers. The ship was subsequently sunk while still in the harbor, supposedly by rats eating through the planks. After being stranded for five or six weeks, he was reunited with his wife in the Netherlands.⁷

In 1742 Abraham and Susanna moved to Herrnhag (see fig. 16), a small Moravian community in a fertile region called the Wetterau, not far from Frankfurt am Main. (See Bernd Willscheid's essay for a closer look at the Roentgens and the Moravians.) To sustain a cabinetmaking business, pattern books, design drawings, and a record of earlier models would be necessary. Documentation reveals, however, that the couple took very few possessions with them. Johann Friedrich Hintz, a fellow Moravian who had arrived earlier and established a workshop, welcomed his colleague with tools and work space.⁸ In Herrnhag Abraham substituted local cherry for the mahogany he was accustomed to and used fir instead of oak for many of the joining parts.

Like the rest of Germany, the region comprised dozens of scattered small states and municipal units, all under the rule of the Holy Roman Empire. The local nobility around Frankfurt was eager to embrace the latest styles. Proud of his experience in England, Abraham called himself an "English cabinetmaker" and advertised creations designed in the "French and English taste," which was at the time marked by the extravagantly curvilinear lines of the rococo style. Innovations imported from London included bracket feet, cockbeaded moldings, carved-shell ornaments or rocaille formations, finely engraved brass inlay, and ornamental applications in combination with prefabricated metal mounts from Birmingham foundries (see cats. 1–3, for example). Such elements, which featured matching ornamentation to form sets, could be ordered from illustrated sales catalogues (see fig. 49, p. 52).⁹ Because of the extensive travels of Moravian members to and from England, urgently needed goods could be delivered faster than by commercial transit.

Furniture of such quality and inventiveness in design and execution—such as tea tables, gueridons (small candlestick tables), brass-inlaid chairs, and precious boxes and tea chests, which would become best sellers (see figs. 3, 4)—was hitherto unheard of in the region, and the demand for such objects increased rapidly. It is interesting that the legs of the tables were not yet



removable, as they would be in later models (see cat. 19). Abraham surely knew of the practice but did not yet feel it applicable given that the destinations for his furniture were generally within a day's voyage.

After the Herrnhuter were expelled from Herrnhag, parts of the community settled in Neuwied am Rhein in 1750, at the invitation of Count Johann Friedrich Alexander zu Wied-Neuwied (1706–1791), who hoped that the strong work ethic and prosperity of the Herrnhuter would strengthen the local economy. He granted the Herrnhuter and other religious and political groups freedom to practice their respective faiths

(a daring move for the time), as well as partial exemption from local taxes and unrestricted employment free from guild regulations. Most important, he lived a long life; thus, his reforms lasted until his death in 1791, at which point all of Europe was in chaos.

The guild-exempt status fostered the rapid expansion of Abraham's new workshop. Guilds in Germany habitually limited each workshop to two journeymen and one apprentice. This protected the broad distribution of projects among guild members, guaranteeing everyone work and a minimal income but simultaneously blocking entrepreneurship of any kind. Further, the

FIG. 3. Abraham Roentgen. Furniture ensemble. ca. 1745–50. Cherry, partially inlaid with brass. Private collection, Germany



FIG. 4. Abraham Roentgen. Box. ca. 1760. Palisander, rosewood, and mother-of-pearl; 9¼ × 15½ × 10 in. (23.5 × 39.5 × 25.5 cm). Private collection, New York

various skills related to specific tasks were narrowly defined and could not be handled by anyone who was not designated to practice them. If an armoire was to be finished, a locksmith had to supply the metal hardware, and only turners were allowed to prepare the ball feet. Thus, talented individuals were constrained by the system.¹⁰ Dozens of gifted cabinetmakers' journeymen from all over Europe chose to settle in Paris, where traditional Church and other exemptions for guild members offered more opportunities.¹¹

The favorable working arrangements in Neuwied also encouraged Roentgen to develop a more exclusive, and costly, product line using rare, exotic hardwoods with beautiful grains, which were collectively called "pound woods" (meaning that they were purchased by the pound), as well as a wide range of color shades and elaborately inlaid surface veneers.¹² To these woods were added other prestigious materials such as mother-of-pearl, ivory, and tortoiseshell, which were all increasingly refined with engraving and carving by Abraham. Roentgen's furniture gives the impression of abundant luxury, yet it is rarely superfluous. This quality and the subtly interpreted rococo forms established the early Roentgen style and distinguished the masters' ingenious creations from products by other cabinetmakers. Mechanical details were meticulously engineered and integrated into the overall design to achieve a balance of aesthetics and function.

The Imperial city of Frankfurt was an economic center of international importance for the eighteenth-century European art market, and its semiannual fairs—spring and autumn—were well attended by dealers and art agents (who were often artists themselves) acting on behalf of their aristocratic clients. Johann Baptist Ehrenreich and Christian Benjamin Rauschner, for example, searched for Old Master paintings and other artifacts for Margravine Karoline Luise von Baden-Durlach, also an early patron of the Roentgen workshop, who frequently argued about the materials and what was necessary or not in her opinion.¹³ On September 21, 1754, a Frankfurt newspaper announced that the "English cabinetmaker Abraham Roentgen of Neuwied, well known for his artistic and extra fine work, has returned with commodes, chests, clock cases, chairs, armchairs, tables, and other pieces executed with fine carving in both the French and English taste," testifying to Abraham's repeated participation at the fair.¹⁴ Johann Caspar Goethe, father of the famed German poet, followed his passion for fine collectibles, ordering from Abraham cherry armchairs and two sculpted walnut consoles, likely with virtuoso carvings.¹⁵

Abraham catered to nearly all principalities between Cologne and Baden. The primarily noble customers often acquired in quantity what came to be called *Neuwieder Arbeit* exclusively for their private use while at court.¹⁶ Many orders formed entire ensembles. A client of utmost importance was Count Johann Philipp von Walderdorff (1701–1768). From 1756 until 1768 he was archbishop and elector of Trier, the most ancient diocese north of the Alps, and the sovereign of about two hundred thousand subjects. In 1763 he also became prince-bishop of Worms, thus ruling two ecclesiastical territories along the middle Rhine. As one of his biographers noted, Walderdorff "loved to build and furnish his buildings in the latest fashion [showing] . . . good taste in many things."¹⁷ As a true Baroque ruler, he favored every form of luxury and supported the arts in all manifestations (his private theater company performed regularly during local festivities), with the aim of guaranteeing eternal commemoration.¹⁸

Walderdorff commissioned or bought from the Roentgens about two dozen pieces that are still traceable, including an ostentatious ceremonial writing desk, now in Amsterdam, and its matching chair, both prime examples of the curvilinear Central European rococo furniture then in vogue (cats. 12, 13). The extravagance of the desk's decoration and iconographic program, including references to much earlier Netherlandish artists, is so distinctive that the client must have discussed with Abraham all phases of the object's creation.¹⁹

As a member of a sect that in some lands was considered heretical, Abraham Roentgen crossed a major ethnic barrier by attracting Catholic clients of international importance, including Walderdorff. In general, the nobility living in Catholic regions hired workers only of their own faith. In 1746, for example, when the gifted cabinetmaker Carl Maximilian Mattern (1705–1774) filed a petition with the prince-bishop of Würzburg for financial help for his workshop, he mentioned expressly that he had recently converted to Catholicism.²⁰

Despite Abraham's success, a note written in 1758 by an administrative brother in Neuwied to the Moravian headquarters in Herrnhut reveals his difficult financial situation: he was a year behind in paying interest to the community on substantial loans, and the Herrnhuter sisters had to sustain him "from one fair to the next."²¹ In an ongoing display of aristocratic entitlement, his clients lagged even further behind in settling their debts to Roentgen than he did with his payments.²² Despite their financial struggles, however, Abraham and his son David would continue to grow their business and to attract important clients.

DAVID ROENTGEN:
GAMBLING WITH THE DEVIL

David Roentgen was born in Herrnhag in 1743, the first of eight children.²³ Abraham's Moravian principles and the broad, coordinated structure of the community's educational system provided the foundation for David's well-rounded upbringing. David may have begun working as an apprentice in his father's workshop as early as 1757.²⁴ In 1761 he is mentioned for the first time in Herrnhuter documents as a "natural" journeyman, which implies some years of prior training.²⁵

David learned quickly and developed superior technical and mechanical skills as well as a keen business sense. In addition to cabinetmaking, he moved increasingly into a managerial position that naturally suited his intelligence and spirit of enterprise.²⁶ This industriousness is in accord with an analysis of David's handwriting by Renata Propper:

His letters are pieces of art by themselves: they reflect his sensitivity to art, his great sense of quality combined with utmost discipline. . . . His personality combines artistry, entrepreneurial drive, and ability for planning, fueled by relentless diligence and a compulsion for excellence. . . . His ironclad discipline . . . shows in his handwriting and repeats itself in his work, in which he combines imagination in the design with quality and precision in the execution. . . . Exact, but vibrant, his writing pulsates and breathes. The fine, differentiated shadings of his writing stroke give us a premonition of the ingenious artistry of his inlays.²⁷

Despite the chaos of the Seven Years' War, which raged throughout Europe from 1756 to 1763, Walderdorff and other affluent clients continued to buy from the Roentgens, who kept producing furniture even though they did not sell enough to cover their costs. The flattering patronage of Walderdorff, the Schönborns, and the Baden family had perhaps made David overly confident and too quick to speculate as less was sold and much accumulated in stock.²⁸ The firm badly needed an injection of capital to acquire new materials, advanced machinery, and additional personnel.

In the summer or autumn of 1765, Abraham and David traveled to Holland and then to London to investigate the feasibility of relocating their workshop from the banks of the Rhine to those of the Thames. Despite the perilous financial situation of the manufactory, they spent generous sums on exotic "wood and mounts"



FIG. 5. Heinrich Foelix. *Katharina Dorothea Roentgen* [wife of David]. 1792. Oil on canvas, 24 1/8 x 18 5/8 in. (61.5 x 47.5 cm). Roentgen-Museum, Neuwied (Inv. no. 3526)

necessary for forthcoming projects.²⁹ The brethren in Neuwied were shocked by David's ambitious plans and expenditures,³⁰ brought about because so much of the work was done on speculation and payment for accepted pieces could be slow, increasing the need for further cash advances. David's boldness attracted envy and criticism; a serious clash with the Moravian community resulted in David's exclusion from some essential sacraments about 1767.

The local Moravians believed that David lacked the "protection of divine grace" and "the Lord's blessing." The conflict was described by one of the brethren:

We have a family here, Abraham Roentgen's; they have three sons here, all bad children. The oldest [David], who runs the entire household, is a miscreant. . . . Now it is possible they are close to bankruptcy. . . . [F]rom England they have had a great deal of expensive wood sent here. With it they plan to build expensive wares. . . . But nothing has been ordered, so it is only speculation. It is no use trying to talk tough with them and never has been.³¹

The constant threat of declining credit and the casual payment schedule of the aristocracy, in

FIG. 6. Abraham and David Roentgen. Secretary cabinet. ca. 1768. Various colored and engraved woods, bronze, brass; 72¾ × 53⅞ × 24¾ in. (185 × 135 × 63 cm). Designmuseum Danmark, Copenhagen (Inv. no. B 36-1921)



conjunction with the company's growing inventory of soon-to-be-outmoded pieces, forced David to explore a more aggressive business approach. Although the promotional methods and attitudes of the gambling world were completely foreign to him and without doubt against his faith, he broached the idea of a furniture lottery, knowing of the aristocracy's love of gambling and in the belief that *Neuwieder Arbeit* (by this time the name Roentgen represented a luxury brand) would entice those who wanted to remain not just *à la mode* but *à la mode Roentgen*. The tradition of such lotteries dates back to the fifteenth century in the Netherlands and to the sixteenth in German-speaking areas. Tapestry weavers in Delft and glass blowers in Middelburg also held large drawings for prizes in the sixteenth century, and in 1695 the Antwerp cabinetmaker Henrick van Soest organized a lottery of his accumulated stock.³² By the eighteenth century, some furniture makers actually preferred lotteries as the best means of selling their goods.³³

Despite the initially dismissive attitude of his father, David carried out his plans to travel with major Roentgen works, making an unprecedented and heavily publicized tour through major German cities. His energetic efforts were a success. In the 1769 Hamburg lottery, all 715 tickets were sold for roughly eighteen guilders

each, the equivalent of six weeks' pay for journeymen artisans. In an announcement for that lottery, the master described the first prize as a "bureau with a cabinet on top most artfully inlaid with Chinese figures in the manner of a mosaic in such a way that I would not hesitate, in view of the fine drawing, shading, and coloring, to compare it to the work of a painter. But the most remarkable and unusual thing is that all the figures are made only of wood."³⁴ The desk also features a clock with carillon (musical mechanism) and a hidden clavichord. This long-lost piece was identified a few years ago as the writing desk now in Copenhagen (fig. 6).³⁵ It was won originally by a Hamburg grain merchant, but, possibly because it would have looked out of place in a bourgeois interior, it soon changed owners.³⁶

THE ROENTGEN MANUFACTORY

By the time of the Hamburg lottery, David had assumed all commercial and administrative responsibilities, and Abraham continued to supervise other craftsmen until his retirement in 1784. Together they established one of the greatest working partnerships in eighteenth-century manufacturing, and certainly without parallel in commercial cabinetmaking.

To use the term "with his own hand" in the context of Roentgen furniture is a romantic

misnomer. The Neuwied *fabrique* (factory), as the enterprise was called by then, was an operation that required many hands. The Roentgens hired from everywhere in Europe only the best in their professions or those talented enough to be trained easily. This use of a team of craftsmen, each assigned a clear role in the process, within a preindustrial environment, anticipates manufacturing practices of the post-Industrial Revolution and beyond. The basic furniture forms could be refined and reworked in multiple directions over and over again, with results that varied in each incarnation. The process of ordering furniture from the manufactory in Neuwied could be compared with the purchase of a couture gown or a luxury automobile, with diverse adjustments and extras available, depending on the client's wishes and financial resources.³⁷

Michael Stürmer called the prospectus for the 1769 Hamburg lottery, with its long list and dozens of detailed descriptions of what had accumulated in the years before, a "Rosetta stone" for identifying the major forms and styles of the workshop's early period.³⁸ Indeed, Abraham initiated most of the furniture types that David would adapt as styles and technology developed. Some forms from the workshop are obvious: the multifunctional table—consisting of a pullout folded reading and writing surface, with one drawer for supplies on the right—was fully realized by about 1769 (cat. 16). This pullout mechanism would become weight driven in later monumental secretary cabinets and desks of the late 1770s and the 1780s (see cats. 34, 42, 64; fig. 21, p. 24, fig. 71, p. 140; and the appendix by Meyer and Pape in this volume), only to return to the hand-operated version in the multifunctional tables of the 1780s like the one at Chatsworth House (cat. 49).

Other ongoing forms possibly developed in the 1760s include the game table with multi-hinged tops and the rolltop desk, whose cylinder mechanism was most likely adapted by Roentgen from English and French prototypes.³⁹ A rolltop desk in the Metropolitan Museum from the late 1770s, with six legs instead of the usual four (see cat. 29), is a good example of the different options that were available to the client within the rolltop genre.⁴⁰ For Catherine the Great, Roentgen would use the same form with eight legs (see fig. 12).

One of David Roentgen's greatest gifts was his ability to attract highly skilled artisans to the Neuwied *fabrique*. Among the notable craftsmen who were associated with the workshop over the years were the artist Januarius Zick (1730–1797), whose paintings were translated into elaborate and colorful marquetry designs, and the gifted die-cutter and engraver Elie

Gervais (1721–1791). The ingenious *mechanicus* Johann Christian Krause (1747–1792) and the marquetry master Johann Michael Rummer (1747–1821), who was David's assistant before becoming a master in his own right, were integral to the running of the manufactory. All had the skills to translate Abraham and David's ideas into wood as well as to contribute many of their own. The Roentgens paid their workers generously, which was characteristic of the workshop and unusual for the time. "The best journeymen and sculptors have to be paid well," lamented the Moravian Parish council.⁴¹

David also established a network of complementary workshops, including that of the Parisian metalworker François Rémond (ca. 1747–1812). One of his most fruitful partnerships was with the Kinzing family of clockmakers and mechanical inventors, led by Peter Kinzing (1745–1816), who collaborated on longcase clocks and cabinets with musical mechanisms. By the end of the eighteenth century, the combined Roentgen-Kinzing workshop had attained a high level of achievement in the production of musical implements within furniture pieces, which today allows scholars interesting insight into musical practices of the time.⁴² In the eighteenth century, the longcase clock was one of the preferred receptacles for recording devices. Elite clients sought to impress their friends with the newest compositions captured on brass or wood cylinders. Correspondence between the Austrian ambassador in Paris, Florimond Claude, Comte de Mercy-Argenteau, and David Roentgen in Neuwied reveals that in the summer of 1779 none other than the most celebrated opera composer of his day, Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714–1787), delivered eight pieces of music for the Roentgen longcase clock owned by the count.⁴³ Gluck was a constant visitor to the house of the ambassador courtesy of the patronage of his former pupil Marie Antoinette as well as the count's mistress, the singer Rosalie Levasseur, principal artist in a number of Gluck's successful opera performances in Paris.

The Roentgen and Kinzing workshops were well aware of the maintenance needs of these complicated mechanisms. In 1779 David wrote to Duke Charles Alexander of Lorraine (1712–1780), asking to be named *artiste-ébéniste et machiniste du prince*. He pointed out that at the time of their delivery all mechanical and musical devices were in perfect condition but would require expert knowledge to keep them that way. David offered him a type of maintenance contract that allowed for periodic check-ups. Eventually the duke granted the title but made it clear that he would call on Roentgen if a problem arose.⁴⁴



FIG. 7. Detail of Berlin secretary cabinet (cat. 34), showing the figure of Columbine



FIG. 8. Grand ducal workshops, Florence, after a design by Giuseppe Zocchi. *Allegory of Sculpture* (detail). Before 1754. Hardstones, soft stones, gilt bronze. Pietre Dure Zimmer, Hofburg, Vienna

PAINTING IN WOOD

The highly detailed geometric and linear marquetry exemplified by Abraham Roentgen's writing desk of about 1760–62 (cat. 12) was referred to as *peinture en bois*, or “painting in wood,” because of its superb quality.⁴⁵ The dominant marquetry subjects in the 1760s were colorfully nuanced *pinnate* rocaille (feather motifs), gardening and musical instruments, and elaborate trompe l'oeil floral and figural compositions (see cats. 13–18 as well as the appendix by Michaelsen in this volume for a full discussion of Roentgen marquetry styles).

In a manner somewhat reminiscent of a medical laboratory, the marquetry workshop, led by Johann Michael Rummer, continually explored new ways of refining inlay techniques that had changed little since the fifteenth century.⁴⁶ The result was the lush painterly quality of marquetry *à la mosaïque*, as Roentgen named it, because of its resemblance to hardstone mosaic (see the essay by Rondot in this volume, p. 32), particularly *pietre dure*. The techniques used in marquetry *à la mosaïque* and *pietre dure* are analogous, incorporating variously shaped pieces of wood in the first case and polychrome precious and semiprecious hard stones in the second to create realistic decorative and pictorial imagery. The strong resemblance between the two has not yet been treated in depth by scholars. A direct comparison between the marquetry Columbine figure from a monumental 1779 secretary cabinet in Berlin (fig. 7) and a *pietre dure* *Allegory of Sculpture* (fig. 8) reveals remarkably similar folds and shadows, sharp rendering of

figures, and, most important, vivid color (see also fig. 29, p. 30, and fig. 63, p. 104). The Roentgens or one of their artisans could have known of such works through a *pietre dure* room in the Schloss Favorite, near Rastatt, from the first third of the eighteenth century, or from a large group of *pietre dure* panels, including *Allegory of Sculpture*, which was dispatched in 1754 from the Florentine workshops to decorate a room in Vienna's Hofburg Palace. These panels soon became the talk of the region.⁴⁷

The Metropolitan's rolltop desk (cat. 29) is a characteristic example of the workshop's mature chinoiserie marquetry in the *à la mosaïque* technique, derived primarily from designs by Januarius Zick (see cats. 21, 22). Chinese scenes and motifs captured on prints by European artists had been available from English and French sources since the 1750s (cats. 23, 25). This exotic repertoire, in combination with curving rocaille forms and designs, was integral to the evolution of the rococo style, and the fashion would last beyond 1780 and well into the neoclassical period (cats. 26, 27).

THE TRANSITION TO NEOCLASSICISM

During their trip to London in 1765, both Abraham and David Roentgen had become acquainted with the new style of Robert Adam (1728–1792) and others who since 1760 had promoted neoclassical design in England and Scotland.⁴⁸ About the same time in Paris, Baron Friedrich Melchior von Grimm (1725–1802), an arbiter of taste and the gossip whisperer of Catherine the Great, heralded *le goût grec*: “For years

now, people have turned to forms and decorations borrowed from antiquity. Aesthetic taste has gained considerably from it, and this fashion has become so prevalent that today everything is done in Greek style. In Paris, the exterior and interior design of buildings, furniture, fabrics, and jewelry of all kinds is in Greek style. This taste has now passed from architecture to fashion accessories. Our ladies are styling their hair in the Greek manner; our young dandies would feel ashamed to carry a snuffbox that was not *à la grecque*.⁴⁹

In 1763 Abraham Roentgen built a house and workshop within the Moravian quarters, featuring on the entrance door intricate rocaille decor carving by him, which served as a kind of shop sign advertising his skill.⁵⁰ In 1774 David built across the street from his father's house a palatial home encompassing two side pavilions, a storage building, two carriage gates, and an extensive workshop (see fig. 20, p. 22).⁵¹ Now he and his wife, Katharina, whom he had married the year before, had room to begin a family. The silhouettes carved on the entrance door to David's house, probably by Elie Gervais, show Plato (fig. 9) and Cicero in molded ring frames with laurel ties, disks, and cone-shaped guttae (see also cat. 65). Just as Abraham's 1763 facade highlighted the rococo style popular during the years he was most active, David's portal promoted the "modern" neoclassical style. The front windows were embellished with swag draperies like those seen on the drawing of furniture mounts in a 1772 portrait of Abraham (fig. 10).⁵² Such stylish use of swag elements appeared in German regions much earlier than in France or elsewhere, and it may well have been an invention of the Roentgens. It is beautifully expressed in a handle in the form of hanging drapery, which came to personify the Roentgen neoclassical style on hundreds of the workshop's pieces (see cat. 61).⁵³ The vogue for neoclassicism was seen especially in the regions that had been receptive to English influence, such as the northern part of Germany and the areas bordering Hanover, ruled over by King George III in a personal union with Great Britain.

The epitome of English-inspired neoclassicism in Germany is represented in Wörlitz Palace, constructed between 1769 and 1773 by Friedrich Wilhelm von Erdmannsdorff for the recently married Prince Friedrich Franz von Anhalt-Dessau (1740–1817).⁵⁴ The earliest neoclassical residence built in continental Europe, its design was influenced by both English and Italian models. David Roentgen was commissioned to supply some of the interior furnishings: English forms of chairs, cabinets, and game tables decorated in the Roentgen style. In 1771

an ensemble from Neuwied was delivered for the salon of the princess (fig. 11). It is one of the rare groups in existence of matching Roentgen pieces still in their intended setting. Yet problems with the ensemble, obviously designed and produced under time pressure, are evident. Some years ago when the group was included in an exhibition in Neuwied, it became clear that the engraved ornament had nothing in common with Abraham's mature technique. Although the urns are adequate, the greenish-stained moldings appear to have been made quickly by workers inexperienced with the form. The inlaid laurel swags, a primary characteristic of the Roentgen neoclassical style, are of lesser refinement in comparison to those that would decorate the writing surface of King Louis XVI's large secretary cabinet of 1776–79 (cat. 37). If the provenance were not known, the two pieces likely would be attributed to different workshops.

FIG. 9. Carved medallion portrait of Plato. Detail from the central doorway of David Roentgen's house in Neuwied

FIG. 10. Detail of fig. 15, p. 16, showing Abraham Roentgen holding a drawing with neoclassical designs in 1772





FIG. 11. David Roentgen. Furniture ensemble in the Salon of the Princess. ca. 1770–71. Wörlitz Palace, Dessau

In his essay, Reinier Baarsen sheds light on how Roentgen conquered the Western European market by targeting Duke Charles Alexander of Lorraine, an uncle of Marie Antoinette. From 1775 to 1779, the duke bought for his Brussels palace entire ensembles of Roentgen furnishings, including game tables and two secretaries (see cat. 27; fig. 21, p. 24) as well as large marquetry wall panels (*tapisseries en bois*) of truly magnificent dimensions (figs. 25–28, pp. 28–29). A longcase clock in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum (cat. 26) could also be associated with this group because of its mounts, whose ornamentation is similar to that of the Brussels ensemble.⁵⁵ The sovereign was immediately emulated by his courtiers, who rushed to update their homes by sending for *Neuwieder Arbeit* to satisfy their own demands for furniture in the latest fashion.

Equally as important as David's market research into taste and local habits and its transformation into furnishing styles was his ability, wherever he went, to deal effectively with local bureaucracy. In Brussels and elsewhere, he knew how to offer bribes quietly, not only to those who facilitated important connections for him but also to those in charge of commercial concerns. A few barrels of the famous wine of the Middle Rhine region could be as helpful as letters of recommendation from the most affluent personalities.⁵⁶ Thus, most of his luxury goods could be shipped across many borders as princely wares,

exempt from restrictions and taxes. Even so, overland travel, where roads were difficult to navigate during rainy seasons, could be precarious. Long-distance voyages were made mostly in the winter to take advantage of the relative stability of frozen trails (see fig. 38, p. 40). Further, the furniture was designed to be shipped in easily packable parts, to be assembled by the client. In March 1769 Abraham Roentgen wrote with instructions to Margravine Karoline Louise von Baden-Durlach, "The feet [legs] are numbered, so that when screwing them onto the table one only has to consult the number on the foot in order to place each one in the proper spot, and it is the same with the facing pieces [mounts disguising the joints between the legs and the apron] that go with the feet."⁵⁷

Inspired by his success in Brussels, David Roentgen created some of his most unusual furniture pieces for the French court at Versailles, among them a secretary cabinet nearly twelve and a half feet (378 cm) tall with marquetry symbolizing the seven liberal arts as well as a clock, dozens of mechanical devices, and housings for musical instruments (see cats. 35–37).⁵⁸ In 1779 Roentgen was appointed *ébéniste-mécanicien* (cabinetmaker and mechanical engineer) to the queen; and later the same year the title was also granted to him by the king. The following year Roentgen was finally inducted as a master into the prestigious Parisian cabinetmakers' guild, which exposed his workshop to opportunities on

a truly international scale. The strong and specific ornamental language of neoclassicism not only conveyed status to the owner but also translated well to metamorphic desks and convertible tables perfect for the smaller room sizes favored during the Enlightenment.⁵⁹

For France an ambitious advertisement was chosen. David Roentgen's business card shows a view of Neuwied in which the buildings are depicted at such a wide angle that the silhouette gives the impression of an important merchant town on the Rhine (see fig. 30, p. 32). Oversize cargo ships that could never actually have maneuvered the dangerously narrow waters at Neuwied dominate the busy waterway of the card. Was this cheating or just an embellishment to entice French clients?

David's ambition to surpass the Paris competition was fueled by a glorious celebration of the *art de vivre* in France. Yet this conspicuous spending underplayed the serious political and social problems on the horizon. Louis-Sébastien

Mercier, considered one of the first writers of *drame bourgeois*, claimed that more than six hundred flamboyant mansions were built in the decade before 1780 and noted that patrons should heed their architects, who warned that the cost of construction would amount to only a quarter of the total expenditure, with the rest to be spent on the interior decoration and furnishings that signaled living in an appropriately grand manner.⁶⁰ Fortunes could be consumed in this way, as the court aristocracy competed for the monarch's favor.

FINAL TRIUMPHS: ROENTGEN'S GREATEST PATRON

Although architectural elements were evident throughout the Roentgen oeuvre—in the pagoda-shaped lids of the tea chests of the 1740s and 1750s (cat. 2), in the altarlike structure of the Walderdorff desk of the early 1760s (cat. 12),⁶¹ and in the hoods and quarter-columns of the longcase clocks of the 1770s (cat. 26)—it is generally agreed that the final stylistic period of



FIG. 12. David Roentgen. Rolltop desk. ca. 1786. Oak veneered in amboyna wood and mahogany, gilt-bronze mounts, inlaid brass, and enamel; 64 $\frac{5}{8}$ × 50 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 35 in. (164 × 128 × 89 cm). The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (EPR-6802)

FIG. 13. Stroganov Palace, Saint Petersburg, detail of facade designed by Bartolomeo Rastrelli, 1752–54



FIG. 14. David Roentgen. Fall-front desk. ca. 1785–89. Mahogany, with gilded bronze and brass; 71 $\frac{5}{8}$ × 51 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 17 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (182 × 132 × 45 cm). The David Collection, Copenhagen (Inv. no. M 29)

the Neuwied workshop, from about 1780 to its suspension of production at the end of the century, was dominated by architectural forms. In reaching this conclusion, scholars note the frequent juxtaposition of only one- or two-tone veneer, mostly mahogany, with a severe neoclassical architectural framework and gilded mounts. Early stylistic experimentation can be seen in the 1769 Hamburg lottery desk now in Copenhagen (see fig. 6), whereas a more assured transitional piece is represented in the organic diminishing curves of the chinoiserie secretary cabinet of 1772–75 in Chicago, inspired by the work of Thomas Chippendale (see cat. 25). The central section of the facade of the famous Stroganov Palace in Saint Petersburg could have been the model for the ornament surrounding the clock dial on a rolltop desk from 1786 (figs. 12, 13).⁶² The incorporation of architectural elements culminates in the restrained fall-front desk in the David Collection (fig. 14), which features a clock dial in its temple-inspired upper section. Also related are the three large secretary cabinets made for Brussels, Versailles, and Berlin (see fig. 21, p. 24; fig. 71, p. 140; and cat. 34): each presents in miniature a fanciful architectural

monument designed by Roentgen to include the order of classical columns, and one has a rotunda. Because the ornamental program of all three celebrates the classical seven liberal arts, the secretary cabinets could be considered a late, movable variant of the symbol-laden *studioli* of the Italian Renaissance.

Having secured his position in France through his business partner Jean-Gottlieb Frost (see p. 34), David traveled northeast to Saint Petersburg in 1783.⁶³ Deliveries of single pieces with marquetry to the Russian court are mentioned as early as 1766 (see cat. 14). In 1782 some objects were sent to Grand Duchess Maria Feodorovna (1759–1828), born a princess of Württemberg, who had seen Roentgen’s inventions in Montbéliard during her grand tour and was enchanted.⁶⁴ Yet the following year saw the beginning of another truly impressive relationship: one between David Roentgen and Empress Catherine the Great of Russia, who were brought together by the former diplomat and Roentgen client Baron Friedrich Melchior von Grimm, as Tamara Rappe discusses in her essay.⁶⁵

In order to attract the empress, Roentgen created a phenomenal desk especially for her, the result of thorough market research into her personal tastes. Roentgen catered to her humanistic ambitions with a statue on top of the desk showing the sun god Apollo, hence the name Apollo desk. Roentgen must also have been aware of the empress’s love of dogs; he added a unique handle, used to gain access to hidden compartments, modeled as a portrait of Zémire, her favorite Italian greyhound.⁶⁶ Catherine couldn’t resist. She paid the asking price of 20,000 rubles, a cost comparable to that of a grand country estate with hundreds of serfs, and added as an extra token of appreciation a gold snuffbox and a “bonus” of 5,000 rubles.⁶⁷ This brilliant marketing ploy came at a time when artisans and craftsmen routinely had to write endless reminders for payment to their noble clients. Such largesse was unheard of, and the news spread throughout Europe at a dizzying speed.

A Maecenas with “the soul of Caesar and all the seduct[iveness] of Cleopatra,” as Diderot eulogized her, the empress was captivated by Roentgen’s ingenious and beautifully made creations, and she instantly became his most important client.⁶⁸ By 1789 she and members of the Russian nobility who embraced her taste had ordered hundreds of pieces to be delivered to Russia. A single shipment received by the empress in March 1786 consisted of 126 items of furniture, including a magnificent rolltop desk (see fig. 12), at a total cost of 72,704 rubles.⁶⁹ The appearance of those pieces followed the material scheme of the Apollo desk (cat. 42), with its

rigidly restrained neoclassical style and fine-grained exotic mahogany and gilded bronze mounts reflecting the harmonious interplay of art and nature.

After his last trip to Paris in September 1791, David recognized the dramatic changes that were about to revolutionize the social order throughout Europe. In 1793 the Neuwied *fabrique* was reduced drastically because many of the artisans were required to serve in the military. The French Revolutionary troops reached Neuwied on October 7, 1794, but did not cross the Rhine to occupy the town until September 1795.⁷⁰ By then David had already removed most of his stock to Kassel and Gotha, which seemed secure at the time; he later sent major portions to Ebersdorf and Neudietendorf in the Gera area.

Once again he began to travel to the aristocracy in order to sell the workshop's remaining stock and collect outstanding payments. On August 13, 1792, three days after the Paris Commune besieged the Palais des Tuileries and factually ended the French monarchy, Roentgen sent a letter to his early patron Prince Franz von Anhalt-Dessau:

I still treasure the memory that twenty years ago Your Highness was gracious enough to champion me as a young man just starting out, and to purchase several examples of my work . . . which was highly imperfect. . . . Since that time my workshop has made great strides, both in artistry and reputation, and that for nearly fourteen years I produced here with as many as two hundred assistants work solely for the French court and Paris market and . . . for the past seven years have worked exclusively for the imperial court in Russia. I . . . can now shrink my manufactory little by little and live in retirement. . . . To that end I . . . ask whether Your Serene Highness might graciously permit me . . . to humbly show Your Highness a few pieces.⁷¹

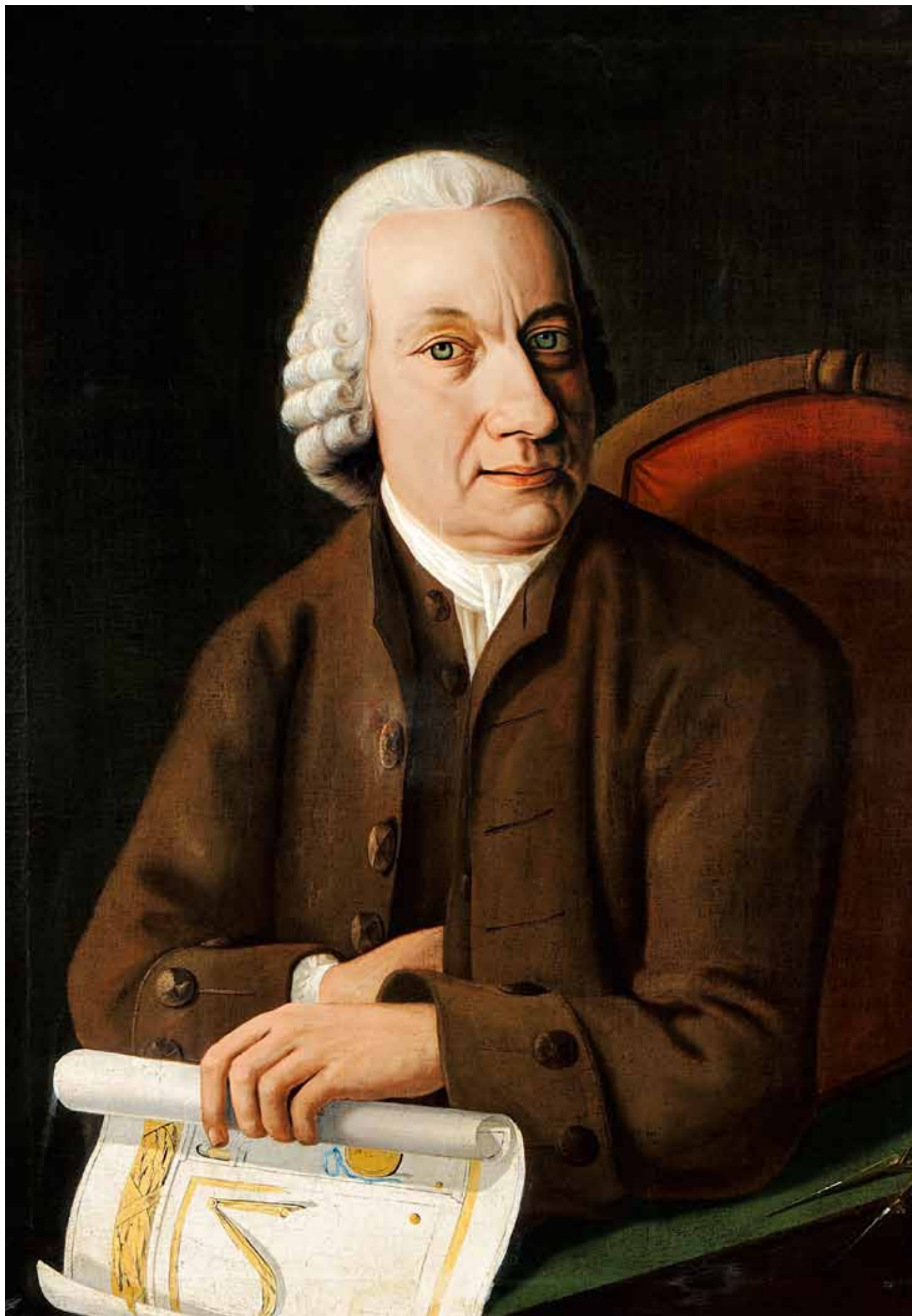
He met with some success in Weimar (see cats. 67, 68) and Gotha, and the aristocratic dynasties of the Reuss and Schönburg families and the dukes of Württemberg in Stuttgart also added *Neuwieder Arbeit* to their collections.⁷² In 1794 the king of Prussia acquired a *bureau plat* with *cartonnier* (file cabinet; see fig. 41, p. 43). As late as 1796 David requested by letter that crates with furniture be shipped from Neuwied, thus documenting that the workshop was still active although likely on a much-reduced level. It was not until March 10, 1801, that David Roentgen wrote the Moravian chairman Schmutz to say that "now I am here to . . . finish my business . . . and

then, God willing, we will joyfully come to Neuwied and commit ourselves to the guidance and direction of the Lord our Savior."⁷³ He had been welcomed back into the Moravian community several years before, and he lived comfortably but not lavishly, applying his many international contacts in his new, non-paying career as a diplomat. He also played an important role in guiding the Herrnhuter through the upheavals of wartime, and he used his diplomatic status to further his extensive charity work.

David Roentgen died on February 12, 1807, while on a mission to Wiesbaden on behalf of the Herrnhuter, who were facing reduced privileges under a new sovereign. As he had been sick only for a few days and the danger of being poisoned by political or religious rivals was real, his son Gottfried requested an autopsy. The written report of this rare procedure, totally unheard of for a Moravian, was prepared the following day: "On the right lung, the main location of his last illness, we discovered a great many black spots. . . . The upper part of the lobe was very withered. The left lung lay completely withdrawn behind the heart [and was] only a third of its normal size." Lung cancer had taken his life.⁷⁴

David Roentgen's multifaceted career as an artisan; an agent acting in the name of his father; a business leader; and even a diplomat is reminiscent of that of Peter-Paul Rubens. Throughout his life he garnered praise from anointed monarchs as well as kings of poetry: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) held him in high esteem. A desk by Roentgen is referenced in the writer's fairy tale "The New Melusine," from his last novel, *Wilhelm Meister's Journeyman Years*: "Anyone who has seen one of Röntgen's ingenious writing desks, where at a single touch many springs and hinges come into motion, so that the writing surface and implements, pigeonholes for letters and money appear simultaneously, or in quick succession . . . can imagine how that palace unfolded, into which my sweet companion now drew me."⁷⁵

The influence of the Roentgen workshop continued to be seen in furniture from France, Germany, Scandinavia, England, and above all Russia, where the use of distinctive brass mounts and contrast between mahogany or close-grained Karelian birch would last well into the nineteenth century. In Central Europe and France, the ensuing Consulate, Directoire, and early Empire styles all recalled many details of late Roentgen masterpieces. Although the standards established by Abraham and David Roentgen were never matched, the works of these and other emulators all over Europe reflected the genius of the Roentgen style.



ABRAHAM AND DAVID ROENTGEN

MORAVIAN ARTISAN AND MERCHANT-DIPLOMAT

BERND WILLSCHEID

THE HERRNHUTER BROTHERHOOD

In a letter of 1785 Count Philipp Otto von Dönhoff mentioned the cabinetmaker David Roentgen to his cousin Prince Johann Friedrich Alexander zu Wied-Neuwied: “That skilled craftsman, who delights almost all the major courts with his artistry [and who] lives in Neuwied, must be a notable mechanic and growing rich. I am told that he is a so-called Herrnhuter; it is well known that the best manufactories and artisans are found among those dear people; that you champion them can only bring blessings to Your Grace.”¹ Who were those Herrnhuter in Neuwied on the Rhine who so greatly influenced the life and work of David Roentgen, the best-known cabinetmaker of the eighteenth century, and who caused him to suffer enormous conflicts of conscience, yet with whom he felt closely associated despite their differences?

The Herrnhuter brotherhood was an evangelical religious community, an offshoot of Pietism that aspired to a life in imitation of Christ and was strictly organized according to his teachings. Their day-to-day lives were based on the concepts of brotherly love, mutual respect, and work for the common good. Unusual features of their devotions were a hymn book that was essentially an exposition of their creed; their worship services, called “assemblies,” in austere church halls; their “watchwords,” or daily exercises—edifying biblical sayings and song verses for mediation; and their practice of drawing lots at times of personal or societal crisis as a means of reaching decisions that they believed revealed God’s will.

The history of the Herrnhuter brotherhood goes back to the Bohemian, or Moravian, Brethren, a Protestant religious community encompassing followers of the reformer Jan Hus (ca. 1369–1415). Following the Thirty Years’ War (1618–48) the fraternity, based mainly in

Moravia, suffered persecution by the Catholic authorities. A small group of German-speaking brethren fled to Saxony and in 1722 settled on the estate of the Pietist Baroness Henrietta Katharina von Gersdorf. Under the direction of her grandson and heir, Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700–1760), an active preacher, the refugees lived in a community with other Pietists. The colony came to be called Herrnhut (from *unter des Herrn Hut*, meaning “under the Lord’s protection”).

Through Zinzendorf, the community came to share the nobility’s respect for learning, its cosmopolitan orientation, and its broadmindedness—qualities from which the Roentgen cabinetmakers would profit. During a stay at the Danish court in Copenhagen, Zinzendorf heard about the miserable lives led by slaves in the West Indies and reported back to Herrnhut. A year later, in 1732, the first brethren left as missionaries for the island of Saint Thomas. That same year saw the beginning of the brotherhood’s extensive missionary work in regions as far-flung as Greenland, North and South America, Africa, Russia, and Australia, and even the Himalayas.² Today’s Moravian churches around the world date back to those early missions.

According to community statute, each Herrnhuter was expected to earn his own living. The congregation took care of its poor, elderly, and infirm. One worked for God, for one’s neighbor, and for the community, not for achievement in itself and not for personal profit. Private ownership was shunned, and all property was entrusted to members as caretakers.

The Herrnhuter maintained a network of trading and financial relationships. As a religious minority frequently threatened by expulsion, they kept their capital liquid and profitably invested in the form of loans to their fellow

FIG. 15. Johannes Juncker. *Abraham Roentgen*. 1772. Oil on canvas, 31½ × 26 in. (80 × 66 cm). Roentgen-Museum, Neuwied (Inv. no. 3523)

believers. In various ways they became a tightly knit community, one in which “intensity of faith, modest consumption, economic success, and strict morality served to complement each other.”³

Unmarried “brothers” and “sisters,” as the Herrnhuter still refer to themselves today, lived apart in “choir houses” in which they established common enterprises that were in fact preindustrial workshops, for potters, clockmakers, gold- and silversmiths, and others. Those industries flourished, and a brisk and efficient trade was developed that helped to finance the community’s missionary work.⁴

The Herrnhut community continued to grow, but it was viewed with suspicion at the Dresden court, and in 1736 Zinzendorf was banished from Saxony. He eventually moved to the Wetterau, near Büdingen and Frankfurt am Main, and there founded a new settlement called Herrnhag, which at one time had more than a thousand members (fig. 16).

ABRAHAM ROENTGEN JOINS THE HERRNHUTER

Abraham Roentgen, David’s father, was born in 1711 in Mülheim am Rhein, now a suburb of Cologne. Following his apprenticeship as a cabinetmaker under his Lutheran father, Gottfried Roentgen, Abraham spent his journeyman years, between 1731 and 1738, in the Netherlands and London. Of that period in his life, Abraham’s

son Ludwig later wrote: “In London he soon found work and made a good income. He specialized in engraving, wooden marquetry, and mechanical devices, with such success that he was soon sought after by the most highly skilled cabinetmakers and was well paid.” To be sure, “the desires of youth [and] the attractions of the opposite sex” led him for a time into profligacy and loose living, but an encounter with Count Zinzendorf and his followers made him change his way of life. “News of the aristocratic German preacher reached him, and accordingly one Sunday evening he went to the count’s meeting-house . . . where [he heard] Brother Petrus Böhler deliver the daily sermon. . . . He attended the edifying meetings every day and made himself known to the count and his assistants, who accepted him in the love of Christ.”⁵ In 1737 Abraham joined the Herrnhut brotherhood, and in April 1739 he married Susanna Maria Bausch, a young woman from Pietist circles in Frankfurt. After setting sail on a missionary voyage that ended in disaster, followed by a sojourn in Holland, Abraham settled with his wife at Herrnhag (see figs. 15, 17).⁶

FROM HERRNHAAG TO NEUWIED

In 1742, the year before the birth of his son David, Abraham Roentgen set up a small cabinetmaking shop where he produced carved and inlaid furniture in the English style, with simple

FIG. 16. Settlement of Herrnhag near Büdingen. Late 18th century. Brush on paper. Hessische Landesmuseum Darmstadt, Print Collection (Inv. no. HO 222)





FIG. 17. Johannes Juncker. *Susanna Maria Roentgen*. 1771. Oil on canvas, 31½ × 26 in. (79.3 × 66 cm). Roentgen-Museum, Neuwied (Inv. no. 3524)

wooden mechanical fittings. His first customers were community members and visitors who came to tour the Herrnhag settlement. Zinzendorf's international contacts and Abraham's own experience working for aristocratic clients in London proved to be of use to him. Very soon he was making profitable sales to noble families in the Wetterau, including various branches of the Ysenburg and Solms dynasties, and to an ever-widening circle of patrons attracted by his displays at the semiannual trade fair in Frankfurt (see cat. 2).

Tensions between the Herrnhuter and the Büdingen authorities led to the dissolution of the Herrnhag colony in 1750. A small group of forty-two people, including Abraham and his family, found a new refuge in Neuwied on the

Rhine (fig. 18). That town was the residence of the pious Count Johann Friedrich Alexander zu Wied-Neuwied. It had a flourishing economy and was known for its religious tolerance. In Neuwied, Abraham set up his workshop once again, and there, especially under his son David, it would develop into a furniture manufactory of the highest rank.

DAVID ROENTGEN'S SCHOOLING AND CAREER

To the Herrnhuter, the education and training of children and adolescents was always a major concern. Their boarding schools for boys and girls had a splendid reputation, and noble families well disposed to the brethren eagerly sent their sons there. David Roentgen left home at



FIG. 18. B. F. Leizelt, after C. F. Tröger. *Prospect of the City of Neuwied*. 1784. Engraving. Roentgen-Museum, Neuwied (Inv. no. 358). David Roentgen's home and workshop appear in the highlighted circle.

the age of six to attend schools in the Herrnhuter settlements at Marienborn, Lindheim, and Niesky. In 1753 he returned to Neuwied and from about 1756 until 1759 lived in the brotherhood's boys' choir house.⁷ David's education was far superior to that of a typical European cabinetmaker's son, for it included instruction in the arts and sciences and in humanist subjects. From a young age he spoke French, the language of affluent Europeans. Most of his tutors had come from a French-speaking region of Switzerland.⁸

Roentgen's early contacts with the nobility and his fluency in French were useful in his later commercial dealings and helped to assure his success. He was perfectly at ease in great houses and palaces; proper behavior and appropriate conversation at court came naturally to him. He corresponded with princes, high court officials, and intellectuals as a matter of course. Thanks to his superior education, he understood the meaning of the mythological scenes and symbols that artists designed for the marquetry and bronzes that he incorporated in his furniture.⁹

David began his formal training as a cabinetmaker in his father's workshop at the latest when he was about eighteen. Abraham's business was flourishing, in part because of various privileges he enjoyed. Count zu Wied-Neuwied had granted the community partial exemption from local taxes and he also waived guild rules against hiring more than two assistants, engaging in activities not directly associated with the profession of a woodworker, and marketing in regions outside the local guild's purview. Another advantage lay in the nature of the Roentgens' clientele, many of whom were noblemen eager to furnish their palaces with maximum ostentation; inasmuch as such "princely goods" were exempt from duties, shipments could cross borders freely.¹⁰

Still another important factor in the Roentgens' success was the brotherhood's missionary activity, in the course of which close ties were forged with ruling elites across the globe. Consequently, the Herrnhuter were able to do well by doing good; however, what set the Roentgens apart was the extravagant nature of their merchandise, a luxury the brethren themselves shunned.¹¹



The Roentgens' patrons in Germany valued the furniture despite the professed religion of the owners of the workshop. What mattered was that they be provided with pieces of the highest quality. Thus, the Catholic archbishop-electors Johann Philipp von Walderdorff of Trier and the abbess of the convent Altmünster in Mainz became the proud owners of Herrnhuter marquetry pieces with intricate interior fittings.¹² By the same token, religious affiliation was equally immaterial to the Roentgens; they employed Herrnhuter, Protestants, Lutherans, Catholics, as well as the Mennonite clockmaker Peter Kinzing. Abraham and David also worked closely with the brotherhood's various industries, especially its cabinetmaking shop, which specialized in architectural joinery and utilitarian furniture.

Not long after David entered his father's shop and energized it with fresh marketing and design ideas, the swift ascent of the manufactory was interrupted by the financial crisis following the Seven Years' War (1756–63). Abraham made few major sales during the conflict, and at the

same time he was building a house for his family. In order to purchase precious woods and expensive materials for furniture ordered by clients or to be made on speculation, he was obliged to seek loans. He turned first to his family and then to the brotherhood. Indebtedness and financial uncertainty eventually led to difficulties with his Herrnhuter brethren. They complained that Abraham's debts were the result of his running "a very expensive household" and that he had "acted on his own in Neuwied from the very beginning."¹³ They even requested that he move to Zeist in the Netherlands or to London—"a relief for Neuwied"—and refused to make any further loan guarantees.¹⁴

A furniture lottery that David organized in Hamburg in 1768–69 freed the Roentgen family and business from all financial worries. At first Abraham was inclined to submit to the urgings of the brotherhood and reduce the size of his workshop, rather than to plunge into uncertain dealings, in this case a game of chance. But the self-confident and determined David—by now a "villain" in the eyes of the brethren¹⁵—prevailed.

FIG. 19. Johannes Juncker. *View of the City of Neuwied from the Rhine Side*. ca. 1790. Colored engraving. Roentgen-Museum, Neuwied



FIG. 20. David Roentgen's dwelling and workshop, Pfarrstrasse 30, Neuwied, shown in a recent photograph

He saw an opportunity to modernize the workshop and make its artistic and technically sophisticated furniture known far beyond the region of the Middle Rhine. He would achieve commercial success, but at a price he never anticipated: expulsion from the brotherhood. By 1767 he was “no longer listed in any community registry and [was permitted] to attend only the Sunday sermon, none of the other assemblies.”¹⁶

In 1772 Abraham announced his intention to transfer ownership of the workshop to his son, and in 1774 David moved the firm to his splendid new house on Neuwied's Pfarrstrasse (fig. 20). His father's premises across the street remained open until 1775, after which time David became sole proprietor of the Roentgen furniture-making business.¹⁷ The shop was organized along progressive lines, with a rational division of labor, and utilized only the finest materials and the most up-to-date tools, often to the dismay of the brethren. In competition with the leading *ébénistes* (cabinetmakers) in Paris, Roentgen would ultimately outstrip them and become known as the premier cabinetmaker in Europe. Armed with court patents and honorific titles, he was able to supply his beautiful, fashionable furniture to aristocratic buyers in Paris, Brussels, and Berlin and finally to his best customer, the Russian czarina Catherine the Great in Saint Petersburg.

His growing reputation attracted prominent visitors to Neuwied. In 1774 the young Johann Wolfgang von Goethe toured the workshop of Roentgen and the clockmaker Peter Kinzing in the company of two other famous personages, the physiognomist Johann Kaspar Lavater and the educational reformer Johann Bernhard Basedow. And in 1792 King Frederick William (Friedrich Wilhelm) II of Prussia was served luncheon in Roentgen's house rather than at the prince's palace—though the dishes are said to have been brought in from there.

Michael Stürmer has described David Roentgen as “a man of contradictions[:] devoted to Pietist godliness and at the same time a salesman to the courts of Europe; . . . a man of the world to whom profits and earthly success were ultimately nothing by comparison with a promise of salvation and reconciliation with the community.”¹⁸ During his journeys to Russia, David Roentgen found a homelike refuge in the Sarepta House, a kind of embassy in the Moravian colony at Sarepta on the Volga. While there, he was given advice and assistance by the administrator of the house, an ordained preacher—probably more liberal than the Herrnhuter in Neuwied. And there Roentgen was surely able to talk about everything that troubled him, most of all his expulsion from the Neuwied brotherhood and its repeated refusal to readmit him.

DAVID ROENTGEN'S LAST YEARS

By adhering to high-minded Herrnhuter business principles while striving for commercial success, David had hoped to lay to rest the brotherhood's doubts about his worldly business dealings. His close ties to court circles were reason enough for the Herrnhuter to have distanced themselves from him. But more likely the real reason he was struck from the membership rolls about 1768 was the brethren's doubts as to whether the credits extended to him thus far were still safe. Also, of course, they feared that Roentgen's pursuit of wealth was damaging his soul.¹⁹

Documents in the princely Wied archives show that it was not primarily the disastrous effects of the French Revolution on the European luxury market that brought an end to Roentgen's career: "rather, David's decision [to retire] was based on religion, and had been made even before the revolution."²⁰ In 1785 he transferred his Paris operation to Jean-Gottlieb Frost, who ran it until he went bankrupt in 1789. As a result of David's major deliveries of furniture to Saint Petersburg and Stockholm, he had doubtless accumulated enough savings to spend the rest of his life as a man of independent means.²¹ David and his wife, Katharina, were finally readmitted into the brotherhood on June 19, 1791.²² He was listed in the registry as "a person who pursues no bourgeois occupation," that is, a man without employment.²³

In the mid-1790s, because the deposed French royals had been his clients in Paris, David was forced to leave Neuwied in advance of the approaching French Revolutionary army. The family found shelter in Herrnhuter colonies at Ebersdorf in the Gera region (modern Saxony) and at Neudietendorf in Thuringia. Letters written during those years show that Roentgen remained in close contact with his Herrnhuter brethren in Neuwied. In one of them, he said firmly, "Although I am completely finished with the sale of my wares, there is still a heavy burden on my shoulders, namely—my houses, many unnecessary furnishings, factories, machines, tools, and other such equipment, all of which I no longer need. I now have a wholly different perspective."²⁴

The Roentgens were able to return to Neuwied in 1801. After the workshop closed, David spent his twilight years in Neuwied, living off the interest from his fortune and payments for pieces bought earlier on credit. He assumed various honorary offices—membership in the brotherhood's supervisory council, for example—although he was passed over for the chairmanship. A shrewd and skillful diplomat, he negotiated in Wiesbaden in 1807 with the brotherhood's new sovereign, the Duke of Nassau, who had annexed the territories of the princes zu Wied-Neuwied. The duke would ultimately reaffirm the special rights granted to the Herrnhuter by the Neuwied princes. During those negotiations, David Roentgen died, on February 12, probably from lung cancer. His second son, August, was at his father's deathbed and managed to see the negotiations to a successful conclusion. Abraham Roentgen had died on March 1, 1793, and was buried in the cemetery at Herrnhut, where he had spent his last years. David found his resting place in the Wiesbaden cemetery. Since 1937 his tombstone has stood in the new municipal cemetery in Neuwied, not far from the brethren's burial ground.

All of Abraham and David Roentgen's endeavors were influenced by the Herrnhuter brotherhood, as were their international connections, their professional and work ethics, and their focus on religion. Like their brothers, the Roentgens felt themselves to be "exalted" by their faith. David's superior schooling and his ready acceptance at the princely courts of Europe must only have strengthened such a feeling.²⁵ And like the missionaries of the community who traveled overseas, he too undertook long, adventurous journeys across Europe. Like all Herrnhuter craftsmen, both father and son saw the production and sale of their work as an activity consecrated to God and "performed in a reverential spirit."²⁶ They worked as if God were standing beside them in their workshops.²⁷ To them, their creations for the European elite—expensive, elaborate, and of the highest quality—surely represented a kind of "gospel," worthy of being carried to the ends of the earth.



A UNIQUE RELATIONSHIP

CHARLES ALEXANDER OF LORRAINE AND DAVID ROENTGEN

REINIER BAARSEN

One of the determining factors in David Roentgen's success story was the extraordinary confidence with which he approached even the greatest rulers of his time. As early as 1770, when the cabinetmaking business was still being run by his father, the twenty-six-year-old David traveled to Potsdam to present a small table to one of the most powerful monarchs of Europe, King Frederick the Great (Friedrich II) of Prussia. It is perhaps unlikely that the king had ordered this single piece of furniture from faraway Neuwied. Roentgen probably used it as an excuse for a meeting, which, although not actually recorded, does seem to have taken place. The cabinetmaker, doubtless emboldened by his newly won fame resulting from the lottery he had held in Hamburg the year before, broached the option of moving his business to Berlin. Frederick declined but did invite Roentgen to consider settling in the Prussian province of Silesia. In response, the cabinetmaker compiled a list of conditions, immodest to say the least, and a sure sign of his youthful self-assurance. They included a large house to be built at the king's expense, exemption from taxes and trade restrictions, and an important initial order from Frederick for "some costly pieces of veneered furniture and a marquetry room."¹ Nothing came of the plan; the king did buy the table, however (see also Stiegel's essay in this volume and fig. 39, p. 41).

Roentgen soon realized that the cabinetry workshop, of which he took charge officially in 1772, was to remain in Neuwied, but this did not curb his ambition to create masterpieces fit to conquer the courts of Europe. In August 1774 he traveled to Paris, the undisputed international center of taste and fashion. His aim does not appear to have been to meet prospective clients; instead, he concentrated on learning about the latest artistic trends and establishing contacts among the artists and craftsmen there. His



FIG. 22. Attributed to Laurent Delvaux. *Charles Alexander of Lorraine*. 1750. Marble, painted wood frame; diam. 16 7/8 in. (41 cm). Musée Lorrain, Nancy (Inv. no. D.95.283)

long and fruitful connection with the Parisian bronze manufacturer François Rémond dates from this visit.² Probably Roentgen did not yet feel up to confronting the connoisseurs of Paris, the most sophisticated, demanding, and spoiled patrons to be found anywhere, who were more-over firmly wedded to the styles and fashions prevalent in their city.

It seems likely, however, that during this trip to France Roentgen passed through Brussels and that he had his first meeting there with the man who was to be his principal patron in the ensuing years: Charles Alexander, Duke of Lorraine (fig. 22). On the face of it, that august statesman—son of the last reigning duke of Lorraine and of a princess of Orléans; brother-in-law of Holy Roman Empress Maria Theresa, who had appointed him governor of the Austrian Netherlands in 1744; and uncle of Queen Marie Antoinette—was as unlikely a correspondent of Roentgen's as Frederick the Great, but as it turned out the two were a splendid match.

FIG. 21. David Roentgen. Brussels secretary cabinet. 1775–76. Oak and pine, veneered with maple, various stained marquetry woods, gilt bronze; 12 ft. 1 1/4 in. × 4 ft. 1 7/8 in. × 2 ft. 10 3/4 in. (3.7 × 1.5 × .9 m). MAK—Austrian Museum of Applied Arts/Contemporary Art, Vienna (Inv. no. H 269/1871)



FIG. 23. David Roentgen. Fall-front secretary. ca. 1775. Sycamore, burr yew, stained tulipwood, various marquetry woods, ormolu mounts; 64½ × 39¼ × 17 in. (163 × 99.7 × 43 cm). Private collection, Germany

The duke was a much-loved, generous, and tolerant ruler. The scope of his influence was limited, however, as he shared his responsibilities with a plenipotentiary minister, also appointed by the Imperial court in Vienna, who wielded most of the actual power. Charles Alexander had gradually come to accept that his role was largely ceremonial, and he gave ever more of his energy to a wide variety of aristocratic pursuits. Art patronage was central to his concept of government, and, like most eighteenth-century princes, he had a particular passion for building and embellishing palaces and country residences. He rebuilt almost entirely his palace in Brussels, the medieval Court of Nassau, and took a great interest in its decoration and furniture. As Brussels is relatively close to Paris, it comes as no surprise that the governor ordered his most luxurious works of art from the French capital, but right from the start he was also keen to encourage artists and craftsmen in his own land. About 1773, when he was more

than sixty years old, he embarked on a grandiose scheme to remodel the principal rooms of the palace in the latest neoclassical style. His court architect in charge was Laurent-Benoît Dewez, but Charles Alexander was himself closely involved at every stage of the project.³

That Roentgen established some kind of contact with the court in Brussels in late 1774 can be inferred from documents dating from the following year. He submitted a request to be allowed to import his furniture into the Austrian Netherlands under favorable conditions, and it was presented to the council of finance in Brussels on March 25, 1775.⁴ Less than two months later, on May 19, Charles Alexander noted in his diary that he had bought a musical clock, two game tables, and a rolltop desk for 116, 30, and 40 doubles souverains, respectively. He mentioned no name, but there can be no doubt that the furniture was Roentgen's. A week later the governor gave his chamberlain 50 doubles souverains to pay for two secretaries and a writing table; this time he specified that they came from "the man from Neuwied."⁵ Charles Alexander bought works of art on an almost daily basis, presumably often from dealers or artists who presented them to him at the palace, but that he should acquire such a large group of costly and voluminous pieces of furniture on the spur of the moment is unthinkable; just as unlikely, in fact, as that Roentgen should send a large consignment of his work to this enormously important patron, the first documented non-German ruler to buy his furniture, without extensive preliminary discussions. We may therefore assume that Roentgen had gained access to the duke, probably on his return from Paris in late 1774, when he was able to inform Charles Alexander of what he had seen and show what he was bringing back with him. The ambitious and visionary Roentgen, whose fame had doubtless preceded him, must have been a godsend to the governor, who was elaborating ideas for his new state apartments, which, as is evident from the results he achieved, he wished to be beautiful, novel, and impressive in every way.

The large commission delivered in May 1775 would almost certainly have been discussed at that first interview, and the governor undoubtedly took an active role in determining its nature. This was his invariable habit; besides, the unique place that the furniture delivered in 1775 occupies within Roentgen's oeuvre strongly suggests considerable input from the patron, and presumably also from the architect Dewez. The only pieces that can be securely identified are the pair of card tables now in Vienna (cat. 27). They are relatively early examples of neoclassicism in Roentgen's work, but as such they were

preceded by as much as four years by the revolutionary ensemble, including two game tables, made for another enterprising and exacting patron, Friedrich Franz von Anhalt-Dessau;⁶ what distinguishes the tables for Brussels are their more balanced proportions and abundant mounts. Both these features reveal the influence of Roentgen's experience in Paris. Indeed, the fine mounts in the form of classical portrait medallions and heavy foliate swags are likely to be Parisian and may have been bought by Roentgen from Rémond, who some years later was to provide the workshop in Neuwied with rather similar medallions.⁷ On the card tables they are combined with features that have a longer history in Roentgen's output, such as the sophisticated mechanisms and the chinoiserie marquetry in an unadorned maple ground. Nothing could better reflect the style at Charles Alexander's court, characterized by an individual, often somewhat overloaded interpretation of both French and Germanic models. The focus on mounts, unusual in Roentgen's work of this date, ties in with the duke's almost obsessive love of gilt bronze.

The mounts provide a clue to the identity of some of the other pieces delivered in 1775. In an unfinished description of his principal apartment and its contents, which Charles Alexander compiled toward the end of his life, he listed among the furniture in his unbelievably crammed private study a "Neuwied marquetry" secretary (he actually calls it a *bonheur du jour*) with figures in colored woods. The detailed description of its interior arrangement perfectly matches that of a secretary by Roentgen, veneered with chinoiserie marquetry and richly mounted with a frieze that includes swagged medallions and triglyphs similar to those found on the game tables (fig. 23).⁸ This is likely one of the secretaries paid for on May 26, 1775, and it is plausible that a closely related secretary with floral marquetry is the other (fig. 24).⁹ A similar frieze adorns, somewhat incongruously, a longcase clock at the Metropolitan Museum (cat. 26), which largely corresponds to a model of which Roentgen produced a number of versions. None of the other known examples have this markedly neoclassical addition to the English-inspired model, and it may be surmised that the clock at the Metropolitan was made especially to match Charles Alexander's other furniture. Not all the classical mounts present on these pieces need be Parisian; Roentgen may have taken only a few back with him to serve as models for local bronze manufacturers in or near Neuwied. It is even conceivable that some were made or finished in Brussels.¹⁰

The duke would not retain his clock for long. The furniture acquired in 1775 was spectacular



FIG. 24. David Roentgen. Fall-front secretary. ca. 1775. Sycamore, tulipwood, kingwood, various marquetry woods, gilt bronze; 5 ft. 1½ in. × 3 ft. 4 in. × 1 ft. 5 in. (156.5 × 102 × 43.5 cm). Private collection, Germany

enough, but it was in Charles Alexander's nature to wish for something even more overwhelming, an unprecedented creation that could only have come into being through his patronage. Roentgen doubtless accompanied the shipment to Brussels, and when confronted with his superb furniture, Charles Alexander may have begun to discuss a piece that was to outshine everything David had made so far. This was to be the great Brussels secretary cabinet, now in Vienna.¹¹ Following in the tradition of desks for rulers made in the Neuwied workshop under the supervision of Abraham Roentgen (see cat. 12), it was the first undertaking of this kind on which David embarked under his own steam. The governor's encouragement must have given him the required assurance, and he would have evaluated the project with Charles Alexander as it developed. Roentgen was again in Brussels in November 1775;¹² it was probably at this stage that he submitted a description of a desk, which already incorporated most of the piece's essential features, for Charles Alexander to consider.¹³ The desk is surmounted by a clock, related in outline to the hood of catalogue 26, and it, too, features a prominent frieze with gilt-bronze triglyphs and swagged medallions. Again, many of the mounts probably came from Paris: the group depicting Apollo on Mount Parnassus at the top certainly did. Modeled by the sculptor Louis-Simon Boizot, it was executed by Rémond.¹⁴



FIG. 25. David Roentgen, after Januarius Zick. 1779. *The Continence of Scipio*. Elmwood with marquetry veneer of walnut, sycamore, and other woods; 11 ft. 9 5/8 in. x 12 ft. 4 3/8 in. (360 x 377 cm). MAK—Austrian Museum of Applied Arts/Contemporary Art, Vienna (Inv. no. H 268)



FIG. 26. David Roentgen, after Januarius Zick. 1779. *The Sabine Women Pleading for Peace between the Romans and the Sabines*. Elmwood with marquetry veneer of walnut, sycamore, and other woods; 11 ft. 9 5/8 in. x 12 ft. 1 7/8 in. (360 x 373 cm). MAK—Austrian Museum of Applied Arts/Contemporary Art, Vienna (Inv. no. H 267)

The acquisition of this desk made the longcase clock redundant, and Charles Alexander returned the latter in partial payment. He noted in his diary on August 23, 1776, that Roentgen had delivered the desk and that he had promised to pay the cabinetmaker an additional sum, for an overall cost of 458 doubles souverains.¹⁵ The Brussels desk was to serve as the model for two even grander bureau cabinets made in 1779, one of which Roentgen sold to King Louis XVI of France, with the other going to King Frederick William II of Prussia (cats. 34–37). He proposed the two masterpieces to these monarchs unsolicited, but the confidence to do so had come to him from his experience with Charles Alexander of Lorraine. Significantly, Roentgen asked a much higher price for the two later desks, made at his own very considerable risk.

The supreme expression of Charles Alexander's taste and ambition was his new audience chamber, the grandest and most extravagant room in the Brussels palace.¹⁶ Designed by Dewez, its walls were entirely veneered with marquetry and mounted with an extraordinary profusion of gilt-bronze ornaments, made under the supervision of the architect's brother, the court goldsmith Michel-Paul-Joseph Dewez. The room had an intricately patterned parquet floor, and its stucco ceiling was painted and gilded; entering it must have felt like stepping into a giant cabinet turned outside in. Work on it had started in 1773, so when Charles Alexander met Roentgen he was probably talking of little else. The initial plan appears to have been to set two large paintings into the room's walls; as late as 1776 various Parisian artists were asked to submit proposals for them. It is also possible that their designs were intended to be woven as tapestries, as the audience chamber had formerly been hung with old-fashioned ones showing peasant scenes after David Teniers II. Whatever the case may be, these ideas were superseded by a scheme whose daring and novelty satisfied the governor's cravings. Roentgen was to make two "tapestries in wood," huge marquetry panels to be set in the room's walls, surrounded by sumptuous mounts. Representing scenes from ancient Roman history symbolic of virtues essential to a leader, *The Continence of Scipio* and *The Sabine Women Pleading for Peace between the Romans and the Sabines* (figs. 25, 26) were designed by Januarius Zick, the painter who during the 1770s provided the models for much of Roentgen's finest marquetry: the *Scipio* panel is signed with both their names. The panels were installed on either side of the door leading into the audience chamber from the throne room that preceded it. *Scipio* was probably positioned to the left and the *Sabine Women* to the right: the compositions,



FIG. 27. Detail of fig. 25, *The Continenence of Scipio*



FIG. 28. Detail of fig. 26, *The Sabine Women Pleading for Peace*

subtly mirroring one another, are both closed off at their far ends by tall structures.

The admirable way in which Roentgen adapted his celebrated marquetry technique to this enormous area resulted in scenes of moving beauty (see figs. 27, 28).¹⁷ He may never have executed another commission that was so obviously determined by the wishes and imagination of the patron. And yet the scheme echoes in an uncanny way a marquetry room Roentgen had proposed to Frederick the Great, indicating that his own input in working out the plan may have been considerable as well. On February 2, 1778, Charles Alexander and Roentgen together signed a contract detailing the commission of the panels, which were finished the following year.¹⁸ On May 13, 1779, they were taken to Brussels on a ten-day trip fraught with incident, including the partial destruction of the city gate of Jülich in order to let them pass, a story that undoubtedly delighted the governor. Roentgen traveled to Brussels separately to install them; Charles Alexander noted on May 28 that he had seen the first in place, and four days later that his audience chamber was “finished.” He was greatly pleased with the panels and on the same day paid Roentgen the agreed sum of 1,000 louis d’or, more than one and a

half times the price of the great secretary cabinet of 1776.¹⁹

Little more than a year later, on July 4, 1780, Charles Alexander of Lorraine died. Notwithstanding his optimistic comment of the year before, the audience chamber was still not entirely finished. The sumptuous room, filled with spectacular gilt-bronze-mounted furniture made in Brussels to match its walls and with many other treasures, did not long survive its creator. Badly damaged by French troops who pillaged Brussels in 1792–93, it was partly dismantled in 1795, after France’s final conquest of the Austrian Netherlands. Such was the admiration for Roentgen’s panels that the last governor, Archduke Charles of Habsburg, went to the extraordinary trouble of having them removed to Vienna, where they are still preserved.

After Charles Alexander’s death, Roentgen continued to enjoy triumph after triumph, to the amazement of admiring observers all over Europe who regarded him as something of a wonder. His success is in no way belittled by stressing the role played at a crucial time by his most inspiring patron, Charles Alexander of Lorraine, a minor ruler who himself probably counted the works of art he commissioned among his finest achievements.



DAVID ROENTGEN AND THE COURT OF VERSAILLES

BERTRAND RONDOT

On his first visit to Paris, David Roentgen made the acquaintance of the German engraver Johann Georg Wille, who had lived in France since 1738. The meeting, which took place on August 30, 1774, proved to be a turning point for the entrepreneur from Neuwied. Wille introduced him to sculptors and draftsmen and exposed him to a French variant of the neoclassical aesthetic called *le goût grec*.¹ The doors Wille opened to Roentgen would allow him to seduce the Paris market for luxury furniture, which had eluded him until then. In a community that included many compatriots, Roentgen must soon have discovered the works of the generation of cabinetmakers who had succeeded the master *ébéniste* Jean-François Oeben after his death in 1763 and whose furniture coincided in many respects with Roentgen's own production. Both Jean-Henri Riesener, who worked for the Garde-Meuble de la Couronne (Office of Royal Furnishings), and Jean-François Leleu had emerged from their training under Oeben with a taste for carefully constructed pieces, sometimes equipped with mechanical fittings, and for marquetry that has been described as painting in wood. But Roentgen must also have discovered the work of the cabinetmakers who since mid-century had influenced taste in favor of *le goût grec*: Pierre Garnier, Jacques Dubois, and Joseph Baumhauer, creator of furniture for the connoisseur Ange-Laurent Lalive de Jully. The rigor of their designs and their use of an antique architectural vocabulary must have made a strong impression on Roentgen.² For practical reasons, he disregarded aspects of Paris furniture production: the pieces veneered with precious materials, such as Boulle marquetry in brass and tortoiseshell, which was experiencing a revival at the time; panels of Chinese and Japanese lacquer; and plaques of Sèvres porcelain. Such costly materials were out of reach for an enterprise like his,

which was far from the sources of supply for those fragile materials and was not set up for long-distance delivery of finished furniture (see fig. 38, p. 40).

Convinced that he ought to modernize his workshop production, Roentgen asked Wille to continue to send him engravings of the latest fashions. Roentgen had probably brought with him drawings by his designers Raillard and Schmoutz, which he wanted to have modified or rendered directly in bronze.³ The innovative gilt-bronze work he saw in Paris revealed to him the weakness of Neuwied products. His initial contacts with Parisian bronze workers, especially the bronze founder François Rémond, date from that first visit.⁴ From then on, the most beautiful creations from Neuwied would be adorned with Paris bronze—not just the usual ornamental mounts but also accomplished pieces of sculpture such as those by Louis-Simon Boizot.

When he returned to Neuwied, Roentgen translated the ornamental vocabulary of Paris and applied it to his new pieces. The cutting-edge designs of the furniture that emerged from his shop was initially marketed to his established clientele in the territories of the Holy Roman Empire. An example is the secretary cabinet sent in 1776 to Duke Charles Alexander of Lorraine, governor of the Austrian Netherlands (fig. 21, p. 24). Neoclassical in style, it was adorned with bronze mounts partly commissioned in Paris and was topped with the three-dimensional figure of Apollo on Mount Parnassus. The figure was sculpted by a "Paris academician," who must be recognized as Boizot.⁵ An advertising card was printed up to announce the new product design of the Neuwied manufactory: "David Roentgen, . . . Cabinetmaker in Neuwied on the Rhine, manufactures and sells all sorts of Cabinetry Furnishings, in both the English and the French Taste, after the latest fashion and

FIG. 29. Detail of cat. 24, showing interior marquetry



FIG. 30. Louis Germain, after Johannes Juncker. David Roentgen's business card for his Paris workshop, with rendering of Neuwied. ca. 1782–84. Engraving. Formerly Deutsches Röntgen-Museum, Remscheid-Lennep, current whereabouts unknown

invention . . . with English locks and equipped with fire-gilt ornaments and mounts.”⁶

By spring 1779 Roentgen was in Paris for a second, carefully planned visit. First, the cabinet-maker made sure he had the cooperation of the press, so that he could advertise to the elite. He had access to columns in *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres et des Arts* (*News of the Republic of Letters and Arts*), a weekly periodical edited by Claude Pahin de la Blancherie. Its aim was to “facilitate the communication of viewpoints, opinions, talents & work of every kind,”⁷ and it covered the meetings of the *Assemblée Ordinaire des Savants et des Artistes* (Ordinary Assembly of Scholars and Artists). The organization pursued “two main goals, to serve as a meeting place, . . . for all scholars, men and women of letters, artists & amateurs, . . . who happen to be in Paris, & to show them the books, paintings, mechanical devices, natural-history specimens, sculpture models & finally all sorts of ancient or modern works whose value, existence, or creator people will want to know or learn about promptly.”⁸ It was certainly at those meetings that, thanks to Wille, Roentgen was introduced to the editor Pahin de la Blancherie.⁹

Roentgen, who was displaying a selection of furniture at the shop of the dealer Brébant, brought to the March 10 assembly meeting a “small marquetry table to be used as a chiffonier.”¹⁰ It was given a long description in the *Nouvelles*:

The top of the table depicts a group of shepherds in marquetry, in a manner completely different from that used until now. All the figures are very well drawn, and the shadows & nuances are created with small pieces of a hard & compact wood. The marquetry

resembles [hard]stone mosaic & is fashioned in the same manner; thus, the shadows are not burned or engraved or ground in with wax or wood filler, the means of expression that had to be used until now, but solidly marked by small, properly stained pieces of wood. The accuracy of the drawing, the vividness of the composition & the precision of the contours would lead one to believe that it is painted or fashioned in a much more solid & compact material.

The writer concludes, “This account perfectly conveys the sensation that table created & the scrutiny it attracted.”¹¹ (The description could apply to the multipurpose table in Munich, cat. 24.)

At the presentation, Roentgen revealed that Louis XVI had acquired one of his pieces of furniture: “The creator of [the table] having had the honor of presenting to the king a desk of his own invention & in the style of this table, His Majesty sought to acquire it for the sum of 80,000 livres & to place it in his study” (see cats. 35–37).¹² Pahin de la Blancherie, who was “authorized to present to Their Majesties & the Royal Family, the interesting objects that are exhibited at the Ordinary Assembly of Scholars & Artists,”¹³ must have organized the presentation at Versailles. Louis’ desk was not acquired through the *Garde-Meuble de la Couronne* but through the king’s private financial office; according to the accounts kept by the king, the piece was paid for about March 20.¹⁴

At a second meeting, on March 18, Roentgen exhibited “several pieces of furniture remarkable for their marquetry & a mahogany wood table so perfectly polished that it created the illusion of marble to the touch & to the eyes.”¹⁵ That earned him another notice in the *Nouvelles* and revealed a further aspect of his talent: mahogany polished to a marblelike shine. Subsequently, Pahin de la Blancherie described at length the desk purchased by the king, which only a few privileged souls had been able to admire:

This piece, about eleven feet tall by five [feet] & a few inches wide,¹⁶ resembles a large commode mounted with a top. . . . Sculpture is represented on the middle door by the figure of a sculptor busily adding the queen’s name on the pedestal of a column, to which Minerva is attaching the portrait of Her Majesty. The lower part of the desk displays the Doric order, the one in the middle the Ionic order & the one at the top the Corinthian order. All the columns are veneered with the wood of a gray burl that perfectly mimics the most beautiful gray

marble. All the architectural moldings are made of molded bronze & ormolu & these moldings, as well as the capitals & ornaments, are fashioned with the greatest precision [with respect to the Greek architectural orders]. Although all these ornaments are attached by a considerable number of screws, proportioned to fit the size of the piece, neither the screws nor the plugs are visible. . . . The piece as a whole is fashioned with the greatest care & with a precision & accuracy that are truly astonishing.¹⁷

The writer also observed that carelessness in mounting screws and other fasteners was still common in Paris workshops. This remark was quoted in the July 1 issue of the Berlin periodical *Vösische Zeitung*, where it was further noted that the French themselves acknowledged they could not match the (Neuwied) workmanship of such large pieces of furniture with bronze mounts.¹⁸

Louis XVI could not have purchased his new desk independently. It may well have been the Austrian ambassador to the French court, comte Florimond Claude de Mercy-Argenteau, who persuaded the king to acquire a desk identical to—or perhaps even more extraordinary than—the one that had been delivered to the queen’s uncle Charles Alexander of Lorraine three years earlier. The ambassador was in regular contact with Roentgen. He had commissioned a large clock from the cabinetmaker for his Paris residence, doubtless thinking that it would draw attention to the excellence of the products of the empire he served. Commissioned

in 1778 and the object of many exchanges between the diplomat and the cabinetmaker, the clock was delivered in the summer of 1779.¹⁹ The queen very likely encouraged her husband to buy the desk, and the purchase must have been concluded by February.²⁰ The delight that Louis XVI took in mechanical devices—with which the desk was replete—is well known, and there is no doubt that he would have been easily convinced to purchase it (fig. 33; see also pp. 140–41).

Another important matter occupied Roentgen. He was about to receive the title *ébéniste-mécanicien* (cabinetmaker and mechanical engineer) to the queen, which he took care to mention during his March 10 exhibition at the Assemblée Ordinaire des Savants. That March he requested the same testimonial from the king, an honor previously accorded only to Jean-François Oeben.²¹ The title was granted, and beginning in July Roentgen was described in the European gazettes as *ébéniste-mécanicien* to both the king and the queen.²²

But in order to sell his furniture in Paris, he had to be admitted to the guild of joiners and cabinetmakers, which, like all ancien régime corporations, jealously guarded its privileges. He was finally accepted as a master cabinetmaker on May 19, 1780,²³ and was at last able to set up his own store in the rue Saint-Honoré district, epicenter of luxury commerce, on the rue de Grenelle–Saint-Honoré (now the rue Jean-Jacques Rousseau), opposite the Église Réformée de l’Oratoire.²⁴ The shop was appropriately named *À la Ville de Neuwied*, and the new advertising cards Roentgen printed up make



FIG. 31. French School. *Louix XVI*. 1783. Engraving, 8¾ × 6¼ in. (22.3 × 16 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Susan Dwight Bliss, 1956 (56.558.60)

FIG. 32. Marie-Louise-Adélaïde Boizot, after Louis-Simon Boizot. *Marie Antoinette*. 1775. Engraving, 9⅝ × 7⅜ in. (24.3 × 18.9 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Susan Dwight Bliss, 1956 (56.558.58)

FIG. 33. David Roentgen. Marquetry panel. ca. 1779. Principally of sycamore, rosewood, apple wood with some traces of coloring, and boxwood. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Widener Collection (1942.9.416)



clear that not only were the products of his Neuwied manufactory sold there but that “commissions for all sorts of works related to cabinet-making” would be accepted (fig. 30). He employed a sales representative for his business in Paris, a Berliner named Jean-Gottlieb Frost, who would work for him until Frost himself became a master cabinetmaker in 1785 (he would go bankrupt only four years later). It was probably Frost who handled the commissions, passing them on to Neuwied or partially executing or assembling them in Paris.

The king and other royals continued to buy furniture from Roentgen.²⁵ As with Louis’ large desk, such purchases were not made through the *Garde-Meuble de la Couronne* but were privately paid for and are often difficult to identify. In 1779 the king settled a bill “with the Germans” for a mechanical commode in veneer wood. This piece is known through a 1792 description: “The interior [is] composed of a special mechanism for which the king has the key,” and the exterior was inlaid with images of Astronomy and the Arts, in accordance with the sovereign’s taste.²⁶ The comtesse d’Artois later acquired a similar piece, which was decorated in veneer “with human figures enacting comedy scenes.”²⁷ Surviving today are three commodes that relate closely to the one owned by the comtesse d’Artois, whereas a fourth similar commode seems to have been dismantled (see also Mechthild Baumeister’s appendix in this volume).

It is noteworthy that examples of the same models of furniture were often bought by several members of the royal family, with each customized as desired by the client. In December 1781, the king purchased for 12,000 livres a rolltop desk of a Parisian type that had been adapted in the Neuwied workshop (fig. 34),²⁸ and the comte de Provence followed suit; moreover, the queen’s sisters-in-law—the comtesses de Provence and d’Artois and Madame Élisabeth—each owned a mechanical clock with a gear-operated organ

mounted on two column shafts, its movement made by Peter Kinzing (see cat. 66). One famous object, the automaton of Marie Antoinette playing a dulcimer (cat. 38), which she received from Roentgen in 1785, was unique. The constant presence of her automated likeness does not seem to have appealed to the queen, as it was soon offered to the *Académie des Sciences*.²⁹

There are also written descriptions of furniture in the archives that are more difficult to interpret. For example, we read of a “commode, speckled mahogany, decorated with rinceau friezes, branches, leaves, and fruit . . . perfectly executed by David of Neuwied . . . [among] the furniture of the late queen” (it was exhibited by the dealer Collignon in 1798);³⁰ and a “table standing on 8 feet with mahogany veneer, opening to 3 drawers, adorned with a [bronze] cord and a vignette [and] in the frieze, two loops of damp cloth,” (confiscated from the comte de Provence in 1793).³¹ Other recorded but unidentified examples are the two pieces of mechanical furniture that Roentgen delivered to the comte d’Artois in 1782 and repaired two years later, when they were transferred to his Paris residence, the *Palais du Temple*.³²

The shop that Roentgen opened in Paris was intended to attract a large public. An advertisement was placed in the widely read *Annonces, affiches et avis divers, ou Journal général de France* (*Announcements, Flyers, and Reviews, or General Journal of France*) on January 8, 1781: “In the store of Mr. David Roentgen, cabinetmaker, formerly on rue S. Martin, opposite rue du Vert Bois & at present on rue de Grenelle, the first carriage entrance on the right via rue S. Honoré, there are bureaux of various forms, office chairs, dressing tables, strongboxes, mechanical devices, pianofortes, quadrille and backgammon tables & others in mahogany wood, well finished and polished like marble. The said [Roentgen] undertakes all sorts of CABINETMAKING work.” From this list emerges a picture of the works

offered on the Paris market: furniture with complex mechanical devices and mahogany veneer, whose “marblelike” finish seems to have been a German specialty.³³ A few identifications of Roentgen furniture in the inventories, under the name “David” or sometimes “the German,” give a partial indication of the cabinetmaker’s success. Other descriptions suggest the scope of his clientele. Many customers came from the German community in Paris: in addition to Mercy-Argenteau, his strongest supporter was Baron Friedrich Melchior von Grimm. Not only did Grimm heartily recommend him to Catherine II of Russia but his own mahogany furniture ensemble also came in large part from Neuwied.³⁴ Seized during the Revolution, it included an oval table with chinoiserie marquetry decoration that was eventually placed in the bedroom of Napoleon’s small apartment in the Palais des Tuileries (see fig. 36).³⁵ It was perhaps at the suggestion of Grimm, who served as secretary to the duc d’Orléans, Louis-Philippe I, that the duke purchased furniture from Roentgen. In the salon of the residence he built on the rue de Provence

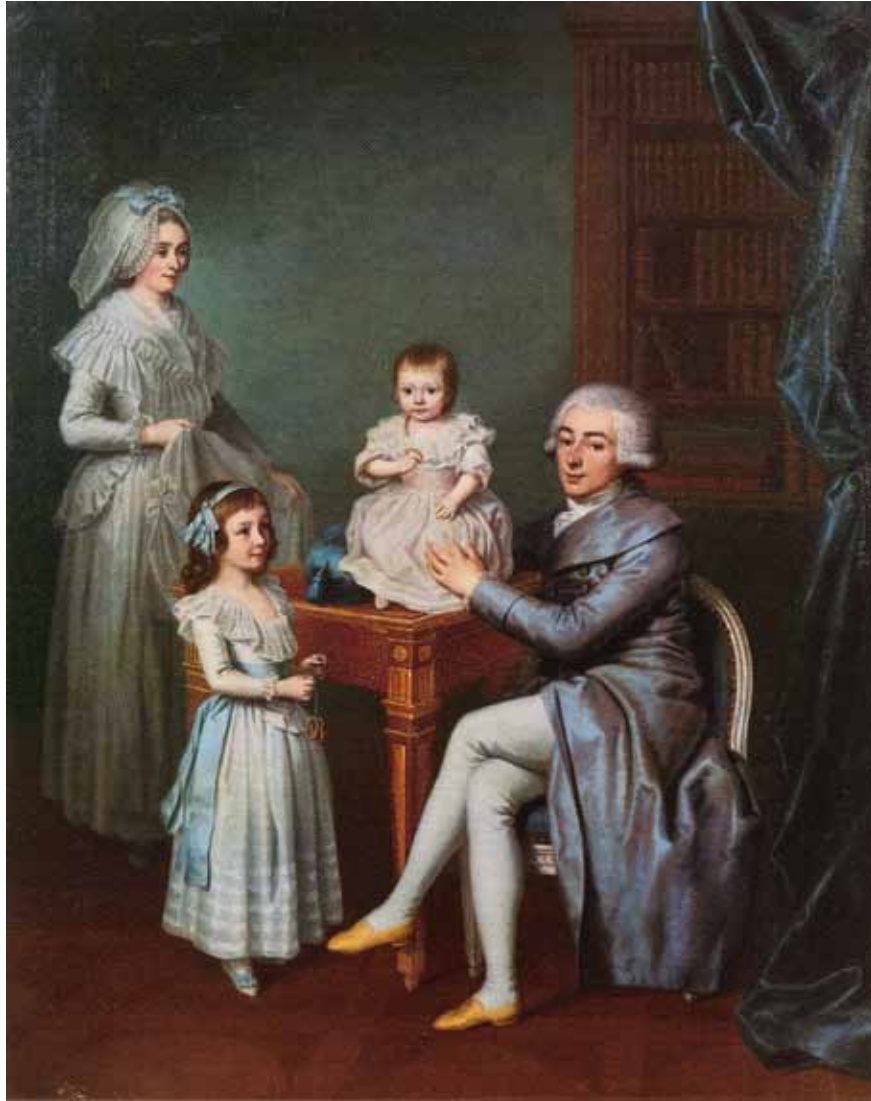
were “two mechanical desks in mahogany wood adorned with gilded bronze, several parts of which fold out and rise automatically”; the complexity of the mechanism and high estimate of 1,500 livres must signify the work of Roentgen.³⁶

Like the royal family, the *princes du sang* were also attracted to the costly creations from Neuwied.³⁷ At the Château de Sceaux, the duc de Penthièvre collected more feminine pieces by Roentgen for his daughter-in-law, the ill-fated *princesse de Lamballe*, most probably at her request. These included a writing table with garland marquetry bearing the mark of the château and the number 8, referring to an apartment on the first floor set aside for the princess, who had her main apartment on the ground floor.³⁸ In the inventory of this apartment number 8 is listed in connection with “an oval marquetry writing table with several drawers, a top depicting a historical subject, and tapering legs, adorned with gilded brass.” This table is surely a Roentgen model depicting Aeneas and Anchises fleeing Troy, of which several examples are known (see cats. 21, 22).³⁹



FIG. 34. David Roentgen. Rolltop desk. ca. 1781. Mahogany, gilt bronze, 58¼ × 57½ × 32⅝ in. (148 × 146 × 83 cm). Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (Inv. no. Vmb 13942)

FIG. 35. Artist unknown.
Édouard Colbert de
Maulévrier and His Family.
ca. 1792. Oil on canvas.
Whereabouts unknown



The expatriate milieu was a rich source of buyers for Roentgen. Although it is not yet possible to determine what the wealthy Alexander Sergeevich Stroganov acquired during his stay in Paris from 1771 to 1778,⁴⁰ we know that Erik Magnus de Staël-Holstein, chargé d'affaires and later ambassador from Sweden to the French court, acquired “a large rolltop desk in the choicest mahogany, with secret drawers and mechanical devices.”⁴¹ The Swedish ambassador was also a client of Frost’s, and it is safe to say that the collectors mentioned among Frost’s debtors when he went bankrupt in 1789 must also have been Roentgen’s clients. In addition to Staël-Holstein, they included the vicomtesse de Talleyrand, the marquis de Clermont d’Amboise, and the baron de Batz.⁴² The marquis de Marigny, Abel-François Poisson de Vandières, brother of Madame de Pompadour, acquired furniture from Roentgen for his hôtel on the Place des Victoires after his retirement as director of the Bâtiments du Roi (Royal Buildings). The virile style of the new pieces blended in smoothly with the furniture in *le goût grec* that he had commissioned a few decades earlier.⁴³

All of Roentgen’s Paris customers were delighted with the complex mechanical devices built into many of the pieces of furniture, which no workshop in the city could rival. One of the rare depictions of a piece of Roentgen furniture in an eighteenth-century French interior shows a mechanical standing desk (called a *table à la Tronchin*) in the center of a family portrait of Édouard-Victournien-Charles-René Colbert, marquis de Maulévrier (fig. 35). He probably did not purchase this piece in Paris, however.⁴⁴ Colbert, who was minister plenipotentiary to the archbishop-elect of Cologne from August 1784 until the Revolution, likely bought it in Neuwied.

Among the furnishings mentioned in Roentgen’s 1781 Paris advertisement are pianofortes. With Kinzing’s collaboration, Roentgen designed a new model called a *piano à tiroir*, or “drawer piano,” which looks like a flat desk, or *bureau plat*. We know that the court of Russia purchased “two large tables in mahogany wood [*acajou moucheté*] with pianofortes.”⁴⁵ The discovery of such an instrument in France, in 2010, revealed that they were actually distributed from Roentgen’s Paris shop (see cat. 52).⁴⁶

Roentgen made a third trip to France, in December 1784. The visit probably coincided with the delivery of the automaton to the queen. The next year marked the end of the Paris branch of the Neuwied manufactory. In December 1785 Frost published an announcement revealing that Roentgen had transferred his shop: “Mr. Frost, successor to Mr. David Roentgen, *ébéniste-mécanicien* to the king and queen, now runs the large cabinetmaking shop on rue Croix des Petits Champs, which the latter formerly maintained on the rue de Grenelle–Saint-Honoré, and continues to sell furniture that is very sought after for its form and finish.”⁴⁷ The last statement is ambiguous: was the furniture made by Frost, who was himself a client of the bronze worker Rémond, or was it in large part imported from Neuwied?

In autumn of the following year, Roentgen ended his activities in Paris, perhaps at the instigation of the Community of Moravian Brothers, which had little appreciation for the cabinetmaker’s dealings with the worldly courts of Versailles and Saint Petersburg. In June 1787, Roentgen went back to Paris,⁴⁸ and he made a final four-week visit, which was reported in the newspaper of the Community of Moravian Brothers in September 1791, during the Revolution.⁴⁹ Frost had gone bankrupt in 1789, and Roentgen’s financial and personal interests had to be protected. But the unrest in Paris would quickly spread across Europe and deal a fatal blow to the Neuwied manufactory itself.



FIG. 36. David Roentgen. Oval table. ca. 1775–80. Sycamore, purple wood, mahogany, stained woods, gilt-bronze mounts; 29 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 28 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 19 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (74 × 73.2 × 50.5 cm). Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (Inv. no. Vmb 837)



DAVID ROENTGEN UNDER THE “SPECIAL PROTECTION” OF THE KING OF PRUSSIA

ACHIM STIEGEL

The Neuwied manufactory was by no means unused to dramatic encounters with leading figures of the ancien régime, but the tie David Roentgen forged with Prussian royalty was altogether exceptional. The Neuwied entrepreneur cultivated that connection for thirty years, longer than those with any of his distinguished clients in Brussels, Paris, or Saint Petersburg, and dealt with three successive Prussian kings.¹ An unproductive encounter with Frederick the Great (Friedrich II) in the summer of 1770 nevertheless initiated a relationship that continued through a good fifteen years of close association with Frederick William II, and finally included a brief postlude with Frederick William III, which ended in 1800.

Thanks to its victories in the Silesian Wars under Frederick the Great, Prussia became the most important power, after Habsburg Austria, in the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, splintered as it was into countless tiny principalities. Following the devastating Seven Years' War (1756–63), the sandy tract stretching from the Elbe to the Memel rivers saw a late flowering of the ancien régime and developed into the epitome of the enlightened state, ruled with Protestant discipline.²

Roentgen must have visited the Prussian capital and the nearby royal residence (the Neues Palais) at Potsdam more than twenty times. From Neuwied, horse-drawn freight wagons could reach Berlin, the largest German-speaking metropolis after Vienna, in two to three weeks (fig. 38). Between 1783 and 1791 Roentgen was there at least a dozen times, on five occasions while making his way to Saint Petersburg. By the last quarter of the century, after the emerging major power had managed to expand its territory into the eastern part of the Prussian heartland by annexing lands held by Poland, Berlin served as the main stopover on the road

to the Russian capital, about 1,250 miles and six long weeks farther to the east.³ Roentgen's close relationship with the Prussian court—he was nowhere near as frequent a guest in any other city—is attested by indications of royal favor that went far beyond the acquisition of his luxury furniture. In 1791, much to the astonishment of his contemporaries, the *ébéniste* was awarded the title Royal Prussian Privy Councillor.⁴ A year later the king and his entourage paid an extended official visit to his new “diplomatic agent on the Lower Rhine”: “After first taking a look around the [Moravian] community hall and the choir houses of the unmarried brothers and sisters . . . they graciously accepted a midday meal at the Roentgen family home.”⁵

A reflection of such extraordinary success was the large secretary cabinet purchased by the Prussian successor to the throne in December 1779 (cat. 34). The monumental desk is considered the most important piece of furniture produced by the Neuwied manufactory. It also offers the most impressive illustration of David Roentgen's shrewd sales strategy: by creating spectacular showpieces as advertisements for the workshop at his own expense, Roentgen aimed to secure as clients not only great rulers but also their courtiers.⁶ Produced in an edition of three, the desk in question was his breakthrough project of the 1770s. It served as his entrée to the three most important European courts, those of the Imperial family, the king of France, and the upstart Prussians. The strategy was most successfully employed in his capture of the Russian market with the sale to Catherine the Great in 1783–84 of the Apollo desk (cat. 42), specifically designed with her in mind. All such efforts were bolstered by extensive diplomatic maneuvering, for Roentgen needed not only to learn something about each ruler's personal preferences but also to acquire the

FIG. 37. Detail of Berlin secretary cabinet (cat. 34), showing scene on center door

FIG. 38. Frederick William [heir presumptive]. *Heavy Freight Wagons with Military Escort*. ca. 1820. Watercolor. Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg (Inv. no. GK II [5] 716/23)



appropriate letters of introduction and the assurance that his shipments of luxury products would be exempted from taxes and duties. Good contacts were invaluable. One such was the Austrian ambassador to Paris, Comte Florimond Claude de Mercy-Argenteau, to whom Roentgen repeatedly turned with astonishing candor. Two weeks before setting out on his second trip to Saint Petersburg, for example, he wrote the count: “On this journey I am fully determined to wait upon His Royal Highness the bishop of Osnabrück, so that I may become known at that court as well. Despite all my efforts, I can find no channel through which I might be recommended there, but I have no doubt that Your Excellency will find some solution, even if you cannot do it directly . . . so I am taking the . . . liberty of most humbly requesting whether Your Excellency would be so kind as to help me obtain a letter of introduction to that court before my departure.”⁷

The first example of the large desk was sold to Duke Charles Alexander of Lorraine in the summer of 1776 (see fig. 21, p. 24). The duke, a connoisseur of fine cabinetmaking and gilt bronzes, had resided in Brussels as governor of the Austrian Netherlands since 1744. To the Rhineland *ébéniste*, who listed among his clients some of the electors of the Holy Roman Empire, it seemed only logical to turn to a close relative of Holy Roman Empress Maria Theresa as a means of access to the Imperial court. Duty-free transport to Brussels was granted him in 1775,⁸

and in August 1776, when the duke arrived in Brussels “for administrative purposes,” as he put it in his *Journal Secret*, he found that David Roentgen and the cabinet were already awaiting him.⁹ Despite the formidable price, Charles Alexander purchased the desk, which he referred to as a “machine” owing to its numerous mechanical devices. With his familial ties to the French queen, Charles Alexander was presumably a helpful reference when in late 1778 Roentgen arrived in Paris with a large shipment of furniture—the showpiece of which was the second example of the large secretary cabinet—to pay his respects to Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette.¹⁰ The king’s purchase of the piece brought Roentgen instant fame. He exhibited his furniture at the Salon des Artistes et Savants, and the pieces were quickly snapped up by members of the court.¹¹

It would appear that Roentgen originally planned to offer the third example of the secretary cabinet to the Imperial family in Vienna. He surely made his appeal not to the aged Empress Maria Theresa but rather to her son Emperor Joseph II. Nevertheless, despite his good relationship with the Austrian ambassador, Roentgen’s attempts to evade the hefty fees imposed on imports of luxury articles came to naught, so that the transport to Vienna alone would have been financially risky. Since the sale of such an extraordinary piece depended entirely on its being seen firsthand, there was no possibility that Roentgen would follow the established

protocol for commissioned works, namely depositing one's goods at the border while waiting to obtain exemption from duties.¹² So he turned to Prussia. The news from Paris had been duly noted in Berlin, and on July 1 the *Königlich Privilegirte Berlinische Staats- und gelehrte Zeitung* wrote about the sensation the French king's desk had caused and about "the master cabinet-maker from Neuwied, Herr Röntgen, known for some years now for his excellent work."¹³ Thus, when Roentgen approached the heir apparent to the Prussian throne offering to present a similar piece to him personally, the prince saw to it that the related import duties were waived. On June 27, 1779, only six weeks after he had received the discouraging news from the Austrian ambassador, he was able to tell Mercy-Argenteau that owing to "an exalted command from another illustrious court, to which I plan to betake myself shortly, my trip to Vienna could well be postponed until next spring."¹⁴

In December of that same year, the last and most elaborate of the three large secretary cabinets arrived in Berlin, where the heir presumptive bought it for the no less fabulous sum of 12,000 gold thalers, making a down payment of 6,000 thalers and thereby placing himself in debt to the manufactory for years to come. He became Frederick William II in the late summer of 1786, and the following December Roentgen called upon his long-standing client and presented him with a truly king-size bill: including seven years' interest, the unpaid balance on the large secretary cabinet alone had risen to 8,100 thalers. Given Roentgen's repeatedly attested sense of diplomacy, it seems likely that he chose to accompany his enormous demand with a gift: a new center door for the cabinet paying homage to the king as a patron of the arts and sciences (fig. 37). The new door replaced the original depiction of Geometry and Astronomy, which in turn took the place of the door on the lower right with its personification of sculpture.¹⁵ Remarkably, it appears that a similar change was made to the pictorial program of the Paris secretary cabinet, for two versions of the center door are among the surviving marquetry panels from the front of the piece (see cat. 36), which was dismantled after 1826.¹⁶ In Paris, however, the substitution was immediate; already in February 1779 it was reported that the queen had the original Astronomy panel replaced by one with a medallion portrait of herself (see cat. 35).¹⁷ The Paris instance indicates that the possibility of personalizing the pictorial program was prepared for in advance of the sale.¹⁸ In Berlin, as in Paris, the substitutions clearly indicate that Roentgen recognized that helping a buyer to feel a personal identification with such a showpiece was a way to promote a

sale, and acted accordingly—in the one case with an homage to the king, in the other with a dedication to the queen.¹⁹

In the summer of 1770, years before the arrival of the large desk in Berlin, Frederick the Great had the opportunity at his meeting with Roentgen to commit himself to early neoclassical furniture. The oval table that he bought at that time (fig. 39)—still indebted to the rococo in form but neoclassical in its ornament—was trendsetting, not in Berlin but at Wörlitz.²⁰ Prince Friedrich Franz von Anhalt-Dessau (later Duke Leopold III), who created a nursery of German neoclassicism in his so-called Garden Realm near that small Saxony town, purchased an identical piece and commissioned from Roentgen the famous furnishings of the princess's chamber (see fig. 11, p. 12; cat. 19).²¹ Roentgen was constantly under way to or from Saint Petersburg beginning in the fall of 1783, and when passing through Berlin he never failed to offer the Prussian crown prince a few samples of his most recent work—executed in the full-blown neoclassical style in mahogany with gilt bronzes adopted from Paris—and to deposit them with him on credit. In 1783, for example, he left a rolltop desk with gilt-bronze mounts, which was appraised three years later at 2,000 thalers, including interest.²²

In December 1786 Roentgen paid his first visit to Frederick William II after his coronation.

FIG. 39. Roentgen manufactory. Oval table. 1770. Formerly Potsdam Palaces, current whereabouts unknown



FIG. 40. Roentgen manufactory. Writing table. 1785–89. Formerly Kunstgewerbemuseum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, current whereabouts unknown



In addition to the above-mentioned accounting, he presented the king with a choice of at least twenty-six pieces, including a “large table . . . for spreading drawings out on . . . in a red, marbled wood, topped by a colonnade in the Doric order” that had been ordered a year before.²³ The king selected fourteen pieces: in addition to the earlier table, the list of purchases included four round barrel chairs, a four-cylinder chiming clock, two pairs of commodes, a rolltop desk, two convertible tables, and a secretary. Of these pieces from the workshop’s wholly neoclassical repertoire, it is possible to identify the expensive chiming longcase clock and the rolltop desk.²⁴ Two major pieces, both lost, can be identified from invoices. One was a columned writing table topped by a cabinet supporting a bronze group that was delivered in 1789 (fig. 40), one of the most splendid avant-garde writing desks ever produced by the Roentgen manufactory.²⁵ The other was an eight-legged drawing table, about twelve feet long, with a *cartonnier* (filing cabinet) with louvred door at one end.²⁶ It was delivered in February 1794 for 200 carolins (roughly 2,200 gulden).²⁷ In addition to the *cartonnier*, this conference table apparently came with a small strongbox as well (see fig. 41).²⁸ The royal inventories mention a second longcase clock with a plucked-string mechanism and decorated

with tall Corinthian columns and a statue of Apollo on top. A rare design drawing for it has also survived (see app. 2.10, p. 233).²⁹ Several other recognizable Neuwied pieces can be seen in contemporary room portraits of the royal apartments, such as a folding writing desk at which King Frederick William III once worked in a watercolor after Friedrich Wilhelm Klose (fig. 42) and a round table in the library. Almost certainly many pieces found their way to the residences of Berlin courtiers.³⁰

For the Neuwied manufactory—a large concern operating in the heart of Europe—the link with Prussia offered far more than simply another important market. Given its extensive territory and thanks to the long period of peace it maintained, Prussia could be relied on and offered far-reaching protection.³¹ It provided not only passes that exempted shipments of luxury goods from protective tariffs³² but also personal letters of safe-conduct that David and Katharina Roentgen were able to make use of as late as the winter of 1800.³³

With the end of the *ancien régime* and the collapse of luxury markets in Paris and other regions, Berlin was the logical place for the firm to set up a new branch. By the spring of 1791, with Roentgen’s support, David Hacker, the manufactory foreman, had established himself



FIG. 41. David Roentgen. Large table with *cartonnier*. 1793/94. Shown in Room 19, Hohenzollern Museum in Schloss Monbijou, current whereabouts unknown. The Berlin secretary cabinet (cat. 34) can be seen on the left.

there. His success served as a model for subsequent business ventures by David Roentgen in Stuttgart, Saint Petersburg, Weimar, Dessau, and Braunschweig. As early as 1770, conflict with the Herrnhuter community in Neuwied had forced Roentgen to consider moving his base operations to Prussia; thirty years later, Elbing, in West Prussia, was his first choice as a possible new home for the business. Even though these dreams were never realized, Roentgen was able to rely on substantial Prussian support. Letters from Berlin assured that “our Prussian agent on the Lower Rhine” should not be burdened with the billeting of soldiers. Ultimately, Frederick William II placed the entire Herrnhuter community under royal protection from the troops of the French Revolution.³⁴



FIG. 42. After Friedrich Wilhelm Klose. *The King's Writing Room, Crown Prince Palace* (detail). ca. 1861. Watercolor, 10 1/4 × 10 3/8 in. (26.1 × 26.2 cm). Hessische Hausstiftung, Museum Schloss Fasanerie, Eichenzell/Fulda, Germany (StaD, D23, case II/32)



NEUWIED FURNITURE AND THE RUSSIAN LUXURY MARKET

TAMARA RAPPE

When she was still only a grand duchess, the German princess who had married the future emperor of Russia and who would become empress in her own right, bought with her own money the furniture she required for her rooms in the royal palaces. That way, she said, “when I went from one residence to the other, I found everything that I needed without the difficulty and the inconveniences of transport.”¹ After she ascended to the throne in 1762, Catherine II continued to concern herself with her surroundings. Her purchases of foreign furniture greatly increased in the 1770s and 1780s, when she was occupied in enlarging and redecorating the Winter Palace in the Russian capital (fig. 44). Catherine preferred to buy furniture from German and English cabinetmakers, and many of the pieces she obtained from David Roentgen’s workshop in Neuwied, one of the best collections of its kind, are now in the State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg.

Roentgen must have decided to explore the Russian market actively about 1782–83.² Was it because he had already conquered most of the courts of Europe with his furniture; because he was intrigued by Russia itself, which was rapidly adopting the civilization of the West; or because of Catherine’s German origins? All those factors surely contributed to his arrival in the spring of 1784 at Saint Petersburg. It was the diplomat and writer Friedrich Melchior, Baron von Grimm, who had paved the way for him to meet the empress. In a letter written to her in July 1783, Grimm described Roentgen in glowing terms:

May I tell you about a man who at this time is on his way to St Petersburg[?] This is Monsieur Roentgen, famous Herrnhuter (Moravian Brother), undoubtedly the best cabinet-maker of this century. He comes to



FIG. 44. Dmitrii Grigor'evich Levitskii. *Catherine II*. ca. 1788. Oil on canvas, 106 × 73 in. (269.2 × 185.5 cm). Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens, Washington, D.C. (51.56)

you because the finest minds attract each other. Since Your Majesty cannot go to Neuwied on the Rhine, the celebrated Roentgen is on his way to St Petersburg on the Neva. Neuwied is the theatre of his glory as the universe is that of Catherine II. France, Germany and Holland ring with his fame. However, this does not suffice to serve his ambition. He is leaving his large establishment to bring a piece of furniture to Your Majesty’s attention. It is unique and has been built especially for you. It has no equal nor will it have. He asks nothing better than to submit it to Your Majesty’s judgement. If Your Majesty does not care for it, he will take it back to Neuwied and, as a good Herrnhutian, seek consolation in Christ Who is dear to him. Do, I beg you, favour him by inspecting his work because this alone is the purpose of this noteworthy man’s journey.³

FIG. 43. Detail of cat. 15, showing central marquetry panel

FIG. 45. Johann Friedrich Anthing. *David Roentgen and Company in Saint Petersburg*. ca. 1784–86. Cut paper, ink, watercolor, gold foil; 17 3/4 × 23 7/8 in. (45.2 × 60.6 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Leopold Heinemann, 1948 (48.73.1)

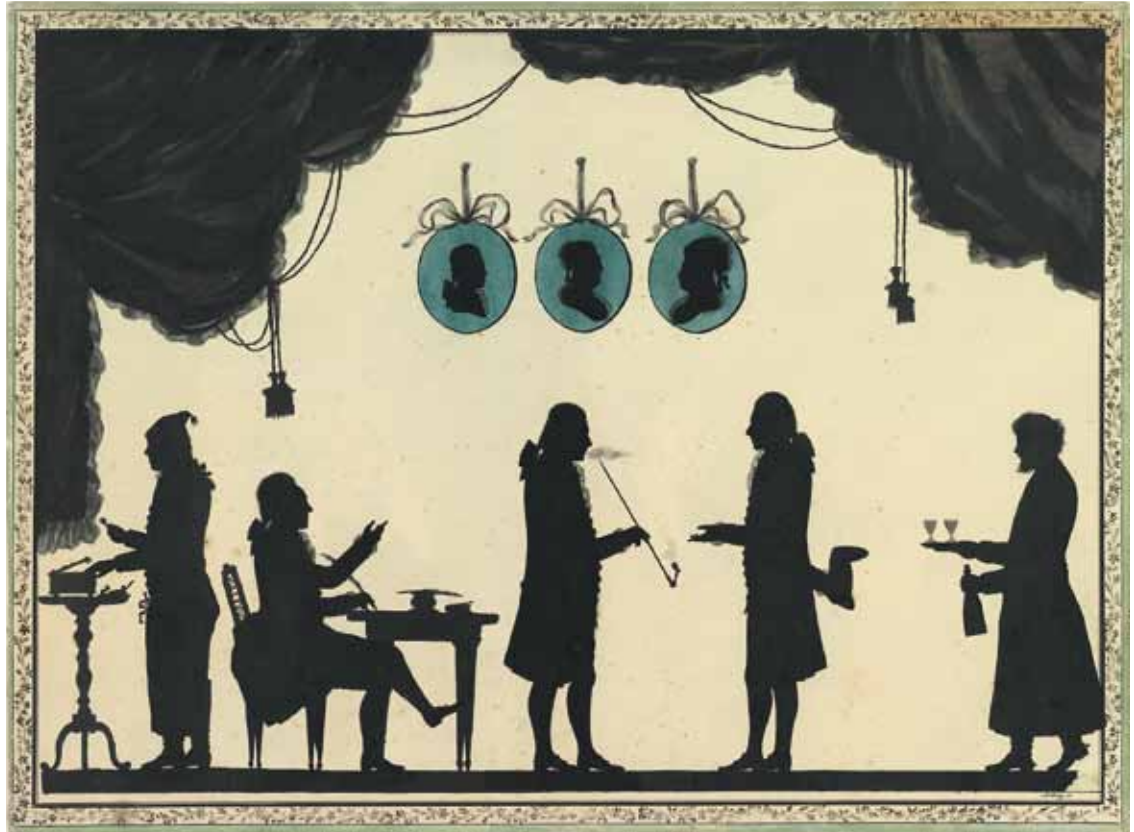


FIG. 46. Detail of the Apollo desk (cat. 42), showing Zémire, the empress's favorite greyhound



Catherine, who paid attention to Grimm's recommendations, replied that she was more than happy to receive Roentgen.

The piece of furniture Roentgen took to show the empress was a large desk crowned with the figure of Apollo. It survived the more than eleven-hundred-mile trip and is today one of the glories of the State Hermitage Museum (cat. 42). The so-called Apollo desk is fitted with mechanical devices, many of which open and close interior drawers and compartments. When the slanted front is opened, a bronze sculpture of Catherine's favorite Italian greyhound is seen lying in front of what looks like the facade of a palace (fig. 46). If the dog is stroked, the facade drops down and is replaced, first by a panel of eight slots for documents and then by five drawers to hold small treasures. When buttons on the upper part of the desk are pressed, a book rest emerges, at which one can write or read while standing (see also the appendix by Meyer and Pape in this volume). The desk also contains a

musical mechanism fitted with a brass cylinder on which melodies are recorded. Needless to say, Catherine was enchanted and paid a large sum for the desk (see p. 14).

Roentgen received commissions to furnish not only the Winter Palace but also residences of the Russian nobility. Thus, the State Hermitage Museum's Roentgen collection contains only a portion of the objects he transported from Germany on different trips. Many others are preserved in the palace-museums in and around Saint Petersburg.⁴ Almost all the works date from one period and were created especially for the Russian market. As a group, they show how Roentgen interpreted the new fashion that had swept across Europe. Nearly all the furniture is executed in a neoclassical style, with very little marquetry decoration, with the exception of a few pieces from before the 1780s. The master instead relied on beautiful mahogany veneer and magnificent gilt bronze to enhance the rather severe forms.

Among the holdings of the Russian State Historical Archives are lists of the furniture that Catherine bought from Roentgen. They have made it possible to connect certain pieces with several of the shipments and so to determine their date of manufacture. The first shipment (in 1784) included two writing desks with compartments, a monumental clock on pairs of columns (for a similar clock, see fig. 95, p. 212), a chest of drawers, large and small desks with writing stands, and an architect's table for the

czarina's grandchildren (cat. 43).⁵ Some of the descriptions are too short to identify any specific piece, but it is probably safe to say that the "tables," "commodes," and "clocks" that accompanied the Apollo desk to Russia were relatively restrained objects.

Roentgen sold all the furniture in his first shipment. Back in Neuwied, having drawn conclusions from what he had seen in the Winter Palace and learned about the lifestyle of upper-class Saint Petersburg, he made a second batch of furniture and delivered it in 1786. Those pieces were more complex in design. They included three rolltop desks, a desk with writing stand, a secretary, two clocks, and a pair of little tables.⁶ One object in particular stands out: a writing desk with a small compartment. In the invoice it is described as number 50, "a large mechanical desk for writing while seated or standing, crowned by a group representing Science, Scholarship, and Vigilance."⁷ Catherine paid 19,600 rubles for it in April 1786 (fig. 47).

The desk is indeed crowned with a bronze allegorical group—not of Science, Scholarship, and Vigilance, but of Justice on a column and, at her side, Athena, who is hanging a medallion struck with Catherine's profile. On the pedestal, Time is shown writing Catherine's name in

Latin. Standing behind her is History, entering the empress's deeds in a book. On the lower step of the pedestal is an inscription in Latin, which translates as OFFERED AND DEDICATED TO THE GERMAN MUSE IN THE YEAR 1786 BY THE INVENTOR ROENTGEN OF NEUWIED.⁸ The bronze group is based on a drawing for the marquetry decoration on a desk made in 1779 for Louis XVI of France.⁹ We do not know if it has been on the desk from the beginning, since the subject does not fit the description in the invoice. But the dedication to Catherine indicates that the bronze group was especially created for the empress.

One of the rolltop desks included in the second consignment is decorated in bronze, with a chiming clock whose dial is inscribed with the words "Roentgen & Kinzing von Neuwied."¹⁰ The top of the desk is in the shape of a pavilion with doubled columns, and it has a clock in the center, which is adorned with a bronze sculpture and magnificently executed ornament created by the French master gilder François Rémond.¹¹ The piece has a mechanism that plays four melodies. Both the writing and rolltop desks just discussed are made of a rare yellowish wood (see cat. 59), whereas most of the other furniture that Roentgen delivered to the Russian court was made of mahogany.

FIG. 47. David Roentgen. Desk. ca. 1784–85. Oak, mahogany, veneered with cedar and maple, gilt bronze; 66 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 57 $\frac{1}{16}$ × 37 $\frac{13}{16}$ in. (168 × 145 × 96 cm). The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (EPR-5,090)





FIG. 48. David Roentgen's reminder to Catherine the Great regarding an overdue payment. June 22, 1789. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Thomas J. Watson Library, Gift of Leopold Heinemann, 1948

Roentgen was conservative in his choice of furniture types. He produced variations on the rolltop desk many times. One example in the Hermitage is decorated with a medallion of the Greek philosopher Plato; in another desk, also in the Hermitage, a piece of paper was found inscribed with the names of Roentgen's journeymen Michael and Johann Höfflin, Ludwig Schneider, and Johann Knössing.¹² Roentgen often reused decorative elements, such as the Plato medallion (see fig. 9, p. 11, and cat. 65), on different pieces of furniture so that he could cut costs and vary his workshop's production.

Roentgen's third delivery, made in 1787, contained furniture that Catherine had commissioned the previous year for Pella Palace, which was then being constructed near the capital. Among other items for Pella, the shipment contained models for double doors whose leaves were decorated with bronze arabesque ornaments executed by François Rémond after models by Jean Martin.¹³ Pella Palace was never completed, and the furniture maker Christian Meyer, who worked in Russia, eventually used the doors for a coin cabinet (cat. 69). Later, the lower part of the cabinet was finished by a different master, Heinrich Gambs.

During his second trip to Saint Petersburg, Roentgen was commissioned to make unique cabinets to hold the carved gems for which Catherine had a passion—an addiction she shared with some of her lovers. Her collection of cameos and intaglios was rich and choice, and special cabinets were needed to preserve it. However, the empress was not satisfied with the two she

ordered from Roentgen in 1786, and on February 11, 1788, she ordered three more. They constituted Roentgen's fourth and last delivery for the empress. It would be some time, however, before final payment was received, and in 1789 Roentgen was forced to send his patron a reminder that she still owed 26,000 rubles for three of the cabinets she had purchased (fig. 48).¹⁴

All five cabinets are in the Hermitage collection (see cat. 65). Each one has one hundred drawers, divided into four sections, with twenty-five drawers in each section. When describing the Winter Palace in 1794, Saint Petersburg chemistry professor Johann Gottlieb Georgi remarked that "the cabinets and cupboards in which gems and other valuables are kept . . . are the most elegant works of Roentgen, Meyer, and other renowned masters of this art."¹⁵ Other foreign visitors to the Winter Palace also admired them. In his biography of Catherine, Jean-Henri Castéra praised their execution, which, in his opinion, was "not less wonderful than their invention; not a joint is visible; all is fitted . . . exactly together as though it were molten at one cast."¹⁶ Their construction is indeed unusual: the upper part is a cabinet with double doors that conceal the little drawers; the lower part is a half-domed niche with a coffered ceiling. The gilt-bronze and brass decoration is stunning. The arabesque ornament on the door panels was made in France by Rémond,¹⁷ and he also made the bronze portrait medallions depicting Plato and Cicero on all five cabinets.¹⁸

Also in the Hermitage collection are examples of Roentgen's multifunctional tables with mirrors and sliding drawers (see cat. 49), a secretary decorated with a medallion, a plain chest of drawers, and a series of desks with writing stands characteristically decorated with bronze drapery-swing handles on the escutcheon plates and rosettes with beads in the corners. Most scholars agree that this type of mount was created in Roentgen's own atelier in Neuwied, although Christian Baulez argues for manufacture in Rémond's Paris workshop (see also p. 11 and cat. 61).¹⁹

As she did in so many other aspects of culture, Catherine II brought Russia up to date in the decorative arts. She chose to purchase the furniture for her palaces from David Roentgen, the best cabinetmaker in Europe, whose technically superb pieces engage the mind as well as please the eye. In doing so she made the point—the fundamental one of her reign—that "Russians were civilized and that she was an enlightened ruler."²⁰

THE PRINCELY FURNITURE
OF THE ROENTGENS

TILT-TOP TABLE

Abraham Roentgen,
ca. 1742–45
Cherry; brass inlay
H. 27 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (70 cm);
diam. of top 30 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.
(78 cm)
Museumslandschaft
Hessen Kassel (BXI.31)

PROVENANCE

Presumably acquired
by Landgrave Ludwig VIII
von Hessen-Darmstadt
(1691–1768).

Three cabriole (double-curved) legs support this table, a type that is also called a tripod table. The top, which can be turned back against the legs, is decorated with a circle of fourteen shallow saucer-like lobes enclosing a circle of seven half-lobes. The rims of the lobes are inset with brass stringing, and in the raised area between the circles are fifteen brass plaques engraved with shell and floral motifs. In the center of the top is a larger brass cartouche engraved with a putto holding a snake, a symbol of wisdom. In the eighteenth century, small tables were used at intimate gatherings, especially when tea was served (see cat. 62). The lobes on this example would have kept saucers and cups from sliding off and provided space for other utensils. When not in use, small tables with a tilt-up top could be placed against a wall or, in warmer seasons, in front of a fireplace, where they would act as a decorative screen.

Abraham Roentgen made this striking piece shortly after he returned to Germany from London, where he had joined the Moravian Brotherhood and learned English techniques of cabinetry.¹ Ludwig Röntgen, his youngest son, later recalled his father's London period: "He specialized in engraving, in marquetry, and in mechanics—so successfully that he was soon sought after by the most skilled cabinetmakers and richly rewarded."² It seems appropriate that Ludwig mentions engraving first: although Abraham is admired chiefly for his complex mechanical inventions, engraving on various materials was always one of his favorite decorating techniques, one in which he was exceptionally skilled.³ This table, like the other early

brass-inlaid furniture produced by Roentgen in Germany, is English in style.⁴ Only the choice of wood is unusual: he used cherry instead of mahogany, which was very expensive and rarely available in Central Europe at that time (see fig. 3, p. 5).

Another Moravian cabinetmaker working in London during the 1730s was Johann Friedrich Hintz, who also specialized in brass inlay. He advertised on May 22, 1738, the sale of "A Choice Parcel of Desk and Book-Cases of Mahogany, Tea-Tables, Tea-Chests, Tea-Boards, etc. all curiously [carefully] made and inlaid with fine Figures of Brass and Mother of Pearl. They will be sold at a very reasonable Rate, the maker, Frederick Hintz, designing soon to go abroad."⁵ Hintz set off for Germany in late spring of that year in a group that included Abraham Roentgen and the Moravian preacher John Wesley, founder of the Methodist movement.⁶ By 1742, both Hintz and Roentgen were settled in Herrnhag, and Hintz, who had arrived earlier, lent Abraham space and tools to set up a workshop. In 1746 Hintz returned to England. He must have played a key role in the early development of the Roentgen manufactory, but no documented work or other evidence have turned up to prove it.⁷

The presumed first owner of this table, Landgrave Ludwig VIII von Hessen-Darmstadt, was married to the daughter and heir of Count Johann Reinhard von Hanau, who lived not far from Herrnhag. Their daughter, Karoline Luise von Baden-Durlach, would become one of the most important patrons of the Roentgen firm. WK





TEA CHEST

Abraham Roentgen,
ca. 1750–55
Oak, cedar, veneered
with rosewood;
brass, iron, and steel
6½ (without handle) ×
9½ × 5¾ in.
(16.5 × 24.1 × 14.6 cm)
The Metropolitan
Museum of Art, New
York, Purchase, Friends
of European Sculpture
and Decorative Arts
Gifts, 1999 (1999.147)

PROVENANCE

Private collection,
Germany.

Beginning in 1742, when he started to work, Abraham Roentgen impressed the small princely courts and the landed gentry around Herrnhag, as well as the rich patricians in nearby Frankfurt, with his brass-inlaid tea tables, gueridons, chairs, and tea chests in the “English Manner” (see fig. 3, p. 5).¹ Furniture of such high quality and so inventive in its design and execution was a novelty, and the demand for such objects increased rapidly.² One of Abraham’s first tea chests was made in Herrnhag for the princely house of Isenburg-Birstein. The appearance of that luxurious object in the prince’s drawing room would have informed his guests that he and his family were familiar with the latest fashions and social pastimes.³

The interior of the present example is partitioned to hold a pair of caddies for black and green tea. Between those spaces was a lidded box where sugar (or candies) could be stored or where tea leaves could be mixed. The arrangement would be repeated with many variations in the following decades. Almost all the details are typical of Abraham’s workshop products. They include English

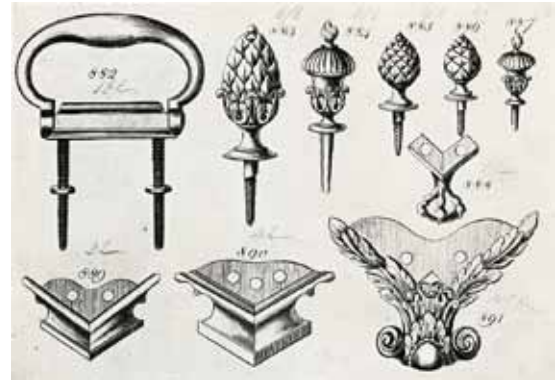


FIG. 49. Page from an eighteenth-century hardware catalogue, Birmingham, England, showing mounts used by the Roentgen manufactory. The Trustees of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London

brass mounts, such as the handle and bracket feet, which could be bought from the metalwork pattern books and sales catalogues of Birmingham foundries (fig. 49),⁴ and a spring-operated secret drawer, which in this case occupies the base of the chest and opens from the right side when a button on top of





the side panel (hidden when the lid is closed) is pushed. The overall design and decoration of the chest, however, is taken to an unusually high level.⁵ The lid's dramatic silhouette, undulating in the manner of a pagoda roof, alludes to the East Asian origin of tea, and the corners are emphasized by suave brass moldings ending in tongue motifs at the base. A brass cartouche engraved with rocaille and floral decoration is inlaid in the front, and a keyhole is hidden behind a small door that springs open at

the touch of a hidden button underneath the chest. Abraham used cartouches of this shape surprisingly often; multiple examples were possibly die-cut from sheets of brass. Nevertheless, the surface was always engraved with different rocaille or floral motifs, so that a buyer could be sure he would not see an identical piece at a neighbor's mansion. The tea chest became one of the Roentgen workshop's best-sellers, and examples survive in relatively large numbers.⁶ WK

CASKET

Abraham Roentgen,
ca. 1756–58
Cherry, veneered with
rosewood; brass,
mother-of-pearl,
and ivory inlay
6 ¾ × 11 × 5 ⅞ in.
(17 × 28 × 15 cm)
Mittelrhein-Museum,
Koblenz (Kg6.014)

PROVENANCE
Johann Philipp von
Walderdorff (1701–1768);
by descent.

The precious appearance of this casket offers a clue to its function. It belongs to a small group of boxes used by archbishop-electoral Johann Philipp von Walderdorff, one of Abraham Roentgen's greatest patrons, to hold documents and objects of value.¹ Among the inner fittings are removable cherry-wood compartments for jewelry or gems. The bombé form of the body was an appropriate choice, for the sides seem to bulge under the weight of the treasure stored within.

Four bracket feet support a rectangular base, ornamented with a brass cockbead molding and a concave brass molding. The body, which is inlaid with brass, mother-of-pearl, and ivory decoration, supports a gently curved pagoda lid with a double-scroll brass handle. The geometric marquetry in the center of the sides is framed by a brass string inlay that emphasizes their Baroque curves. An inset

brass plate with floral and shell decoration enriched by blossoms in mother-of-pearl serves as a frame for a keyhole, which is concealed behind a little flip door. A spring-operated drawer can be released on the right side of the casket.

The casket's form is much like that of Roentgen's early tea chests (see cat. 2), which are in the English style he mastered during his London stay in the 1730s. It should be mentioned, however, that a chest of similar shape and with similar fittings and brass string decoration was made by the German artisan Johann Eggerich Frers as early as 1666 (fig. 50). It, too, has inventively crafted hidden drawers and was used to hold valuables, in this case writing and scientific instruments.² Roentgen made similar models, including several with the addition of a sliding panel on the right side that conceals drawers and secret compartments.³ WK



FIG. 50. Johann Eggerich Frers. Casket with scientific and writing implements. 1666. Walnut, gilt brass, iron; 4 ⅞ × 9 ⅞ × 5 ¼ in. (11.8 × 24.5 × 13.2 cm). Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel, Astronomisch-Physikalisches Kabinett (Inv. no. G 23)



ROTATING TABERNACLE

Abraham Roentgen,
ca. 1758
Oak, ebony, and rose-
wood, veneered with
amaranth, yew, walnut,
olive, rosewood, ebony,
and ivory; tortoiseshell
and engraved mother-
of-pearl (partially
stained); sheet silver,
gilded yellow metal
H. 50 in. (127 cm);
diam. 26 ¾ in. (68 cm)
Bischöfliches Dom- und
Diözesanmuseum Mainz
(ML 00040)

PROVENANCE

Commissioned in 1758
by Abbess Maria Fides
Peetz for an altarpiece
in the church of the
Altmünsterkloster,
Mainz; the convent
was dissolved in 1781
and the church building
changed ownership
several times; sold in
1808, the altarpiece was
installed in the Church of
Saint Emmeran, Mainz;
sent to secure storage
in 1943.

This remarkable object by Abraham Roentgen once stood at the center of an elaborate altar in the Altmünsterkloster in Mainz. Around the middle of the eighteenth century, the learned and art-loving abbess of that Cistercian convent, Maria Fides Peetz, ordered a large-scale refurbishment of the cloister's church. Her ambitious undertaking included the creation of four marble-embellished side altars, a throne area and high altar with a monumental painting by the famous Austrian artist Franz Anton Maulbertsch, and this cylinder-shaped tabernacle. The last may have been kept in a decorated case. Within a frame of geometric marquetry, its three vaulted niches each served a specific liturgical purpose and could be turned to the front of the altar, possibly by means of a cranking mechanism.¹ One niche originally held a monstrance for the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and the second displayed a small altar crucifix. The third once held a ciborium (a receptacle for the eucharistic host) that stood in front of a depiction of the Last Supper.

The themes of the decoration and the fine quality of the ensemble reflect the sophistication of the patron. The first niche is veneered with tortoiseshell over red underpaint and gold foil; on the front of the base where the monstrance once stood is a cartouche with the letters *IHS* (the abbreviation of Christ's name in Greek), and on the base's top appear the interlaced letters *CV/MFPA*. The latter have been interpreted as a reference in Latin to the convent of Altmünster and to Abbess Maria Fides Peetz.² The flowing abstract forms of the dramatic background may allude to the blood of Christ; the engraved ivory-and-silver angels appear in their role of intercessors for Christian souls, and their beautiful figures would have encouraged churchgoers to follow their shining example.

The niche that once held an altar crucifix is magnificently adorned with tortoiseshell and mother-of-pearl. There is also gilt-bronze ornamentation showing grain and grapes (allusions to eucharistic bread and wine) as well as a stylized net symbolizing the veins of Christ's blood that nourish

active Christian congregations. The net might also be the one with which, as Christ told his disciples, they were to catch human souls ("I will make you fishers of men"; Matthew 4:19).

The space depicted in the Last Supper in the ciborium niche is reminiscent of the famous Schönborn Chapel, by Balthasar Neumann, an annex to Würzburg Cathedral. Lothar Franz von Schönborn, elector of Mainz, who died in 1729, commissioned the chapel.³ Prominently displayed on the entablature of the niche is a rocaille cartouche inscribed with the words, *HOC FACITE IN MEAM COMMEMORATIONEN* (Do this in memory of me), Christ's words spoken by the priest at the moment in the communion mass when the bread and wine are consecrated. Below the cartouche, the altar that typically would stand at this spot has been replaced by an illustration of the Last Supper in engraved ivory. In a departure from the usual iconography, Christ is placed not in the center but prominently at the left of a long oval table. This was done in order to avoid having the ciborium hide the Savior from view.

It is interesting that the columns framing the scene are wound with leafy sprays, an allusion to the twisted columns of Bernini's baldachin beneath the dome of Saint Peter's in Rome. It may be that the abbess herself visited Rome—as surely Abraham never did—to see the columns, which derived from descriptions of the legendary columns in Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem, and it may have been her idea to use them in the tabernacle scene to indicate the setting of the Last Supper. When the niche was turned toward the congregation during the celebration of the communion mass, the scene with the commemorating inscription would have looked like an extension of the nave to the churchgoers seated before it.

Documentation suggests that the rotating tabernacle was installed in 1758.⁴ Abraham Roentgen's workshop had a considerable reputation by then, and archbishop-elect Johann Philipp von Walderdorff was already an enthusiastic patron, yet it is still astonishing that a member of the Catholic clergy employed a member of a Protestant sect to





work on such an important church project. Not surprisingly, the tabernacle was long attributed to one or another of the gifted local cabinetmakers in Mainz, but its authorship by Roentgen has recently been established by Diana Ecker and Paul Engelmann.⁵ A touching postscript to the story is found in a note dated January 19, 1758, from a Moravian brother in Neuwied to the governing board at Herrnhut explaining that Abraham Roentgen's ongoing financial difficulties were partly attributable to the fact that a canon of Mainz Cathedral had left his bills unpaid for eighteen months.⁶

Various features of the tabernacle, such as the silhouetted silver figures surrounded by silver and gilt-bronze ornament, must have been produced by several skilled metalwork specialists in close cooperation with Roentgen. The angels and extensive use of mother-of-pearl seem to relate it closely to works by the Italian cabinetmaker Pietro Piffetti of Turin,⁷ but so far a connection between the two men has not been found. Perhaps the abbess or a high church official in Mainz who also held a post in Italy owned works of art by the celebrated Italian artisan that Roentgen was able to study first hand.⁸ WK



HARLEQUIN TABLE

Abraham Roentgen, ca. 1760–65
Oak, pine, walnut, rosewood, and mahogany, veneered with rosewood, tulipwood (stained), pearwood (stained); ivory, mother-of-pearl; gilt bronze, brass, and iron
31½ × 42½ × 20½ in. (80 × 108 × 52 cm)
Kunstgewerbemuseum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (W-1979,93)

PROVENANCE
[Georges Salmann, Paris, until 1979].

This convertible table is one of the most splendid and elaborate of the gaming and writing tables produced over a period of more than twenty years by Abraham Roentgen's workshop.¹ Supporting three tops, one above the other, the table rests on four massive cabriole legs decorated with intricate carving. The squat body curves forward at the front corners and is ornamented with exquisite latticework on all its surfaces. The first top has a delicate foliate border in engraved ivory all around; near the front edge, scenes in mother-of-pearl filled with parrots, overflowing baskets of fruit, and heaps of musical instruments lend a sense of rococo playfulness to the decoration.²

Each of the latticework squares is framed in thin strips of rosewood, with lighter-colored engraved rosettes (or stylized quatrefoils) at the corners, and each is filled with one of three different parquet

patterns in tulipwood and walnut. This marquetry is typical of Abraham Roentgen's pieces, though there are also simpler types with only one or two square patterns.³ The engraving on the numerous small rosettes was presumably produced with stamps of the kind known to have been delivered to the workshop on several occasions by the Neuwied engraver Elie Gervais.⁴ On the more elaborate table in Frankfurt (cat. 9), gilt bronzes take the place of the carving on the legs of the present piece, which gives the appearance of having been applied rather than cut out of the wood.

When completely folded, the piece becomes a side table. Once opened, it presents a sizable square surface, one that is also completely covered with latticework, omitting the gaming board found on other similar tables. The right half of the table's rear body can be swung outward along with the leg to





support the opened top. Once the second hinged top is opened, a plain surface stained a mahogany color is revealed. A slightly recessed rectangular section houses a frame that can be raised to form a lectern and, on either side, a lidded compartment. The two lids are ornamented with exquisitely engraved floral bouquets in brass. A final, astonishing transformation elevates an entire writing cabinet, previously hidden inside the body of the table. The cabinet's chief decorations are two extremely

delicate bucolic scenes engraved in ivory. To use the writing cabinet, one sits at the back of the table.

This convertible table is a splendid example of how greatly Abraham Roentgen was influenced by English designs. Late eighteenth-century English furniture included folding tables of this kind. Known as harlequin tables, they were introduced about 1720. Such tables owe their name to the fact that, at the release of a spring, a hidden cabinet suddenly rises up like a jack-in-the-box.⁵ AS

READING AND WRITING STAND

Abraham Roentgen,
ca. 1760–65
Pine, oak, and walnut,
veneered with rosewood,
alder, and palisander;
ivory, ebony, and
mother-of-pearl;
gilt bronze
30½ × 28¼ × 19¼ in.
(77.5 × 71.7 × 48.9 cm)
The J. Paul Getty
Museum, Los Angeles
(85.DA.216)

PROVENANCE

Commissioned by
Johann Philipp von
Walderdorff (1701–1768);
by descent.



The eye-catching quality of this small table compels the viewer to examine it closely. Like many of Abraham Roentgen's mechanical pieces, it has early eighteenth-century English prototypes (for example, the table at upper right and the adjustable knee-hole desk in fig. 51, p. 64).¹ The beveled pedestal with its bold marquetry rests on three curved legs. The tall apron looks solid but opens up to serve several functions. The upper part can be raised to the desired height by means of two gilt-bronze handles and conveniently tilted to form a stand for reading, writing, or drawing. Secret drawers and pivoting supports for candles emerge from the sides and front. The lower part contains a compartment that slides forward and breaks on a hinge into two sections. Each front section swings out,

allowing access to eight flat drawers. This stand is one of Roentgen's first pieces with this perfected feature (for later examples, see cats. 12, 18, 23).

The stand is a restrained rococo: the rocaille formations that frame Johann Philipp von Walderdorff's coat of arms and monogram on the top are symmetrically placed, as are the small S-shaped volute moldings on the legs. Roentgen's preference for an understated but rich geometry is seen in the superb marquetry made from fillets cut from a wide range of woods with different grains. The complex pattern of squares within squares covers every surface. The mother-of-pearl quatrefoils at the corners of the squares appear on several pieces made in the Neuwied workshop between 1756 and 1768, the years when Walderdorff served as elector of Trier.



Other objects by Roentgen display a similar artistry, but none is so perfect and accomplished in its execution, material, design, and proportions.²

Within each of the rounded corners of the top is a decoration in mother-of-pearl representing the three nails that secured Christ to the cross, a

symbol of redemption.³ The objects in the central cartouche—the elector’s arms surmounted by a crown with an orb, sword, and crosier—bespeak Walderdorff’s position as a worldly ruler and eminent churchman. The Lamb of God, shown in two quarters of the shield, refers to Walderdorff’s office as prince-abbot of Prüm, to which he was appointed in 1754.⁴ There is no doubt that Roentgen discussed this unique program with his client and executed his requests to the letter (Abraham’s son David would follow this practice, which undoubtedly contributed to the success of the workshop). The task of engraving the Lamb of God prominently on the precious ivory must have given Abraham special pleasure: the lamb bearing a flag (*vexillum*) is the emblem of the Moravian Brotherhood.

As an ordained priest, Walderdorff was obliged to say mass every day. It is possible that he carried the detachable upper section of the stand on his travels and used it as a reading stand or as a base for a small portable altar.⁵

WK

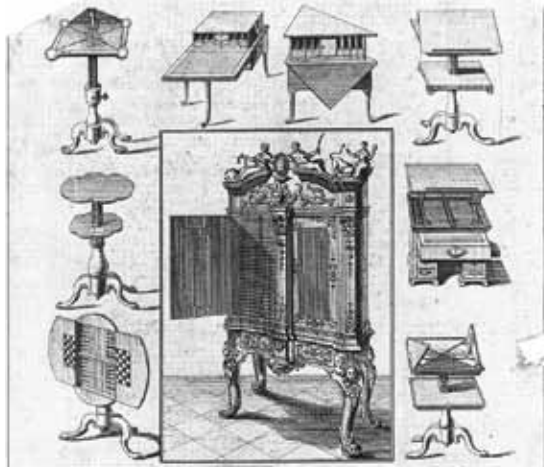


FIG. 51. Detail of an advertisement print signed Potter, possibly recording furniture produced by Thomas Potter, who was in partnership with John Kelsey in the late 1730s in London. Engraving, 10 3/4 × 7 3/4 in. (27.3 × 19.7 cm). The Trustees of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London



7
SOFA

Abraham Roentgen and young David worked on this sofa in cooperation with an unrecorded artist-designer, possibly either the artisan-craftsman Elie Gervais, who moved to Neuwied in 1756,¹ or the gifted painter Heinrich Foelix (see fig. 5, p. 7), a student of Januarius Zick. They clearly gave a great deal of thought and attention to every detail of this sofa and its pendant, in the same private collection in Germany. The Roentgens created a novelty heretofore unknown: artistically conceived palace furniture for seating that celebrated the patron's wealth and was simultaneously a marvel of comfort. Eighteenth-century palace furnishings reflected the rigorous social order of the ceremonial seating of a princely court at that time. It was an honor to sit on the sofa, as that was the pinnacle of a hierarchical arrangement that included armchairs, side chairs, tabourets, and simple cushions.² The archbishop and elector of Trier Johann Philipp von Walderdorff (r. 1756–68) commissioned the pieces,³ and because their use was restricted to his most important guests

in an ostentatiously decorated interior, he would surely have conferred the specific requirements with the cabinetmakers and approved their design.

Abraham included naturalistic details in the decoration that are typical of the later phase of the rococo but are unparalleled in their accuracy. The feet of the short legs on the sofas are remarkable, for they represent the single-toed hooves of horses instead of those of even-toed ungulates such as cattle or deer. The hoof, pastern, and ergot of each foot are as recognizable as on a live horse. Foot shapes on elegantly elongated furniture legs in France were *pieds de biche* (deer feet) and were transformed by Abraham to the single-toed style, which he used on small and high tables.⁴ On this and on a few case pieces (see cat. 14), the legs lend the object a secure stand that becomes a real base with the shaped aprons on all the visible sides. The overall form of the sofa is related to the English variant with scrolled back and comfortable armrests, all covered with upholstery,⁵ and three or four frontal legs with carved claw-and-ball feet.

Abraham Roentgen,
ca. 1762–64
Walnut, beech, oak,
veneered with walnut
and birch (partially
stained and painted with
colored washes); green
silk (replacement)
43¼ × 87¾ × 29½ in.
(110 × 222 × 74 cm)
Private collection

PROVENANCE
Commissioned by Johann
Philipp von Walderdorff,
(1701–1768); by descent;
private collection.





What makes this sofa type so special in the history of furniture is that all visible parts conformed to the principles of the late Baroque, with areas that ought to be static appearing to break out of the frame as though they too were filled with upholstery material, giving the whole a highly sculptural quality. This bursting impression is supported by the scrolling and shaped moldings across the top and the sides that end in wildly curved hand pieces. These wavy moldings provide the frame for the veneer of exquisitely grained walnut burl applied *en papillon*. In its appearance the veneer can be compared to fewer than a handful of pieces, including the secretary formerly in the Walderdorff collection

and now at the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, and a fall-front secretary in the Schönborn collection at Schloss Wiesentheid.⁶

In daringly juxtaposing the extremely delicate marquetry on this sofa with its sturdy frame and vividly figured veneer, the Roentgen workshop reached heights above anything seen before. The fanciful capriccio motifs in the marquetry covering the back, sides, and shaped apron were combined in a way similar to the ivory-inlay decoration on the Berlin and Frankfurt harlequin tables (see cats. 5, 9). The central cartouche on the crest of the sofa shows two putti discussing a building design in a setting of fantastic architecture and spraying fountains;



around them are drafting and building implements and other rolled-up designs. Scrolling rocaille enriched with floral elements and bunches of grapes meander over the full length of the crest. The putti personify Architecture and allude to the elector's love for building and lavish interiors. On the other sofa, the putti represent Astronomy.⁷ The grape vines represent the fertile vineyards of the Rhineland and the Mosel River valley, all part of the elector's domain. In a departure—or an intriguing experiment—the figures, architectural elements, and ornaments are not engraved but are painted finely on inlaid birch. The depictions are so delicate that they could only have been done by an artist.⁸

The figural cartouche in the center of the crest and the smaller ones on either side are reminiscent of a technique referred to as *lacca povera* or *lacca contrafatta*, or under-painted tortoiseshell inserted in so-called Boulle marquetry.⁹ Individual elements of the decoration, here so skillfully combined, originate from the ornamental prints of Franz Xaver Habermann, Johann Georg Hertel, and Johann Esaias Nilson in Augsburg, as in many cases their designs served as models for the marquetry or the engraving on inlaid brass and ivory (see cat. 12).¹⁰ WK

MULTIFUNCTIONAL COMMODORE

Abraham Roentgen,
ca. 1755–60
Oak and cherry, with
mahogany veneer and
walnut, maple, and birch
marquetry; gilt bronze
33 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 53 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 26 $\frac{3}{8}$ in.
(86 × 136 × 67 cm)
Hessische Hausstiftung,
Museum Schloss
Fasanerie, Eichenzell/
Fulda, Germany
(Inv. no. FAS M124)

PROVENANCE

The landgraves
and grand dukes of
Hessen-Kassel.



The hinged double top of this ingeniously conceived commode can be ratcheted up to serve as a desk for writing, reading, or drawing while standing. The height and degree of incline can be adjusted for individual comfort. When the top rises, a narrow molding at the front comes up to keep books or sheets of music and other papers from sliding off the polished veneered surface.

The commode is fitted with three drawers of similar size, each with a brass lip molding around the front. There is also a concave brass molding above and below the middle drawer. The top drawer was once fitted with a leather-covered writing surface and had small drawers that are now lost but which have survived in a few related case pieces.¹ Such fittings are more usually found in tables serv-

ing a variety of purposes (see cats. 17, 43, 44). A door on each side of the commode conceals further compartments. Those doors are framed by brass moldings like the ones that mark the separation between the stand and the body of the commode.

Strict attention was paid to the decoration, and there are many refinements. For example, the harmony between the elongated gilt-bronze drawer handles with their feathery fronds and the compact and prickly escutcheons is delightful. The natural flame pattern in the mahogany veneer is carefully book-matched across each drawer. The quality of the picturesque floral marquetry on the convex corner panels is one of the best examples made during the same period in the Roentgen workshop. (The floral sprays are executed in a type of marquetry developed early at Neuwied and seldom preserved in such an excellent state as here.)

The stand of the commode is similar to that of a later desk in Saint Petersburg (cat. 14). The two parts must have been built after the same blueprint, an example of the workshop's reliance on modular construction. Both bases have horse-hoof feet, but the base of the Saint Petersburg desk has only the residue of the original mount. The Fulda commode's legs have large gilt-bronze cartouches on the knees. A more elaborate treatment can be seen in a commode characterized by plain veneer contrasted with embossed gilded mounts (fig. 52).² WK



FIG. 52. Abraham Roentgen. Commode. ca. 1756–60. Mahogany, gilt bronze; 35 × 53 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 24 in. (88.9 × 134.8 × 61 cm). Beningbrough Hall, North Yorkshire, National Trust (Inv. no. 1190873)



HARLEQUIN TABLE

Abraham Roentgen,
ca. 1760–65
Walnut, mahogany,
and apple, veneered
with kingwood; ivory,
mother-of-pearl, and
brass inlay; gilt bronze
31 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 41 × 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.
(81 × 104 × 52 cm)
Museum für Angewandte
Kunst, Frankfurt, Jubilee
gift of the Friends of the
Kunstgewerbemuseum,
1926 (V70)

PROVENANCE

Commissioned by
Johann Philipp von
Walderdorff (1701–1768);
by descent; [J. Rosen-
baum, Frankfurt].



It was in his Herrnhag workshop that Abraham Roentgen created his first harlequin tables.¹ They are veneered in cherry, and a folding top conceals a multitude of mechanical devices that cause interior compartments to move up and down in what is known as harlequin action.² He adopted a French idea for the look of the tables and combined it with English ones for its mechanical devices: a design by Jean Mariette of 1727 (fig. 53) with which Roentgen may have been familiar shows a console table with a similarly high body, and an advertisement first published in the late 1730s, when Roentgen was in London, illustrates a line of mechanical furniture with harlequin action (see fig. 51, p. 64), which he must have studied.³ Interestingly enough, the cabinetmakers in France, England, and Italy who also began to make harlequin tables did not try to elaborate the basic design,⁴ whereas Roentgen went further and succeeded in adding several more inventive and useful features.

The present table, made in Neuwied in the early 1760s, has four tops that add height to its already tall body when the piece is placed against a wall as a console table. As with a similar table in Berlin (cat. 5), the first top folds out, doubling its size and disclosing an expanse of plain veneer with a serpentine edge. When the second top is turned back, a board for various games is uncovered (not included in the Berlin table). A third turn reveals a

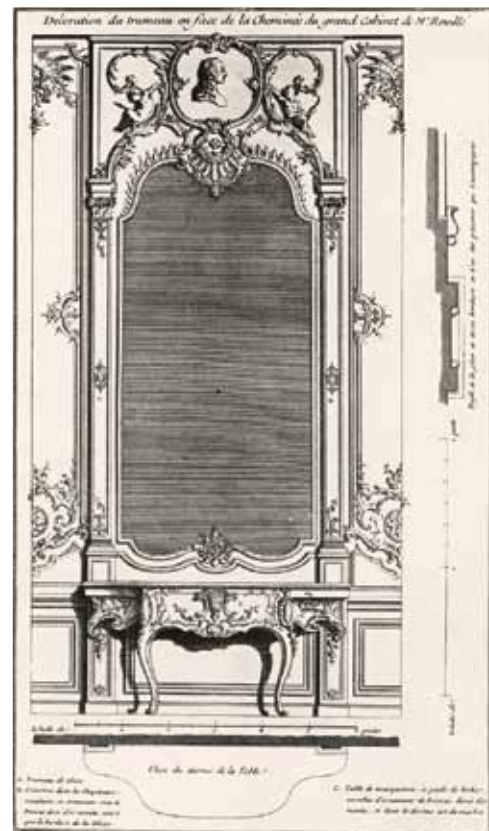


FIG. 53. Jean Mariette. *Décoration du trumeau de la cheminée du grand cabinet de M. Rouillé. 1727.* Published as pl. 474 in *L'Architecture Française*, vol. 3, 1929. Reprint after the engraving. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Thomas J. Watson Library



writing surface, from which rises a spring-operated nest of drawers with pigeonholes. An adjustable stand can be unfolded from the top of the drawers. This position has to be used from the table's back where legroom is available beside the swinging leg support. The back leg, called a gateleg, pivots out to support the tabletop when folded out.

The Roentgen workshop's clientele changed after Abraham moved to Neuwied, and his harlequin tables became more elaborately decorated. An example from the late 1750s in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, documents an interim period when he inlaid the wood with engraved brass cartouches and connected them with serpentine brass stringing.⁵ A small group of tables made in the 1760s, including this elegant example and the equally remarkable one in Berlin, demonstrate what splendid objects Abraham could create when a patron gave him free rein to use a wide variety of materials. Carvings were replaced by gilt-bronze mounts. The sturdy ones on the knees of this table

impart a sense of strength to the slim legs that support the heavy top, and they also hide the joint between the body and the detachable legs. The apron mount is a playful rocaille composition of leafy C-scrolls and exotic birds that perhaps refer to the foreign origin of the woods that compose the veneer. The legs appear to bow out more than usual under the weight of the top, an impression buffered by the curved gilt-bronze moldings that continue along the leg to the cushion feet.

The top is inlaid in ivory and mother-of-pearl with C-scrolls, feathery sprays, and a bird of paradise swinging in a suspended hoop.⁶ The sides are covered with the most complex of all the geometric marquetrys that the workshop applied in those years, accented with mother-of-pearl quatrefoils (see cats. 5, 6).⁷ To produce such elaborately decorated furniture, Abraham had to hire outside specialists—metal casters and chasers and a gilder. Their fees reduced the master's share of the profits considerably.

WK

WRITING DESK



Abraham Roentgen,
ca. 1760–64
Spruce, oak, walnut, and
mahogany; yellow metal
31 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 62 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 30 $\frac{1}{8}$ in.
(81 × 158.5 × 76.6 cm)
Museumslandschaft
Hessen Kassel
(MHK 2.3.29)

PROVENANCE
Landgrave Wilhelm IX
(1743–1821); by descent
in the Hessen-Kassel
family until World War I.

The influence of designs by the English cabinet-maker Thomas Chippendale is evident in this writing desk, with its knee hole in the center and block of drawers on either side. The knee hole—an area underneath the top of a desk where a writer can stretch out his legs—originated in English library tables of the early eighteenth century.¹ The top's three-part design recalls the dressing tables of that period (see cat. 16). The middle section of the desktop slides back, giving access to storage space; it can also be raised to serve as a reading stand.² Side sections on the desktop flip up; the one on the right is fitted with an inkwell and sander (for blotting wet ink) as well as various compartments.³ The metal mounts were ordered from a factory in Birmingham, England.⁴ The carefully matched panels of

vener and other refinements, such as the cockbead brass moldings around the drawer fronts and the horizontal metal fluting, suggest that this was a top-of-the-line version of the basic desk model. By good fortune, another example, made in walnut, has survived at Schloss Fasanerie, near Fulda, which illustrates the Roentgens' ability to customize their pieces.⁵

Wilhelm von Hessen acquired this desk when in his early twenties. His father, Landgrave Friedrich II von Hessen-Kassel (whom Wilhelm succeeded in 1785 as Wilhelm IX), loved all things French and purchased several expensive pieces from Neuwied, including an inlaid writing cabinet and a magnificent longcase clock.⁶ By contrast, Wilhelm admired the royal English lifestyle and taste,



FIG. 54. Anton Wilhelm Tischbein. *Landgrave Wilhelm IX of Hessen-Kassel*. ca. 1770. Oil on canvas, 41 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 34 in. (105 × 86.5 cm). Hessische Hausstiftung, Museum Schloss Fasanerie, Eichenzell/Fulda, Germany (Inv. no. FAS B144)

perhaps under the influence of his mother, Princess Mary, a daughter of King George II of England. Wilhelm probably acquired this desk on his own. He is portrayed sitting next to it in a painting of about 1770 (fig. 54),⁷ examining maps and building plans in a library or office furnished with a bust and bookshelves. His sword and tricorn hat are placed aside on a chair; their presence bespeaks the young man's ambition to be a just ruler. After he became landgrave, he and the members of his court continued to patronize the Neuwied workshop: a neoclassical mahogany version of this desk model with bracket feet was ordered possibly about 1780–85 for the Kassel court and is still preserved at Wilhelmshöhe Palace in Kassel.⁸ WK



CORNER COMMODE

Abraham Roentgen,
ca. 1757
Oak, fir, veneered with
rosewood, plum, and
walnut; gilt bronze,
marble, and leather
31 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 47 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 33 $\frac{5}{8}$ in.
(79.5 × 120 × 85.5 cm)
Bayerisches National-
museum, Munich
(66/156)

PROVENANCE

Johann Philipp von
Walderdorff; by descent;
[French art market].

Commodes were fashionable across Europe during the eighteenth century. This type, called an *encoignure* in France, where the vogue began, was designed to stand in the corner of a room. Usually with such triangular pieces, a door in front conceals the drawers or shelves inside (see cat. 15), but in this example—the only one of its kind made in the Roentgen workshop that survives—the drawers are not closed off, and their fronts are intricately veneered and fitted with elaborate gilt-bronze mounts. Several other features are unusual. The top drawer, which curves back underneath the white marble top, is fitted inside with a leather-lined writing panel that can be lifted up to access the drawer space below; however, the commode cannot have been used often for writing, as the magnificently decorated apron offers little legroom and the drawer loses its stability if pulled out too far.

Commissioned by archbishop-electors Johann Philipp von Walderdorff as a showpiece for one of his reception rooms,¹ it challenged Abraham Roentgen and his craftsmen to exercise their sculptural talent and technical expertise. In the full-blown rococo style, all surfaces flow and merge into each other, whether curving in or swelling out, and this wavelike movement counteracts the dominating effect of a ninety-degree corner angle. The grain and color of the different veneer woods, which are arranged in a svelte diamond-shaped pattern, give a richness to the surface of the commode.

The sumptuous look owes much to the ormolu sprays of flowers and leaves that wind in a dramatic movement around their stems, emphasizing the curved sides of the commode. This playful reference

to the natural world is echoed in the zoomorphic feet and the escutcheons surmounted by heraldic Walderdorff lions, each standing on an electoral bonnet.² The handles with griffin heads are mounted on back plates that could have served as escutcheons but have blind keyholes. They are the only bronze mounts that seem not to have been custom-designed for the commode.

Rarely does an ensemble of mounts harmonize so effectively with a piece of furniture.³ They are attributed to the workshop of Anna Katharina Kern, widow of the Koblenz bronze master and founder Franz Anton Kern. Little is known about her. In Walderdorff's account books her name appears from about 1755 to October 1764.⁴ The widow of a guild master was theoretically allowed to run her deceased husband's workshop, but under pressure from other masters, who were usually not happy with such a situation, she often married a journeyman in her field, who took over the shop. Because the Kern products were extraordinarily fine and sold well in the region (bringing a stream of tax revenue to the archbishop), the court may have intervened and allowed Anna Kern to remain in charge.⁵

In 1757 Abraham Roentgen likely delivered this piece to Molsberg Palace, the Walderdorff family seat. The bill, for 60 Reichsthalers, probably covered only Abraham's master design and the cabinetry. The Kern workshop would have been paid separately, as would the vendors of the marble top.⁶ The archbishop's commissions and inventories document his intention to follow the latest fashion for rooms decorated with corner furnishings.⁷ WK



WRITING DESK

Abraham Roentgen,
ca. 1758–62
Oak, sycamore, walnut,
and cherry wood,
veneered with sycamore,
purplewood, kingwood,
pear wood, olive, bar-
berry, boxwood, plane,
sycamore, various burl
woods, and other woods
(partially stained);
tortoiseshell, mother-
of-pearl, ivory
(partially stained);
gilt bronze, brass,
copper, and silver
58¼ × 44½ × 24¾ in.
(148 × 113 × 62 cm)
Rijksmuseum,
Amsterdam (BK-16676)

PROVENANCE

Commissioned by
Johann Philipp von
Walderdorff (1701–1768);
Mathilde von Rothschild;
Baron Albert von
Goldschmidt-Rothschild;
Schloss Grüneburg,
Frankfurt, until 1926;
Dr. Fritz Mannheimer,
Amsterdam, until 1939.

This desk is the most precious and technically refined piece of furniture executed by Abraham Roentgen and his workshop.¹ It was made for Roentgen's premier patron, the Catholic official Johann Philipp von Walderdorff, who favored his residence at Koblenz, near Neuwied, and had a number of other estates in the district. Among the many other pieces of furniture Roentgen crafted for him are a chair and corner commode, both with lavish marquetry (cats. 11, 13).

Distinguished by its forward-looking architectural form, the desk is both a testimony to Walderdorff's status and love of splendor and a demonstration of Roentgen's astonishing skills. The viewer is left in no doubt as to its owner. Walderdorff's cut mother-of-pearl portrait (after a medal by F. A. von Lon of 1757) is set into the canopy of the tabernacle-shaped cabinet that crowns the desk. The front of the cabinet is dominated by his coat of arms within a rococo cartouche supported by lions, one with a forked tail.²

The Walderdorff arms appear beneath the crown of an elector, and a sword and a crosier allude to the man's secular and religious power. Sword and staff appear again on the slanting fall front of the desk, together with an elector's bonnet and a pallium, a white vestment with pendants worn only by the pope and by archbishops with supreme pastoral powers. The theme of episcopal authority is further symbolized by a processional cross and a bishop's miter. These various attributes are held by two angels and two putti in the audience room of a palace. On a dais in the middle of the room stands a throne beneath a canopy bearing the crowned monogram JPC (Johann Philipp *Churfürst*). Personifications of Charity and Justice, standing in niches, flank the throne. In the corners of the lid are emblems from the heraldry of Walderdorff's forebears. The depiction of the room is curious (p. 78). The tiled floor in the background is shown in correct perspective, but in the foreground the floor resembles a framework of planks supported by blocks. The dais is also represented unrealistically, as an open construction.

A delight in virtuosity may have triumphed over any desire to render the setting convincingly; or perhaps the aim was to isolate the throne, suggesting how difficult it is for commoners to approach it. Below, on the front of the desk, are two vertical marquetry panels depicting ruined buildings and a horizontal one with a river landscape. Pastoral and bucolic scenes appear on the sides of the desk. They include animals and figures derived from prints after the Dutch landscapist Nicolaes Berchem, which were reprinted in Augsburg in the eighteenth century.³ On respective sides of the uppermost compartment, a lady and a gentleman are seen standing at the entrance of a palace.

The magnificent exterior encloses an interior decorated with equally fine marquetry; within, however, it is the ingenious construction that commands the most admiration. Its complexity safeguarded the elector's privacy. In order to open the desk, not only does one need the two keys—cast with Walderdorff's initials—but one also must have precise knowledge of the location and operation of all the desk's secret mechanisms. For instance, concealed in the molding along its upper edge is a knob that makes the interior of the small upper cabinet revolve, revealing stepped platforms containing drawers. The keyhole in the fall front is hidden behind a small plate that slides when another knob, also incorporated into one of the molded edges, is pressed. The inside of the fall front also displays the monogram JPC, which vanishes from sight when an inside compartment running the width of the desk is drawn forward. This compartment includes two sliding panels, each revealing four drawers behind. Pressing those drawers inward makes them swing sideways, revealing smaller drawers, executed in wood of a boldly contrasting color, that turn in the opposite direction. At the midpoint between the upper and lower sections of the desk, leaves in the sides turn outward when pressed. They are equipped with an adjustable bookrest and two small drawers. Each bookrest is decorated in marquetry with a basket of fruit and flowers; the designs show the





influence of prints by Louis Tessier. The marquetry is painted in bright colors. The two tall panels below the slanted front open out when knobs behind them are pressed. They then fold up and slide out of the way above emerging drawers. Those drawers are contained in two hinged sections, one behind the other. The front section contains three drawers that pull out from its inner side, and the back section has three drawers that open on its front. Between the two tall panels is a drawer with a concealed lock.

The Walderdorff desk occupies a key position not only in Abraham Roentgen's career but also in the history of German furniture. In many respects it is rooted in tradition. Beginning in the late sixteenth century, furniture with intricate interiors and secret compartments was among the specialties of German cabinetmakers.⁴ During the eighteenth century, a large writing desk decorated with marquetry became the most important piece of furniture in a prince's study. With its rich marquetry and countless secrets, the Walderdorff desk

reflects both traditions. But Roentgen gave it an elegant, modern, French-inspired form. The gilt-bronze rococo mounts also have a pronounced French accent. They are attributed to the workshop of the widow of Franz Anton Kern in Koblenz. Although large, heavy display furniture continued to be produced in Germany after the 1760s, a preference for lightness and delicacy gradually prevailed, with French influence continuing to play a role.

For Abraham, the desk embodied a new level of ambition. To the stylish form he added marquetry displaying great skill and ingenuity. Only one other desk of comparable splendor—in the Hillwood Museum in Washington, D.C. (cat. 18)—is known. The most original elements are the ornamental patterns—daring combinations of ovals, kidney shapes, rosettes, flutes, ribbons and C-scrolls. The brilliant manner in which ebony wood and mother-of-pearl are contrasted is reminiscent of the Mainz tabernacle (cat. 4), which also features similarities in the pictorial scheme and in technical details.





CHAIR

Abraham Roentgen,
ca. 1758–60
Walnut, cherry, pal-
isander, veneered with
walnut, amaranth,
hazelnut, mahogany,
poplar, maple (stained),
birch, and ebony
42½ × 20½ × 19¼ in.
(108 × 52 × 49 cm)
Museum of Applied Art,
Cologne (Inv. no. A30)

PROVENANCE

Johann Philipp
von Walderdorff
(1701–1768); by descent;
[G. Lewy, Berlin, 1888].



The curvilinear silhouette of this chair derives from Dutch and English models, but the piece far surpasses them in exuberance of design and in execution. No contemporary Central European furniture can match it, other than one even bolder and rather more sturdily constructed example by Abraham Roentgen.¹ The inlay inside the legs is comparable to that on Roentgen's rotating tabernacle in Mainz (cat. 4) and establishes the chair's date at about 1758–60. That such a lavishly decorated piece was used by an archbishop would be surprising were not Johann Philipp von Walderdorff also one of the most powerful secular princes of the Holy Roman Empire in his role as the elector of Trier. As such, he could not be faulted for ordering splendid furniture that would reflect his elevated status.

Very likely, the chair stood in front of Walderdorff's writing desk. His monogram (JPC, for Johann Philipp *Churfürst*) is prominently displayed on the back and was visible to those approaching him from behind or from the sides. The artistry and refinement of the decoration on the seat are remarkable. Similar in style to the marquetry on the front and sides of a desk by Abraham in Amsterdam (cat. 12), it shows a broken column and other architectural fragments scattered across a ruined city that is being overrun by vines. Nature is reclaiming the city, and the implication of such scenes is that human pride should be tempered by humility—an appropriate idea for a ruler to consider before sitting down to hold audience.

Walderdorff's biographer noted that according to court protocol the archbishop was the only member of his household allowed to sit in an armchair at the dinner table.² In many formal portraits, Walderdorff is indeed depicted standing next to or sitting in an armchair.³ The present chair, used during his working day, has no arms, perhaps because the uncomfortable ceremonial costume of the time included an ermine-lined robe that could not be managed in an easy and impressive way if its flow was restricted by armrests. WK



FALL-FRONT SECRETARY

Abraham and David
Roentgen, ca. 1763–68
Oak, fruitwood, and
maple, veneered with
walnut and rosewood;
leather; gilt (possibly
regilt) bronze
56¼ × 35⅞ × 17¾ in.
(143 × 91 × 45 cm)
The State Hermitage
Museum, Saint
Petersburg (EPR-1248)

PROVENANCE

Possibly delivered to
Saint Petersburg in 1766;
collection of Peter
Durnovo (Russian interior
minister 1905–6),
until 1917.

The French term for this type of secretary or desk with a hinged front—*secrétaire à abattant*—appears for the first time in the 1760 inventory of French royal furniture,¹ so it is likely that the Roentgens' interpretation of the form was the first one made in Germany.² This example has a wood top that is a modern replacement of a marble slab with a protruding shaped edge. The fall front, which when lowered can be used as a writing surface, conceals an interior fitted with drawers and storage compartments; however, a flaw in the desk's design makes it difficult to access them from a seated position, as the fall front is exceptionally deep. The round front corners of the desk are lined with a strip of brass, and the swelling lower section contains two drawers, each marked off at the top by a brass traverse and decorated with a gilded escutcheon. Supporting the massive desk is a low stand with deep, curved aprons and zoomorphic legs

(compare cat. 7). Filled drill holes for drawer handles and two bronze fragments on the front apron testify to the loss of additional mounts that once enriched the secretary's appearance.

The Roentgens were keenly aware of developments in French cabinetmaking. Beginning in the late 1750s, Jean-François Oeben's furniture with colorful marquetry featuring artfully arranged floral compositions was acclaimed as the finest in Paris,³ and the Roentgens were quick to follow his lead. But rather than imitating Oeben's sharply outlined flowers and bold scrolling foliate frames, the Neuwied workshop created a much more nuanced and delicate type of marquetry. That style also had its roots in France, especially in the prints of Jean-Baptiste Monnoyer (see cat. 17) as well as Pierre-Gabriel Berthault after Pierre Ranson showing flowers in wicker baskets and within trellis frames. The Roentgen workshop created its own whimsical interpretation of those prints by presenting the blossoms within trellis-like cartouches consisting merely of single or double lines at the outer borders.⁴ Examples of both types are seen on the fall front, sides, and drawers of this secretary. Although the arrangements feature plants that never grow together in nature, the individual flowers are so naturalistically portrayed that most of them can be identified.⁵

This model of secretary, one of the most popular items produced by the Roentgen workshop during its first fifteen years at Neuwied, was executed in many versions, which together illustrate some of the Roentgens' shrewd cost-cutting strategies. The carcasses of all the known examples have virtually the same dimensions, indicating that the three parts—stand, drawers, and superstructure—were prefabricated and could be assembled easily.⁶ Roentgen bought entire sets of mounts from the foundry in Birmingham; they could be attached in the same positions on each piece—two time- and labor-saving measures.⁷ The danger of marketing look-alike desks to different clients was avoided by varying the veneer (see, for example, figs. 56, 57).⁸ The workshop could also eliminate the superstructure and finish the two lower components with a veneered or a marble top, thus creating an elegant commode (fig. 58) that could be paired and sold with a matching desk.⁹

WK



FIG. 56. Abraham Roentgen. Fall-front secretary. ca. 1755–65. Oak and cherry veneered with walnut, gilt bronze; 59 × 37 × 17¾ in. (150 × 94 × 45 cm). Schloss Wiesentheid



FIG. 57. Abraham Roentgen. Fall-front secretary. 1755–65. Oak and spruce veneered with mahogany, walnut, plum, and pearwood, gilt brass, leather; 58⁵/₈ × 38⁵/₈ × 19¹/₈ in. (149 × 98 × 48.5 cm). Private collection



FIG. 58. Abraham Roentgen. Commode. ca. 1760–65. Oak veneered with palisander, gilt bronze; 32⁷/₈ × 45⁵/₈ × 24 in. (83 × 116 × 61 cm). Badisches Landesmuseum, Zweigmuseum Höfische Kunst des Barock, Schloss Bruchsal (Inv. no. G 1002–3 [one of a pair])



CORNER CABINET



Abraham and David
Roentgen, ca. 1765–67
Fir and oak, veneered
with maple, palisander,
and mahogany;
gilt bronze
30³/₄ × 26³/₈ × 18¹/₂ in.
(78 × 67 × 47 cm)
The State Hermitage
Museum, Saint
Petersburg (EPR-401)

PROVENANCE
Possibly acquired
during the early reign
of Catherine the
Great for the court in
Saint Petersburg.

This corner cabinet with a serpentine top is part of a distinguished and rather extensive group of furnishings that the workshop created for the European luxury market.¹ Some of the pieces, such as a secretary in the Residenz, Würzburg, are dated in inventories as early as 1778. The wood top of this cabinet is also decorated with magnificent marquetry. In contrast with other examples of the same time, the lines framing the marquetry decorations are breached only once, at the top surface, where feathery fronds brush across the plain border.

About 1760 Abraham Roentgen—and by then probably also his son David—began to follow this practice. The effect is charming, but such pieces tend to dominate their surroundings, and decorative objects displayed on top would compete with or obscure the marquetry, so the style did not last long.

Called *encoignures* in France, corner cabinets were important furnishing elements in French (and less so in German) interiors from the second quarter of the eighteenth century onward. Usually produced in pairs, they were sometimes joined by a matching commode, placed between them in the center of a wall.

The inlay on the panel to the left of the door is based on an engraving published in German books of flowers during the first half of the eighteenth century.² The motif is also found on the sides of a writing desk signed “Roentgen Fecit / A Neuwied” in the collection of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg.³ The subject is a hyacinth, one of the first flowers of spring. The panel to the right of the door shows an oak branch with acorns, an allusion to autumn and the yearly harvest. Could there have been a cabinet matching this one decorated with marquetry showing symbols of summer and winter? A nearly identical piece appeared on the German art market in 1992. The question whether both pieces came from stock or were part of an ensemble must remain unanswered for now.⁴

In the 1768 prospectus for the Hamburg furniture lottery of 1769, organized by David Roentgen, lots 10 through 14 are described as “five corner commodes [cabinets] inlaid as mentioned above [with flowers, birds and insects], each 30 ducats.” Roentgen lists in lot 3 “a large commode with doors.”⁵

WK

DRESSING TABLE

Abraham and David
Roentgen, 1769
Walnut, oak, cherry,
and pearwood, veneered
with palisander,
kingwood, maple,
boxwood, and ash;
mother-of-pearl and
ebony; mirror glass;
gilt bronze
32⁵/₈ × 39³/₄ × 24³/₈ in.
(82.9 × 101 × 62 cm)
Museum für Angewandte
Kunst, Frankfurt (13877)

PROVENANCE

Probably ordered by
Friedrich August III,
Elector of Saxony, as a
gift for his wife, Maria
Amalie Auguste von
Pfalz-Zweibrücken-
Birkenfeld (d. 1828);
the landgraves of
Hessen-Kassel (after
1868, until 1880);
J. Rosenbaum, Frankfurt
am Main (in 1921);
Baron Robert von Hirsch,
Basel (his sale, Sotheby's,
London, June 23, 1978,
lot 598).

When closed, this dressing table, or *poudreuse*, gives no hint that it is one of the most complex pieces of European furniture ever made. Its compact form probably derives from kneehole desks of the 1740s, and details like the stylized claw-and-ball feet are typical of English furniture of that period.¹ Early neoclassical features such as the virtually symmetrical arrangement of the marquetry motifs and mounts and the almost completely rectangular body reflect the Roentgens' search for new sources of inspiration in the late 1760s, a time when they were seeking ways to place the workshop on a firm financial footing.² The names of only two marquetry artisans, Johann Georg Barthel and Johann Michael Rummer, are documented in the workshop records for 1769, the year this piece was made. Both men were likely involved in the fulfillment of this significant commission.³

Under the center of the tabletop, a mirror was raised to reflect every detail of a woman's attire and coiffure while she engaged in her morning grooming ceremony, or *lever*. As the occasion was public, a myriad of utensils and accessories designed to signal her taste and status was kept at hand in various compartments and drawers.⁴ In order to raise the mirror and open the central section of the table, four triangular tablets had to be pulled out; candlesticks were placed on them, creating an "altar of beauty" and adding drama to the courtly *lever*.

This *poudreuse* clearly differs from the *toilette recouverte*, a type of dressing table draped in precious lace.⁵ Nevertheless, the impression of a textile-covered table is evoked here by the exquisite marquetry pattern of a beflowered ribbon that runs continuously through the loops of the lambrequins (valances) around the front and the sides. The netlike







pattern inlaid on the back of the table and the pierced gilt-bronze trellis mounts on the legs and the sides call to mind the lacy fabric that was often draped over a dressing table in preparation for the *lever*.

It is accepted by many scholars that this dressing table was a gift from the elector of Saxony Friedrich August III of the ancient house of Wettin to his wife, the Countess Palatine Maria Amalie Auguste von Pfalz-Zweibrücken-Birkenfeld, on the occasion of their marriage in 1769. That date is inlaid on the underside of a panel that rises behind the mirror on the table's top.⁶ Its marquetry design resembles a stage with a checkerboard floor and an inlaid

diamond pattern on the backdrop—emulating sash glazing—which is topped by an arch surmounted by the so-called Palatinate lion, a heraldic emblem of the bride's family.⁷ It grasps possessively a shield that is inlaid with the crowned Wettin coat of arms and those of the electorate of Saxony. The year before the wedding, Johann Phillip von Walderdorff was succeeded as the elector of Trier by Clemens Wenzeslaus August von Sachsen, a brother of the groom, who had had the opportunity to admire the exquisite Neuwied furniture first hand. Perhaps it was he who recommended the Roentgen workshop to his brother; possibly he himself commissioned the dressing table as his gift to the newlyweds (see cat. 18). The supposition that the *poudreuse* was a wedding gift is supported by the presence of a large parrot in the marquetry on the tabletop. This bird was a symbol of long life and a good marriage, as parrots are monogamous and pairs remain close even if they join a flock after the mating season.⁸

An extraordinary mechanical contrivance that the Roentgens may have developed in collaboration with the clockmaker Christian Kinzing is contained in the kneehole frieze.⁹ When a spring-driven drawer is pulled out, a hinged and adjustable three-panel writing surface emerges, as well as a gilded-metal inkwell and pounce pot and further drawers and compartments.¹⁰ David Roentgen used this highly complicated mechanical device a decade later in his three grand secretary cabinets; there, however, the simple turn of a key sets the works in motion (see cat. 34, and the appendix by Daniela Meyer and Hans-Werner Pape in this volume). Maria Amalie Auguste's *poudreuse* was the prototype for other Roentgen models, including the multi-functional tables of the 1780s and early 1790s, one of which is part of the Chatsworth ensemble (see cat. 49). WK



ARCHITECT'S TABLE

David Roentgen,
ca. 1769

Oak, beech, and other woods, veneered with maple, rosewood, and other woods; leather; gilt bronze
31½ × 31 × 22 in.
(80 × 78.7 × 55.9 cm)
House Collection,
Dumbarton Oaks,
Washington, D.C.
(F390)

PROVENANCE

Dr. Dosquet, Berlin;
[Julius Böhler, Munich];
acquired by Mrs. Robert
Wood Bliss in 1962 for
the House Collection,
Dumbarton Oaks.

The design for this type of table was improved and polished by the Roentgens from the 1750s, when Abraham was in charge of the manufactory, until David terminated the business after 1800. With some of their other specialties—small chests, game and tilt-top tables, and various types of secretaries and commodes (see cats. 1–3, 5, 8, 9, 11, for example)—it established their reputation across Europe, from England to Russia. The sophisticated double-hinged ratcheting mechanism on this example had its origins in Abraham's experience during the 1730s as a cabinetmaker in London. There he familiarized himself with English designs for multifunctional furniture, probably in part through study of illustrations in advertisements (see fig. 51, p. 64).¹ By 1769, when David held his furniture lottery in Hamburg, the design was close to perfect. An example much like this one was advertised in the lottery prospectus: “[For] 65 ducats. A writing table, which [can be used for] writing while standing or sitting [and] furnished with many other amenities; the top is inlaid with flowers, birds, and insects.”²

Apart from its usefulness as a side table and for studying or working in various positions, this table has a leather-covered panel inside the large drawer that offers an excellent supplementary surface for writing when the elevated stand is otherwise in use. There is a slot for a horizontal molding at the base

of the tabletop on which a book or papers can be propped. In other examples of the table, the molding rises when the top is lifted; on this model, which was probably a special commission, it must be attached by hand and put back in the drawer again when no longer needed.

Leaves, flowers, insects, and rocaille formations—the panoply of rococo naturalism—dominate the table's marquetry decoration, which is typical of Neuwied work during the transitional period at the time of the Hamburg lottery. Even the stern Moravian brothers, who had become suspicious of David's worldly success, expressed admiration for it: “His merchandise or [rather,] new inventions for arranging [and inlaying] flowers is something quite magnificent.”³

Reflecting a current fashion in contemporary porcelain decoration, the flower arrangement in a stylized basket is based on French prints such as those by Jean-Baptiste Monnoyer (fig. 59); some of the individual motifs were borrowed from the kind of flower book that focuses on a single species, such as the great tulip inlaid *à la mosaïque* on the left side of the top.⁴ Over the years, the Neuwied marquetry workers created a profusion of similar motifs with a wide range of different blossoms and seemingly endless variations on the twisting ribbon element.⁵

WK



FIG. 59. Jean-Baptiste Monnoyer. *Upright Basket of Flowers* (pl. 14). 1680–90. Etching, 21½ × 16¼ in. (54.8 × 41.3 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1920 (20.61.2[13–16])



ROLLTOP DESK

Abraham and David
Roentgen, ca. 1770–74
Oak, cherry, and other
woods, veneered with
sycamore, tulipwood,
rosewood, and maple;
mother-of-pearl and
ivory; mirror glass;
leather; gilt bronze
and steel

45¾ × 42 × 25 in.
(116.2 × 106.7 × 63.5 cm)
Hillwood Estate,
Museum & Gardens,
Washington, D.C.,
Bequest of Marjorie
Merriweather Post, 1973
(33.222)

PROVENANCE

Lady Ela Russell (sold
Christie's, London, May
20, 1909, lot 87); Charles
Wertheimer collection,
London; [E. M. Hodgkins,
Paris, 1909]; [Symons
Inc., New York, 1927].

The curvilinear silhouette of this rolltop desk and its surface embellished with eight bold marquetry trophies conceal a wealth of mechanical surprises and hidden compartments. The trophies, suspended by ribbons in the marquetry, invite the viewer to explore their subjects. On the sides, scientific instruments, such as a compass and an astrolabe, illustrate geography and geometry. The front continues the program of aristocratic pleasures and pastimes, with objects representing grammar and poetry on the left; painting in the center; and musical composition on the right. Three trophies on the lower section of the front further celebrate music with suspended bundles of instruments and, in the center, an open score. In the inlay, the notation is musically literate, apart from a few minor flaws, but so far it has not been identified.¹ Roentgen's sources for these trophies have been traced to rearrangements of equally bold trophies in ornamental prints published about 1750 in Paris by Gilles Demarteau (1722–1776).²

The inside of the desk is a spectacular arrangement of compartments and fold-out devices. Four candleholders, all with snuffers and with shades to protect against taint from the flame and to diffuse the light, can be released, two on the top of the desk and two at the level of the writing surface. At the

back edge of the desk, a mirror can be raised from the top by a crank. A concealed keyhole gives access to the cylinder; when it is lifted a writing surface slides out. Secret buttons in the lower part reveal further compartments and two lockable boxes, finished on all sides, that can be detached. A possibly unique decoration on the top is a metal insert with an ornamentally etched surface. It is not known whether this was intended to imitate heavy marble, but an analysis of the alloy could help to clarify this mystery.

The complex desk could be used as a *poudreuse* and for writing and reading while its owner stood or sat, but above all it was meant to impress the owner's guests. When compared with some dated objects from the Neuwied workshop, such as the dressing table of 1769 (cat. 16), the ensemble of 1770–71 in Wörlitz (fig. 11, p. 12), and the two fully documented rolltop desks of 1773 at the Munich Residenz,³ the Hillwood rolltop surpasses them all in its refinement, quality of craftsmanship, and attention to detail. It is fashioned in the transitional style, with cabriole legs, shaped aprons, and a slightly retreating and protruding surface and frame, but the prototype for this piece was clearly the renowned Walderdorff desk (cat. 12), made at least a decade earlier. The similarity can be seen, for example, in the fluted stubs on the front of the writing surfaces of both desks.⁴



FIG. 60. Anton Raphael Mengs. *Maria Antonia Walpurgis, Princess of Bavaria and Electress of Saxony*. 1752. Oil on canvas, 45½ × 44¼ in. (115.5 × 112.5 cm). Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden (Inv. no. 2163)





The monogram beneath an electoral crown can be read several ways. As MA, it could have stood for Marie Antoinette, but the desk is too late to have been made for her wedding in 1770 to the future King Louis XVI of France (see fig. 72, p. 142). Further, the crown with its orb and cross are not suitable symbols for either a French queen or a Habsburg archduchess. The letters MA were widely used: they were a common abbreviation for the Virgin Mary and are found in countless references to ecclesiastical furnishings. Among the significant details on the desk is an ornamental band defined by mother-of-pearl inlay that follows the shape of the apron and the sides and decorates some interior compartments. Repeated within the band is the motif of a stylized cross with arms of equal length.⁵ Might this represent or allude to the Order of the Starry Cross, an order of the Habsburg dynasty given only to women of high nobility, which was founded by Eleonora Gonzaga in 1668?

The proposal from various scholars that a south German princess was the patron of this desk seems plausible. The monogram MA could also be interpreted as MAW or MAC.⁶ An acceptable

candidate is Maria Antonia Walpurgis (1724–1780), known as Maria Antonia, electress of Saxony. In a portrait by Anton Raphael Mengs, she proudly wears the Order of the Starry Cross, bestowed on her in 1737, suspended from a black ribbon (fig. 60).⁷ In 1747, she married Frederick Christian, who was elector of Saxony briefly in 1763, and after his death she continued as regent for her son, or dowager electress (*Churfürstin*, hence her connection with the monogram MAC), until 1768. She was well respected as a composer of two operas and other musical works, a singer, a harpsichordist, and a patron of the arts. The desk's iconographic program fits her character perfectly, and she was assuredly familiar with furniture from the Roentgen workshop, which she knew not only through the *poudreuse* her daughter-in-law received in 1769 (cat. 16) but certainly also through her brother-in-law Clemens Wenzeslaus August von Sachsen, who in 1768 became the last elector and archbishop of Trier after the death of Johann Philipp von Walderdorff. Documentation shows that Wenzeslaus also owned pieces by Roentgen.⁸

WK



OVAL TABLE

Abraham and David
Roentgen, ca. 1770–73
Oak, pine, cherry,
maple (partially stained),
mahogany, and holly; gilt
bronze, steel; leather
H. 28¾ in. (73 cm);
top 28⅜ × 20½ in.
(72 × 52 cm)
Private collection

PROVENANCE

[Art market, Paris].

Reminiscent of an ancient cameo, the long oval shape of this table type became extremely popular in many areas of design beginning in the 1760s. The whole table—a type known as *table à la Kaunitz* (or *Caunitz*, as used in the eighteenth century)¹—is a marvel of mechanical inventiveness and technical virtuosity. The S-shaped stretchers and dished medallion can be removed and the curved legs detached for traveling (see below). The front apron hides a spring-operated drawer that opens when a button underneath is pressed. If the drawer is pulled out to the point of resistance, both sides of the frieze swing open, revealing areas for storage. The drawer is fitted with small compartments and a leather-covered sliding tablet. The curves of the legs and top are emphasized by dark veneer and moldings that contrast with light-colored surfaces embellished with floral marquetry. The design on the top features a complex knotted-bow motif and a trompe l’oeil gardener’s pruning knife suspended from fine threads and surrounded by floral arrangements.² The narrow range of the colors evokes *en camaïeu* (using only two or three tints of the same color) marquetry (see app. 2.2, p. 230). The stains of the small sawed-out pieces of wood are purple, light blue-green, and yellow—a fashionable palette also favored in luxury German porcelain of the period.³

The table was made shortly after the Hamburg lottery, when the Neuwied workshop was moving toward neoclassicism (compare the neoclassical-style flowers on the casket held by Susanna Maria Roentgen in her portrait of 1771 [fig. 17, p. 19]). The small-block mosaic marquetry band around the top of the table is often found on eighteenth-century English furniture and appears on many other Roentgen pieces, including the Metropolitan’s

longcase clock (cat. 26) and the Cooper-Hewitt Museum’s architect’s table (cat. 44).

In a document of February 29, 1772, the engraver and die-cutter Elie Gervais wrote, “David Roentgen owes Gervais and Raillard a day’s wages for making marquetry designs on a *table à la Caunitz*,” and another document dating only two months later mentions that the two men performed the same service again.⁴ The distinctive marquetry was likely designed by Gervais after prints of floral bouquets, which were available at that time in great numbers. That gifted artisan was a complete master of the difficult task of turning ornamental or figural creations into patterns for marquetry.

About the same time this table was made, the workshop’s chief marquetry cutter signed a dressing table (*poudreuse*) embellished with similar flower-and-knife decoration. The inscription, written twice on the interior of the carcass, reads, “Michael Rummer van Handschuhsheim made this at Neuwied in 1772.”⁵ David Roentgen would never have permitted an employee to sign a piece in this way. Undoubtedly he was not aware of it because he had assumed the demanding role of a modern marketing director, focusing on expansion of the business and streamlining production methods. At no other furniture manufactory of the period did a director-owner focus to such an extent on the development of new products.

Several other examples of the model for this table are documented. One, closely related to it and now lost, was acquired by Frederick the Great, king of Prussia, in 1770 for the Neues Palais in Potsdam (see fig. 39, p. 41). Another version is part of a suite of furniture delivered by Roentgen in 1771 to the salon of Princess Luise von Anhalt-Dessau at Wörlitz Palace, where it remains today.⁶ WK





OVAL TABLE

David Roentgen,
ca. 1774–80
Oak, walnut, pine, cherry,
cedar, and maple,
veneered with maple,
hornbeam, holly (all par-
tially stained), cherry,
mahogany, tulipwood,
and other woods; gilt
bronze, iron, brass, steel;
partially tooled and
gilded leather
29½ × 29 × 20½ in.
(74.9 × 73.7 × 52.1 cm)
The Metropolitan
Museum of Art, New
York, Gift of Samuel
H. Kress Foundation,
1958 (58.75.39)

PROVENANCE

Sir Charles Mills, Baronet
(d. 1872); The Lords
Hillingdon.

An astonishingly large number of table forms were invented over the years by the Roentgens. David seems to have concentrated on small luxurious types with ingenious, useful features. This example reflects a step forward in the category of the multi-functional type represented by catalogue 19. The basic mechanical structure and much of the marquetry decoration *en camaïeu* has not changed. The pattern on both tabletops featuring nosegays, tied ribbon, and a suspended pruning knife, was a Newwied staple during the 1770s, employed to embellish almost all furniture types the workshop produced.¹ In this example, too, the spring-loaded central frieze drawer encloses a leather-lined slide and several small drawers, and it is flanked on either side by a spring-released section of the frieze that swings open to reveal areas for storage.

A new feature on the present table is the shape of the leg. No longer the curving rococo cabriole type that supports catalogue 19 (see also fig. 39, p. 41), it is square and tapered, has molded corners, alluding to brass moldings, and ends in block feet. The position of each leg is marked on the frieze by a tall rectangular block with two chamfered channels that are brass-filled; these are underscored by four guttae on the brackets between the legs and the

top. Both the channeling and the guttae allude to motifs of ancient classical architecture.

Today the legs on this table are firmly attached, but an X-ray examination has shown that originally they could be taken off.² When removed, all four legs would fit underneath the top between the brackets. The result was a convenient package that was much easier to transport than an assembled table. This was one of the features Roentgen devised to steal a march on his French competitors.

When museums first began collecting Roentgen furniture, they sought out small oval tables in particular. An example that had belonged to Captain Charles Spencer Ricketts, described in 1867 as “inlaid with festoons of ribbons and bouquets of flowers,” was acquired with the Jones collection by the Victoria and Albert Museum.³ Metropolitan Museum curator James Parker discovered a similar table in a portrait by John Singer Sargent of Lady Sybil Eden, mother of the future prime minister Anthony Eden (fig. 61),⁴ and possibly the same table type is shown in Sargent’s *Portrait of Mrs. Asher Wertheimer*, of 1904, today in the Tate, London.⁵ It should be noted that copies of Roentgen’s oval tables made by various nineteenth-century cabinet-makers bore the stamp L.BONTEMPS/PARIS.⁶ WK



FIG. 61. John Singer Sargent. *Portrait of Lady Eden*. 1906. Oil on canvas, 43½ × 34⅞ in. (110.6 × 86.5 cm). Philadelphia Museum of Art, Purchased with the W. P. Wiltach Fund, 1920 (W1920-2-1)



OVAL TABLES

David Roentgen,
ca. 1775–80
Oak, pine, and cherry,
veneered with tulipwood,
maple, and holly; leather;
gilt bronze and brass
29³/₈ × 29³/₈ × 20 in.
(74.5 × 74.5 × 50.8 cm)
Private collection

PROVENANCE
[Paris art market].

David Roentgen,
ca. 1775–80
Oak and cherry,
veneered with holly,
maple, walnut, tulip-
wood, and various
other woods; tooled
leather; gilt bronze,
iron, and steel
29⁵/₈ × 29⁵/₈ × 20⁵/₈ in.
(75.1 × 75.1 × 52.5 cm)
Philadelphia Museum
of Art, The Henry P.
McIlhenny Collection in
memory of Frances P.
McIlhenny, 1986
(1986-26-117)

PROVENANCE
Possibly purchased by
Henry P. McIlhenny at
Partridge, London.



CAT. 21

Among David Roentgen's many oval tables of this design, the two examples discussed here are distinguished not only by a rich application of gilt-bronze mounts (some of which are by François Rémond) but also, and especially, by the pictorial marquetry on the top.¹ Both tables are decorated on their aprons with trophies of weapons suspended from a ribbon. On catalogue 21 the weapons are executed in trompe-l'oeil marquetry; on catalogue 22 they are made of gilt bronze. On both tables, the rectangular panels containing the trophies are edged with strips

of gilt-bronze *milleriaies* decoration mounted at each corner with a small ornament—a molded disk.

The military trophies are thematically related to the image on the tabletops, which illustrates a passage from Virgil's *Aeneid*.² In the aftermath of the Trojan War, Aeneas, prince of Troy, carries his elderly father, Anchises, out of the burning city. Aeneas' son Ascanius follows, clutching the family's devotional image, and Anchises stretches out his hand to the boy, encouraging him to hold the statue tightly until they have safely escaped the conquer-



CAT. 22

ing Greek army, for if he loses it their dynasty will surely die out. The story of a prince who escapes great danger and founds the city of Rome appealed to aristocratic audiences, and it became a familiar part of grand Baroque imagery.³

The composition was one of the Roentgen workshop's greatest successes. Tables decorated with the Flight from Troy (in nearly all cases there are variations in the marquetry woods used; see p. 105) survive in unusually large numbers, and no fewer than twenty-eight are documented.⁴ Januarius Zick,

court painter to the elector of Trier, was responsible for the basic design, in which the dramatic story unfolds with eloquent simplicity on a stagelike space (see fig. 62).⁵ But the artist who executed the line drawing for marquetry cutting made some important changes, for example, adding palm trees to suggest that the setting was a faraway land. Moreover, the composition is much compressed.⁶

The ruined columns—reduced in number from three to two—evoke the Temple of Castor and Pollux in Rome, an image that had become widely



FIG. 62. Januarius Zick. *Flight from Troy*. ca. 1780–90. Oil on canvas, 19¾ × 59½ in. (50 × 151 cm). Mittelrhein-Museum, Koblenz (M 1972/91)



known through prints and countless miniature models.⁷ That Aeneas is shown walking toward the columns may allude to his destiny as the first ancestor of the Romans. Elie Gervais, who turned his own pictorial designs and those of other artists into marquetry line drawings, noted in November 1774 that he and his assistants worked two days on an oval table and that he himself drew the heads, hands, and feet.⁸

Small differences indicate that the marquetry on these two tabletops was executed by different artisans, and comparisons made with other examples shows that this was often the case. The beauty of the original color scheme can be admired in a table formerly in the collection of Baron Robert von Hirsch that underwent careful conservation several years ago (see fig. 63).⁹ Tables of the same model are found in collections around the world, from Europe and the Americas to Eurasia and Australia.¹⁰ WK

FIG. 63. David Roentgen. Marquetry detail from the underside of an oval tabletop, ca. 1775–80, showing the original colors. Private collection



CAT. 21



CAT. 22

ROLLTOP DESK

David Roentgen,

ca. 1773–76

Oak and cherry, veneered with maple, amaranth, burl elm, tulipwood, and various other woods (partially stained); gilt bronze, brass, and steel
45¾ × 44½ × 23 in.
(116.2 × 113 × 58.4 cm)
Kravis Collection

PROVENANCE

Sir Robert Henry Edward Abdy, fifth Baronet of Albyns, Essex (1896–1976); [Galerie Maurice Ségoura, Paris].

The lower edge of this desk's curved and stepped front, and its cabriole legs with their bronze knee mounts, were inspired by a design of about 1740 by the Bavarian rococo architect François Cuvilliés, who built the Augustusburg palace and the Falkenlust hunting lodge at Brühl, not far from Neuwied.¹ The object in Cuvilliés's print could resemble a rolltop, but the slanted front with bookrest indicates otherwise. The decoration on the curved legs was probably intended to be in carved wood (see fig. 65).

The disposition of the various marquetry fields on the present desk reflects English models from the 1750s that the Roentgens saw during their trip to London in late 1765.² The rolltop, or cylinder-fall, mechanism was adapted from English and French prototypes. It appeared in the Neuwied workshop's oeuvre in the late 1760s.³ A terminus post quem of 1773 for this model is established by a dated example in the Residenz, Munich.⁴ The Neuwied manufactory created other rolltop desk types with more refined mechanisms and with differences in the illusionistic marquetry and the gilt-bronze ornamentation. (The mounts on this example are in part by François Rémond.)

The present piece was made during an early stage in the transition from rococo to neoclassicism: features such as the curved legs (firmly attached in this example) and the chinoiserie scenes are found side by side with such neoclassical details as the inlay with ribbon-tied bunches of flowers and swags suspended from rings, the simple cockbead border

of the top, the gilt-bronze laurel branch escutcheons, and the pierced gilt-bronze gallery. The interior is fitted with three pigeonholes and six slightly curved drawers with lion-mask pulls. Remarkable are the light-reflecting, gilded cockbead moldings, which clarify the object's form, lending it delicacy and refinement. The mechanical devices represent an important step leading toward the mechanisms found, for example, in the Metropolitan Museum's rolltop of about 1776–79 (cat. 29). The deep compartments of the lower section are not spring-driven but have to be pulled out using the keys as handles; they can be "broken," or swung aside, to give access to other drawers. The leather-lined writing surface has no handles but slides forward when the rolltop is pushed up. This desk seems to be the only Roentgen example embellished with grotesque gilt-bronze leaf masks.⁵

The chinoiserie marquetry scenes have the painterliness that only the Neuwied artisans were able to attain (see Hans Michaelsen's appendix on marquetry in this volume). The principal scene, showing a Chinese lady in conversation with a bird vendor who is offering parrots, was designed by Januarius Zick and based on a print by Martin Engelbrecht of Augsburg (see fig. 64). The workshop's first rendering of that composition, which was one of the earliest documented chinoiserie themes they undertook, decorates the front of a longcase clock made about 1770–71 for the landgraves von Hessen and is today in the Wilhelmsthal Palace collection.⁶

WK



FIG. 64. Martin Engelbrecht. Chinoiserie design. Before 1756. Etching. Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg



FIG. 65. François de Cuvilliés. Detail of an ornamental design for a slant-front desk. ca. 1740. Etching. MAK—Austrian Museum of Applied Arts/Contemporary Art, Vienna (Inv. no. KI 15288 F-142 S-85 Z-3)



MULTIFUNCTIONAL TABLE

David Roentgen,
ca. 1774–80
Oak, pine, and walnut,
veneered with maple,
boxwood, elm, ebony,
and beech; gilt bronze,
brass, and ivory
31 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 35 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 19 $\frac{5}{8}$ in.
(81.5 × 90 × 50 cm)
Bayerisches National-
museum, Munich
(84/239)

PROVENANCE
Austrian aristocratic
collection; [art
market, 1978].



A table with three folding tops like this one, but with an interior pop-up storage compartment, was made at Neuwied until about 1765–68 (see cats. 5, 9). It was replaced by a model with a backgammon board, and several versions decorated in the rococo style with floral and feathery rocaille marquetrie are known.¹ The present neoclassical version was in manufacture by about 1770–71: two such tables, decorated with laurel swags, were commissioned by Friedrich Franz von Anhalt-Dessau for his wife, Princess Luise, at Wörlitz Palace (fig. 11, p. 12), where they are in situ today.² The Roentgen manufactory continued to produce versions of the model, always decorated in the latest fashion, until the shop closed in the early 1800s (see cat. 45). In a surviving document written in his own hand, Roentgen provided a guide to the use of the various parts of the table; a similar manual was possibly added to most examples with mechanical

elements, to explain their operation in order to avoid accidents.³

The long sides of this table are decorated in nearly identical marquetrie, showing a garden hoe or seeder suspended from a ring and hung with a ribbon of floral bouquets. Gilt-bronze paterae on disks ornament the corners. The *en camaïeu* (see cats. 19, 20) marquetrie on the first top shows four bouquets tied to a double-string wreath, which seems to hang on ribbons from the frame of the table. The first top is folded back to reveal a marquetrie medallion with a scene of shepherds playing dice while watched closely by their dog (see fig. 29, p. 30). Januarius Zick designed all the floral arrangements and the pastoral scene, Elie Gervais did the line drawings, and Johann Michael Rummer is thought to have created the medallion's marquetrie.

The broad surface with the medallion was used for card playing (facing page). The second top folds

back to reveal a chessboard, and the third conceals a divided interior, where a bookrest can be raised and from which the backgammon board rises up when a catch on the underside of the table is released. On either side of the backgammon board is a well with a sliding tambour top, where game pieces and other utensils were stored (see cat. 27). Twenty-eight game pieces and two removable ivory candle sockets survive, all original to the piece.

The corner blocks of the table are accented with brass fluting. The tapered legs, decorated with trailing gilt-bronze leaf-bundles, are detachable to facilitate transport. The back has a gateleg with an adjustable support mechanism that accommodates the height of the top in the different positions. The gateleg—released by means of a catch—hides a narrow drawer on its right side.

The table was restored about thirty years ago, and a few minor areas were left with only a thin layer of inlaid wood. Nevertheless, most of the marquetry remains intact. It exemplifies the extraordinarily fine workmanship on luxury products such as this.

The ivory candle sockets have typically French details, and the table could have been intended for that market. When David Roentgen was in Paris in 1779, a description of the marquetry on one of his tables appeared in a local journal: “The top of the table depicts a group of shepherds in marquetry. . . . All the figures are very well drawn, and the shadows are . . . solidly marked by small, properly stained pieces of wood. The accuracy of the drawing, the vividness of the composition & the precision of the contours would lead one to believe that it is painted.”⁴ The scene of shepherds playing dice was used on Roentgen furniture throughout the 1770s. In 1771 Elie Gervais wrote in his account book, “Neuwied in the year 1771[,] David Roentgen owes Elie Gervais [for the following work]. . . . Raillard has started a line drawing of a shepherd scene by H. Sieck . . . [he] has drawn the heads, hands, feet, and the dog.”⁵ One rendering of the scene on an oval table, which appeared in the Paris and German art markets in the latter part of the twentieth century, shows the initials DR (for David Roentgen) on the dog’s collar (see cat. 29).⁶ WK



SECRETARY CABINET

David Roentgen,
ca. 1772–75
Walnut and various
other woods (partially
painted green), veneered
with marquetry panels;
gilt bronze, brass
Bottom $41\frac{7}{8} \times 54\frac{1}{4} \times$
 $24\frac{1}{8}$ in. (106.4 × 137.8 ×
61.3 cm); top $59\frac{1}{4} \times$
 $54\frac{3}{4} \times 14\frac{1}{2}$ in. (150.5 ×
139.1 × 36.8 cm).
The Art Institute of
Chicago, Gift of Count
Pecci-Blunt (1954.21)

PROVENANCE
Count Cecil Pecci-Blunt,
until 1954.

The extravagant appearance of this secretary cabinet seems to reflect a special commission. Although the object's patronage and history are obscure, it occupies a prominent place in the Roentgens' oeuvre.¹ The kneehole compartment of the lower structure, which rests on bracket feet, is concealed by a concave door, and there are three small serpentine drawers on either side. Above it is a drawer that extends the full width of the piece, and over that a slanted front opens to form a writing surface and to reveal a row of pigeonholes and compartments with two shallow drawers on each side. The upper structure's interior has a finely finished arrangement of two stacks of small drawers that can be concealed by a curtainlike tambour *jalousie* front, and there are several large drawers and shelves as well. The figural marquetry fields embellishing its exterior are surrounded by fillets of exotic wood as though they are framed paintings. Brass moldings and channeling outline elements of the entire structure, and there are bronze mounts on the lower part and standard Birmingham Chippendale pulls on the interior fittings.

A writer for the *London World* of March 22, 1753, declared, on the subject of taste, that "a few years ago everything was Gothic . . . according to the present prevailing whim, everything is Chinese, or in the Chinese taste: or, . . . partly after the

Chinese manner."² Chinoiserie scenes like those of the bird cage on the kneehole door of the secretary and the figural group on the central door of the cabinet appear on furniture from the Roentgen workshop as early as 1770–71 on the front of a long-case clock in Schloss Wilhelmsthal and, in a different combination, on a transitional-style rolltop desk in the exhibition (see cat. 23).³ Several of the motifs are influenced by prints of Jean-Baptiste Pillement and by English pattern books (see fig. 67). The exuberantly shaped broken-scroll pediment is bordered by gilt-bronze volutes. The secretary cabinet's exotic silhouette is truly remarkable, as are the inlaid ornamentation of the outside and the veneered areas showing the grain of the wood.

The Roentgen workshop had come a long way in the few years since its search for new designs, as exemplified by the Copenhagen secretary cabinet of about 1768 (fig. 6, p. 8), with its combination of highly unusual component parts, including a clock. The evocation of Chinese architecture sets the present desk apart, and in its shape it is close to similarly stylized objects in England.⁴ Abraham and David could have been inspired by furniture seen during their travels to London in late 1765. Its architectural inspiration is a testament to the popularity of contemporary design sources such as

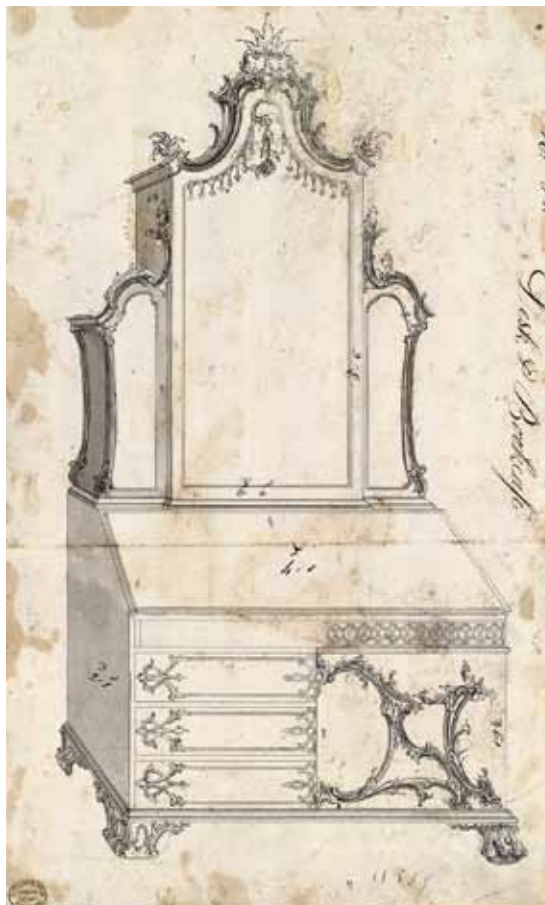


FIG. 66. Thomas Chippendale. Design for a secretary. Published as pl. LXXXII in the 1754 and 1755 editions of *The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director*, London, 1753–54. Black ink, gray wash, $12\frac{1}{8} \times 7\frac{3}{8}$ in. (30.6 × 18.7 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1920 (20.40.2[33])





William and John Halfpenny's *New Designs for Chinese Temples* (1750–52). Further, Thomas Chippendale's work is an obvious source of inspiration (see cat. 26). A preparatory drawing by Chippendale, incorporating two alternatives for the front of the secretary, for his *Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director* (1754, pl. LXXXII; 1762, pl. CX), illustrates a very close design (fig. 66). The secretary cabinet here is an accomplished example of rococo furniture in the *gout chinois*.

There is a possibility that a second version of this model exists in a private collection in France. The only directly comparable piece is a rolltop desk in Mannheim Palace that was acquired by the margraves of Baden-Baden in 1772.⁵ Although it lacks a cabinet above, that desk lends significant support to a date of 1772–75 for the present piece. This architectural form, with its sturdy base, writing compartment, and intriguing superstructure with a central door flanked by a narrow door on either side, would serve as the prototype for the three secretary cabinets that the Roentgens would create only a few years later (see cat. 34). WK



FIG. 67. Jean-Baptiste Pillement. *Design with Chinoiserie Motifs*. In *The Ladies Amusement, or Whole Art of Japanning Made Easy*, by Robert Sayer, London, 1762, pl. 40. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Thomas J. Watson Library

LONGCASE CLOCK

The hood of the case consists of a curving superstructure, crowned by a pagoda-shaped roof surmounted by a cylindrical urn finial (replacement). The concave surfaces of the hood are fitted on front and sides with pierced-brass panels, and the edges are set with gilt-bronze strings of husks terminating in grotesque lion-masks. The case for the movement is arched at the top front and decorated with fretwork. Each side is fitted with an arched door of glass (added later) and openwork brass with fabric behind it. The clock has a white enameled dial painted with the hours in roman numerals, surrounded by a band with five-minute subdivisions of the hour in arabic numerals. The dial has chased openwork brass hour and minute hands, as well as a wavy steel auxiliary minute hand. Beneath the dial, openings in the plate display the days of the week and the month incised on rotating metal plaques. The lower part of the dial plate centers on a circular lunar subdial enameled in blue and gold with a moon and stars, with two brass pointers; the bottom edge of this dial is inscribed *ACHENBACH & SCHMIDT À NEUWIED*, for the clockmakers.¹ Surrounding this dial are ten smaller dials, called auxiliary dials, each with a single pointer, that are inscribed, reading clockwise: *PHILADELPHIA. / MEXICO. / PEKING. / HISPANAN. / CAS=BON=SPEI. [CAPE OF GOOD HOPE] / CAIRO. / ROM. / LISABON. / LONDEN. / ST. PETERSBURG.* At the sides of the dial plate, suspended from rectangular quatrefoil motifs, are gilt-bronze leaf-and-berry swags interlaced with whimsical palm sprays. These mounts and the ones framing the dial could be inventions by Michel-Paul-Joseph Dewez, the goldsmith of Duke Charles Alexander of Lorraine, from Brussels, who was the brother of the duke's primary architect.² The lower corners of the dial plate are each mounted with a globe relief.

Beneath the clock dial, the hood has a three-sided molding that fits onto the cornice of the pendulum case. The cornice is decorated across the front with gilt-bronze profiles of Roman emperors in ribboned and garlanded medallions and with four diglyphs of brass, each surmounting gilt-bronze guttae. At the corners are garlands and swagged drapery, and at the sides are garlands and diglyph



David Roentgen,
ca. 1774–75
Oak, veneered with
maple, burl woods, holly,
hornbeam (all partially
stained), and other
woods; mother-of-pearl;
gilt bronze and brass
122½ × 27 × 16 in.
(311.2 × 68.6 × 40.6 cm)
The Metropolitan
Museum of Art, New
York, Gift of Mrs. Edgar
Worch, in memory of her
husband, 1975 (1975.101)

PROVENANCE

Probably made for Duke
Charles Alexander of
Lorraine and delivered to
Brussels before 1776;
taken back in August
1776 by David Roentgen
in partial payment for a
secretary cabinet; pos-
sibly the landgraves of
Hessen-Kassel; acquired
by Edgar Worch from the
Hessen family after
World War I; his wife.



motifs. The sides of the pendulum case are each fitted with an openwork brass panel to release the sound of miniature flutes and a dulcimer that played mechanically after the striking of the hour; this is now lost. The marquetry on the front depicts two lovers seated on a semicircular bench beneath an arbor. The young man, a shovel at his feet, presents the young woman with a rose from a basket on her lap. A third figure, walking toward the left, holds a watering can. Through the arbor stand two pedestals topped with male busts, and in the background is an open court flanked by clipped tree formations. Water gushes into a basin in the foreground, and to the right of the basin the name REUSCH appears in the architectural plinth. The front of the pendulum case is flanked by two engaged quarter columns with gilt-bronze bases, capitals, and leaf-and-berry spiral bands. The base of the pendulum case is decorated with floral marquetry and stands on four bracket feet.³

The case is related to several other longcase clocks by the Roentgen workshop that were influenced by designs in Thomas Chippendale's *Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director*, for which the Metropolitan Museum has Chippendale's drawings (see fig. 68).⁴ Reinier Baarsen (in "A Unique Relationship: Charles Alexander of Lorraine and David Roentgen" in this volume) suggests that the clock could be identical to the one that Duke Charles Alexander of Lorraine returned to Roentgen as partial payment for the acquisition of the secretary cabinet in 1776.⁵ That object has so many mechanical devices, including a clock with musical implements that it would have duplicated the present clock (see fig. 21, p. 24).

In his daily notes, the duke did not mention a longcase clock with such a multitude of functions, chief among them the dials indicating the time in the then most important cities of the world. Philadelphia, for example, where the Declaration of Independence would be adopted by the Continental Congress in the American colonies on July 4, 1776, was known worldwide for its importance as a harbor and trading center. The clock's mechanism and eccentric gilded mounts, however, fit perfectly with the duke's fondness for complicated automata and musical clocks. An example in his collection in the form of a jewel-embellished pyramid clock with dragons spitting precious pearls instead of fire testifies to his extravagant taste.⁶ Elie Gervais recorded a payment for July 23, 1774, owed him by Roentgen for "dessiné un jour au grand Cadran de

Kintzing: 36 Xer [Kreutzer].⁷⁷ It is the only appearance of a clock-dial design in Gervais's books and must have had very special importance, possibly relating to the Metropolitan Museum's piece.⁸

The role of Johann Anton Reusch, who signed the marquetry, is still not clear. This project was too ambitious for Reusch, who did not have the financial means, the technical equipment, or relevant relationships to the other artisans involved, beginning with Januarius Zick, who certainly invented the figural scene, as the man with the watering can is stylistically very close to a figure on the document cylinders of the Berlin secretary cabinet (cat. 34).⁹ It is likely that Reusch, who had an independent workshop in Neuwied, repaired the case at some point and added his name to the main marquetry panel.¹⁰ Roentgen would never otherwise have allowed this to happen. A payment by Count zu Wied to Reusch for a mahogany "worktable" with brass moldings was recorded on February 20, 1776.¹¹ Other signed works by this master are known, and although they follow Roentgen's style closely, they are generally of a much lower quality in the execution of the details.¹² WK

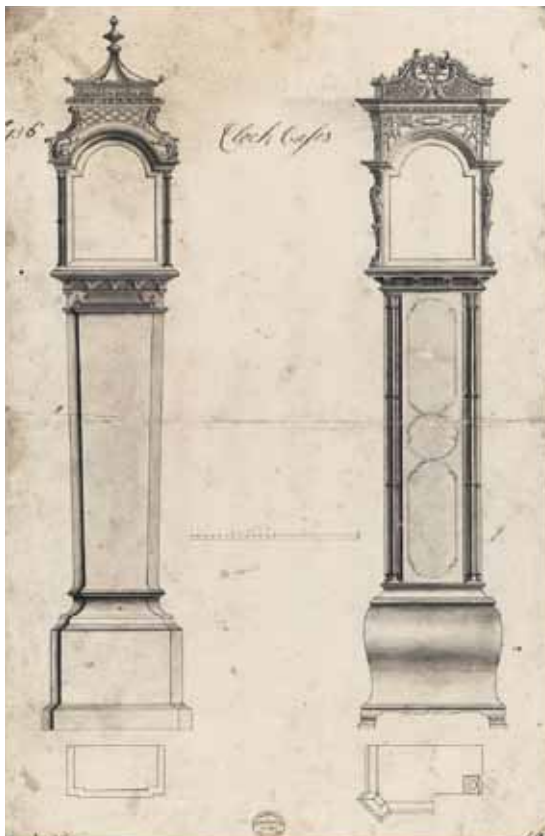


FIG. 68. Thomas Chippendale. Designs for clock cases. Published as pl. CXXXI in the 1754 and 1755 editions of *The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director*, London, 1753–54. Black ink, gray wash, 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (32.5 × 21.4 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1920 (20.40.1[95])

GAME TABLE

David Roentgen,
ca. 1774–75
Oak and other woods,
veneered with burl wood,
mahogany, maple,
and other woods;
gilt bronze
32½ × 35 × 17½ in.
(81.5 × 89 × 44.5 cm)
MAK—Austrian
Museum of Applied
Arts/Contemporary Art,
Vienna (H270)

PROVENANCE

Manufactured for Duke
Charles Alexander of
Lorraine (1775–d. 1780);
purchased for 340
guilders from the
duke's estate by his
nephew Duke Albert
Casimir von Sachsen-
Teschén (1780–d. 1822)
and his wife, Archduchess
Maria Christina of
Austria; descended in
the Imperial Habsburg
family; Teschen-
Habsburg collection until
the nineteenth century,
when that collection
was distributed among
various museums.



This table is one of a pair acquired in May 1775 by Duke Charles Alexander of Lorraine for his residence in Brussels.¹ Like other tables used for games (see cats. 24, 45), this example is multifunctional. Its three hinged tops offer surfaces for playing cards and chess and one for writing. It also contains a pop-up backgammon box flanked by wells where game pieces could be stored (facing page). The arrangement of the parts and the mechanical features are based on Abraham's inventions of the 1760s.² Earlier models by the workshop, called harlequin tables, had either a nest of drawers or a *cartonnier* (file drawer) that could be raised

from the heart of the table by a spring-driven mechanism (see cats. 5, 9). Later models, such as this one, eliminated the harlequin feature, probably because it made the table too heavy to move with ease. Game tables enjoyed increasing popularity during the eighteenth century, an era that appreciated intriguing mechanisms and unexpected surprises—such as the drawer, possibly for cards, in the back of this table that becomes visible only after a gateleg is swung out to support the top's leaves.

The chaste neoclassical form of the present example is based on that of the two game tables in the 1771 Wörlitz Palace ensemble (see fig. 11, p. 12).







By 1775, however, David Roentgen had traveled to Paris and back, and his workshop's designs were reflecting ever more strongly the influence of French neoclassical architecture. The friezes and corners of this table are representative of that transitional period, when marquetry decoration was reduced or abandoned in favor of gilt-bronze mounts and polished veneer. The corner blocks with their chamfered brass channeling are reminiscent of Doric architecture, as is the brass-filled triglyph in the center of the front, between recessed metope-like panels.³ The finely chased gilt-bronze mounts may have been supplied in part by the Parisian master gilder François Rémond, possibly after drawings delivered from Neuwied. The medallions with classical profiles imitate ancient coins and they are framed by ribbon-tied swags of laurel, whose leaves have a princely connotation. They are unusual, as are the pendant foliate mounts on the legs. Documentary sources tell us that gilt and

silvered bronze mounts were shipped between Neuwied and Brussels, so it is possible that the duke's own goldsmith, Michel-Paul-Joseph Dewez, made them.⁴

The pictorial design on the tabletop (marquetry appears nowhere else on the piece) is still rooted in the rococo style. On a stagelike structure, a Chinese magician with a snake in his hand stands in front of a kneeling boy with a basket, possibly his apprentice. Opposite them is a woman, perhaps a fortune-teller. A rococo table on cabriole legs supports an oriental cup and saucer, a teapot, and a sugar box. In the earliest known version of the design, on a now lost rococo table of 1770–75, the stage is placed higher and there is no incense burner next to the female figure.⁵ The Neuwied workshop was in the habit of varying a theme of this sort by changing small details. In two later versions, the drama of the scene was enhanced by filling the brazier with fire and clouds of smoke.⁶ WK

ROLLTOP DESK

David Roentgen, ca. 1780
Oak, pine, walnut, cherry,
tulipwood, and mahog-
any (later drawers),
veneered with maple,
hornbeam (both partially
stained), tulipwood, burl
wood (stained), mahog-
any, holly, walnut, and
other woods; gilt bronze,
brass, steel, and iron;
marble; partially tooled
and gilded leather
44 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 45 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 26 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.
(114 × 116.2 × 67.3 cm)
The Metropolitan
Museum of Art, New
York, Gift of Samuel
H. Kress Foundation,
1958 (58.75.55)

PROVENANCE

Sir Charles Mills, Baronet
(d. 1872); The Lords Hill-
ingdon; [Duveen Galler-
ies, New York,
until 1958].



The floral marquetry motifs on this rolltop desk are set into cuts of fiddleback maple veneer, a fine, fluid background for such an elegant presentation.¹ On the curving rolltop are flower and leaf bouquets twined around a pointed planting tool and tied with a looped ribbon suspended from rings. Beneath are two ribbon-tied pruning knives flanking a bouquet, which hang together from another pair of rings. The juxtaposition of what is probably a seeder or a hoe with the pruning knives and bouquets constructs a narrative for the flowers that follows them from planting to harvest. These motifs occur elsewhere in

Roentgen's oeuvre (see, for example, cats. 19, 20). The image is enclosed within a frame of gilt-bronze mounts composed of alternating studs and tongue motifs, a pattern that recurs in more developed neoclassical examples from Roentgen's designs.² Other mounts on the desk front take the form of oak-leaf clusters, set above triglyphs between the lower drawers, and rosettes above bow ties followed by clusters of acanthus flowers, which spill down the tapered legs. The top is of Spanish brocatelle marble surrounded by a three-sided open-fret gallery, which was added later.

The curved top glides back in its groove when the writing slide is pulled forward by its two gilt-bronze loop handles, and the desk opens to reveal an architectural interior with four pigeonholes flanked by pilasters, beneath which are four blind drawers in the center, which provide a counterweight to support the writing surface, and a pair of working drawers on either side. The drawer handles are small gilded rings held by lion-masks, and the pilasters are set with gilded studs, rosettes, and ribboned laurel leaf-and-berry clusters. Delicate garland motifs adorn the spandrels. The back of the desk is made of finished and stained maple panels with a rosewood border, possibly a later addition; the framing elements suggest that the desk could be placed in the center of a room and viewed in the round.

Other rolltop desks of this type by Roentgen exist—some with six legs, some with eight, all with similar but slightly different decoration.³ The present example also reveals substantial later alterations. Originally the lower side drawers were spring-

operated and when pulled forward would have swung out on a hinge, revealing an additional set of hidden drawers deep within the desk (the mechanism is present in cats. 12, 18, 23, 29). The drawer fronts and their mounted escutcheons are replacements, as are the two front legs, which, unlike the originals, are stationary and cannot be unscrewed.⁴ Viewed alongside the inlaid decoration on the roll-top (which is certainly original) and on the central drawer below it, the marquetry on the side drawers is stiffer and less nuanced; the juxtaposition is instructive, as it brings Roentgen's mastery into sharp focus.

Such a major restoration was likely necessitated by serious damage of some kind. Possibly someone opened (or tried to open) the desk by force, causing irreparable damage to the marquetry and other surfaces, the locks and inner springs, and the body of the drawers. It is a testament to Roentgen's skill that the desk was so difficult to penetrate and that the restorer could not (or perhaps did not even attempt to) replicate his mechanical fittings. TS



ROLLTOP DESK

David Roentgen, ca. 1776–79
Oak, cherry, pine, mahogany, veneered with maple, burl woods, holly, hornbeam (all partially stained), tulipwood, mahogany, and other woods; mother-of-pearl; partially gilded and tooled leather; gilt bronze, iron, steel, brass, and partially gold-lacquered brass
53½ × 43½ × 26½ in. (135.9 × 110.5 × 67.3 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1941 (41.82)

PROVENANCE

Unnamed marquis, Paris, until 1890; (sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, February 10, 1890, no. 352); M. Mialhet, Paris; Mme. de Polès, Paris, until 1927; (sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, June 22–24, 1927, no. 277, to Seligmann); [Arnold Seligmann, Rey & Co., New York, Paris, 1927]; Mrs. Henry Walters, New York; (her sale, Parke-Bernet Galleries, New York, April 23–26, 1941, lot 731)

This splendid rolltop desk is distinguished by having six legs instead of the usual four.¹ The added pair and the lavish mounts changed the frontal view into a more facadelike structure (compare the desk at right).² The presence of the mounts and the use of exotic marquetry woods point to an affluent patron.³ Even so, it is not the most elaborate desk designed by David Roentgen during this period. Traditionally, however, it is considered a preeminent example of his technical skill and artistic creativity.⁴ The monogram DR inlaid on the drawer above the knee-hole indicates the cabinetmaker's satisfaction with what he must have considered an exceptionally refined desk, as access to its inner secrets can be gained only via the keyhole above his initials.

When the key is turned to the right, the compartment to the right of the knee-hole slides forward. A button underneath can be pressed to release its front half. This swings aside to reveal two drawer panels, each with four Birmingham Chippendale-style pulls (see fig. 70).⁵ Not every pull is functional, however, for the compartment contains only two deep drawers, not four shallow ones. The veneer, which was cut from matching sheets, has a curtain-like look, even though the grain lines are broken by brass moldings. Pressing in and turning the key to the left opens the compartment to the left of the knee-hole; pressing it in halfway and turning it to the left disengages the writing surface, which can then be pulled forward by means of the drop-loop handles; simultaneously, the curved top opens, revealing the interior. The rectangular structure above the rolltop consists of a single wide drawer. It is crowned on three sides by a pierced gilt-bronze gallery chased on both the front and the reverse and decorated with gilt-bronze acanthus cones, ornaments that were favored by the workshop during the



FIG. 69. David Roentgen. Rolltop desk with four legs. ca. 1776–79. Cherry, cedar, amboyna, tulipwood, sycamore (stained), veneered with various inlaid woods, gilt brass, ormolu, and leather; 50¾ × 45½ × 26¼ in. (129 × 115.5 × 66.5 cm). Private collection

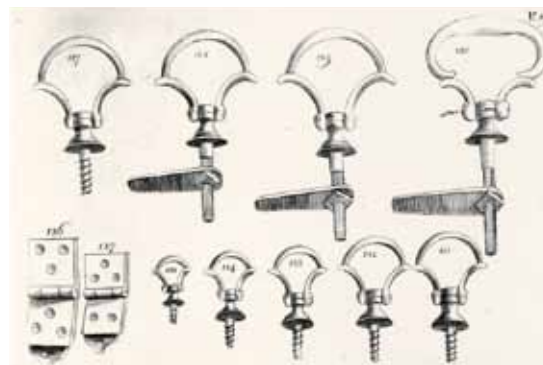


FIG. 70. Chippendale-style drawer pulls (nos. 127–35) from an English manufacturer's catalogue of hardware. 18th century. Engraving, overall 7⅞ × 10⅜ in. (18.3 × 26.4 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1935 (35.41.1)





entire neoclassical period.⁶ The sparkling ormolu and brass moldings have preserved some residue of their original gold-lacquered surface.⁷

The colorful chinoiserie marquetry on the desk's front and sides is set into large panels of maple wood, which may originally have been stained a shade of blue gray (see cat. 23). In this case, a blue-gray background would have been exceptionally striking, for the visible grain of the maple would have evoked a steel-blue fabric that was popular in the late 1770s.⁸ Like a theater scrim, it would have set off the lively scenes of Chinese life, confining them within an apparently shallow, three-dimensional space. The workshop used the vignettes on numerous pieces (see fig. 69); they are based on drawings by Januarius Zick.⁹

By the last quarter of the eighteenth century, Parisian cabinetmakers had largely abandoned rococo chinoiserie marquetry in favor of plain veneer with a beautiful grain.¹⁰ This desk must date to a transitional period in the Neuwied workshop, for the interior is decorated entirely in the restrained French neoclassical style. The disparity may indicate that Roentgen was doing "market research" into his customers' opinion of the new style. Because the Roentgen workshop was famous for its chinoiserie marquetry David discarded it only with great hesitation.

WK



PORTRAITS OF AN ELDERLY WOMAN AND AN ELDERLY MAN

Roentgen manufactory,
1775–80
Partially stained marquetry
in maple, hornbeam,
beech, boxwood, and
other woods, frame in
mahogany, picture
backing in cherry; gilt
bronze, glass, and iron
Diam. without frame
5 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (14.7 cm),
diam. with frame
7 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (19.5 cm)
Kunstgewerbemuseum,
Staatliche Museen zu
Berlin (1904,54 [woman],
1904,55 [man])

PROVENANCE

Purchased as a pair
by the Berlin pastor
Römer, a member of
the Roentgen family,
May 27, 1904.



These medallion portraits—in their original frames—are so-called character heads, a highly popular genre in the eighteenth century.¹ Called “fantasy” portraits, such heads are usually of imaginary persons, often elderly, and with distinctive physiognomies that presented a challenge to the artist. The fashion was inspired by Netherlandish painting of the seventeenth century and especially by Rembrandt’s graphic works. The painter Januarius Zick, who designed marquetry patterns for David Roentgen, produced a number of character heads, both paintings and drawings. Two of his signed drawings, after a pair of paintings dated 1773, are not only very similar to the present portraits but also take the form of fully framed medallions.²





Considering the fondness of the Herrnhuter for silhouette portraits and the old woman's delicate, typically Moravian, netted cap, the similarity of this pair to actual portraits is quite evident.³ When David Roentgen delivered his two large marquetry wall panels to Charles Alexander of Lorraine in Brussels in May of 1779, he also presented him with "two small portraits inlaid in wood," which may have been likenesses of Charles Alexander and either his sister Anne Charlotte or Empress Maria Theresa, both elderly women.⁴ The woman was dressed in an antique costume identical to the one worn by the mother of Lucretia in one of the large wall panels, *The Continnence of Scipio* (see cat. 31, and fig. 25, p. 28).⁵

The present medallions are known in two other versions—now in Nuremberg and Weimar—that differ only in insignificant details.⁶ This, the most elaborate pair, came from the Roentgen family itself.⁷ They are marquetry showpieces in the technique called *à la mosaïque*, made famous by the Roentgen workshop (see Hans Michaelsen's appendix on marquetry in this volume).⁸ The iris and pupil in the old woman's portrait (see facing page, below) are made up of at least two dozen chips, simulating a great variety of detail. Johann Michael Rummer, called the greatest master of such "woodworker's painting," was probably responsible for the marquetry here.⁹ AS

PORTRAIT OF AN ELDERLY WOMAN

David Roentgen, 1779
Marquetry in oak, maple,
plane, ash, and other
woods; passe-partout
frame in ebonized maple
15 × 12 1/8 in.
(38 × 30.8 cm)
Private collection

PROVENANCE

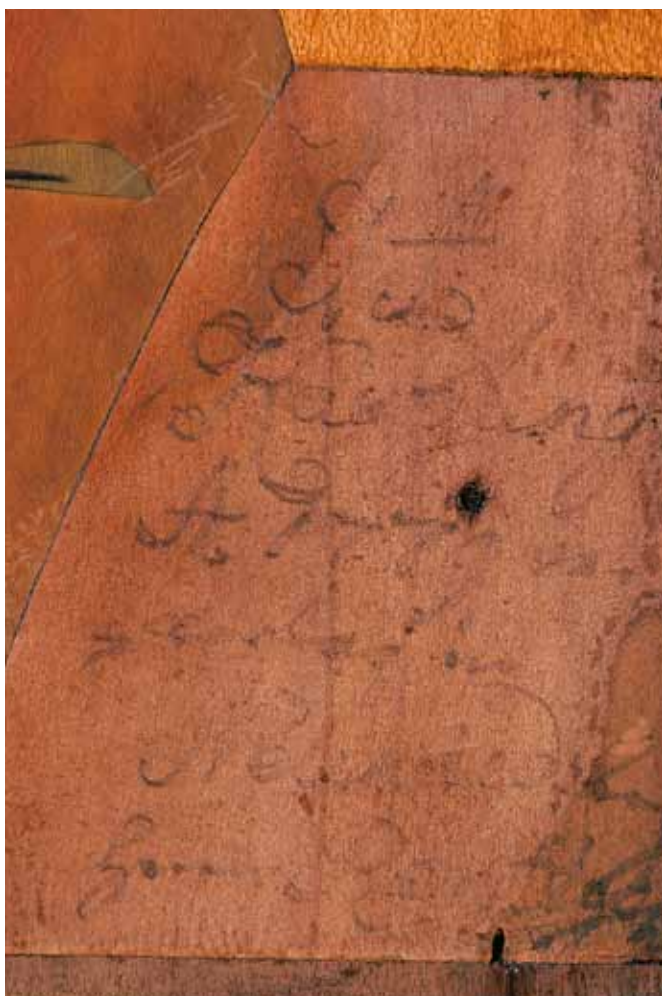
Made for Duke Charles
Alexander of Lorraine
(1779–d. 1780; sold at his
estate auction in 1781);
an English country
house; (sale, Christie’s,
London, June 12, 1997,
lot 46).

This portrait shows a mature woman veiled like a priestess of Vesta and with a Vitruvian scroll on her undergarment that identifies her as a figure from the classical Roman world. She may be the mother of the fiancée of Allucius, a Celtiberian chief. Her daughter was captured by the Roman general Scipio Africanus during the war between the Romans and Carthaginians. When Scipio realized that the girl was betrothed, he freed her and reunited her with her fiancé, thus turning his enemies into new allies of Rome.¹ Usually titled *The Continence of Scipio*, the story is presented in Baroque art as an allegory of the just and decent ruler. We know the identity of the woman in this picture because she appears in a very large marquetry wall panel on that same subject, one of a pair of panels that Roentgen made in 1778–79 for Charles Alexander of Lorraine’s palace in Brussels (the other is *The Sabine Women Pleading for Peace*; see “A Unique Relationship,” by Reinier Baarsen, in this volume). “Tapestries in wood,” as these marvels of inlay were described, mark the end of a tradition of marquetry-decorated

chambers.² They are related to eighteenth-century rooms embellished with lacquer and porcelain, and even *pietre dure* (see fig. 8, p. 10).³

During conservation carried out in 2000 by Mechthild Baumeister, the name J. A. Kaergling was found inscribed on the lower right corner of the present panel (below), an area that is normally covered by the ebonized maple passe-partout frame. No person of that name appears in any Roentgen document, but Kaergling was obviously an employee at the Neuwied workshop who used an opportunity—possibly while he was gluing on the frame—to sign his name, the location, and the date 1779. He may have been an assistant to Johann Michael Rummer, the finest *marqueteur*, or inlayer, in the workshop, who was in charge of the execution of the two big marquetry wall panels for the ducal palace. Those works were based on designs by Januarius Zick, as this oval portrait also must be.

In a letter to Duke Charles Alexander on May 15, 1779, David announced the dispatch of the wall panels and mentions “two small crates, one with



CAT. 31, DETAIL OF SIGNATURE BENEATH THE FRAME



two small panels and the other [filled] with old tools.”⁴ In another letter of the same date, addressed to the duke’s chamberlain and private secretary, Monsieur de Giron, Roentgen lists, under number six, “two small portraits inlaid in wood.”⁵ One of them was probably this picture, the other perhaps a portrait of the duke (see the entry for cat. 30). In the catalogue of the duke’s estate auction in 1781, a marquetry portrait of an old woman is mentioned, and the measurements given correspond exactly to those of the present panel.⁶

The facial features of the elderly woman seen here are extremely realistic. Since the two small

panels delivered to Duke Charles Alexander were called portraits, the question of the identity of the sitter arises. She may be the duke’s sister, Anne Charlotte of Lorraine, who died in 1773. She was an abbess and had devoted her life to religion, like a Roman vestal priestess.

After removing the frame of this portrait, Baumeister discovered areas where the original color scheme, in various shades of green, was well preserved. This may explain earlier references to the rich and extraordinarily colorful appearance of the two large wall panels, which are maintained, though badly faded, in Vienna (see figs. 25–28, pp. 28–29). WK

COMMUNE

David Roentgen, ca. 1775–79 (with later alterations)
Oak, pine, walnut, mahogany, and cherry, veneered with hornbeam (partially stained), tulipwood, walnut, holly and maple (both partially stained), boxwood, mahogany, and other woods; red brocatelle marble; gilt bronze, iron, steel, and brass
35¼ × 53½ × 27¼ in. (89.5 × 135.9 × 69.2 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Jack and Belle Linsky Collection, 1982 (1982.60.81)

PROVENANCE

Possibly Louis XVI, king of France, Versailles (until 1792); Baron Mayer de Rothschild (1819–1874), Mentmore Towers, Buckinghamshire; Earl of Roseberry (sale, Sotheby's, London, April 17, 1964, lot 54, to Linsky).



These important Roentgen commodes both have an illustrious provenance. Their histories may have begun in the royal apartments at Versailles. During the nineteenth century the example now at the Metropolitan Museum (cat. 32) belonged to Baron Mayer de Rothschild, a member of the distinguished banking and art-collecting family, who kept it at Mentmore Towers, his palatial and splendidly appointed residence in Buckinghamshire. In 1964 it went under the hammer in London and fetched the highest price ever paid at auction for a piece of furniture, attracting tremendous media attention.¹

The New York and London commodes are related closely to each other and to the latter's nearly identical counterpart at the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum in Munich, with which it once formed a pair in the collection of the grand duke of Sachsen-Weimar.² All three pieces are so-called



Cat. 32, detail showing one of two Versailles brand marks (actual size)

COMMODOE



David Roentgen,
ca. 1779–early 1780s
Oak, pine, cherry, maple,
and mahogany, veneered
with maple (?) burl wood
(stained), walnut, holly,
maple (last two partially
stained), boxwood,
mahogany, and other
woods; *bleu turquin*
marble; gilt bronze, iron,
steel, brass, and lead
34 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 53 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 26 $\frac{1}{4}$ in.
(86.7 × 134.8 × 66.8 cm)
Victoria and Albert
Museum, London
(W 51-1948)

PROVENANCE

Grand duke of Sachsen-
Weimar, 1920s; (sale,
Sotheby's, London, *The
Property of H. R. H. the
Grand Duke of Saxony*,
June 10, 1932, lot 136, to
Eckstein); Lady Eckstein,
London, until 1935;
her son, Sir Bernard
Eckstein, Baronet.

commodes à vantaux, which means they have three doors concealing interior drawers; however, they all include a shelf compartment, rather than drawers, behind the central door, which transforms the type into a combination of the *commode à vantaux* and a variation called *commode en bas d'armoire*.³

All three commodes have six feet. The feet of the New York commode, however, represent a unique departure in Roentgen's oeuvre. Although the four outside feet are square as usual, the two front middle feet are trapezoidal and decorated with mounts on the three visible sides, lending an extra element of luxury. The fronts of the commodes are divided into three vertical sections, and the frieze contains a single drawer that runs the full width of each piece. The sides and the three front door panels are decorated with marquetry: the former show musicians—woodwind and stringed-

instrument players—and the center panel on the front shows a scene of actors on a stage. In several ways, the marquetry of the New York commode differs from its two counterparts. It probably originally resembled the others closely, but major alterations were undertaken at some point after the French Revolution, when the taste of the ancien régime fell into disrepute. The absorbing story of how the New York commode was changed can be found in an appendix by Mechthild Baumeister in this volume. Suffice it here to mention four major differences: First, the two lateral doors on the front of the Metropolitan's commode show two empty stages, whereas those doors on the London and Munich commodes display theater boxes filled with people watching the performance taking place in the scene on the central door. Second, the panels on the sides of all three pieces are the same, but those on the

New York commode are reversed, with the woodwind players on the proper right side. Third, the frieze mounts on the New York commode are replacements of mounts similar to their counterparts and by another hand. The mounts on the feet and stiles are also different. Fourth, the original blue-gray marble tops preserved on the London and Munich commodes have been replaced on the Metropolitan's piece by a red brocatelle marble slab.⁴

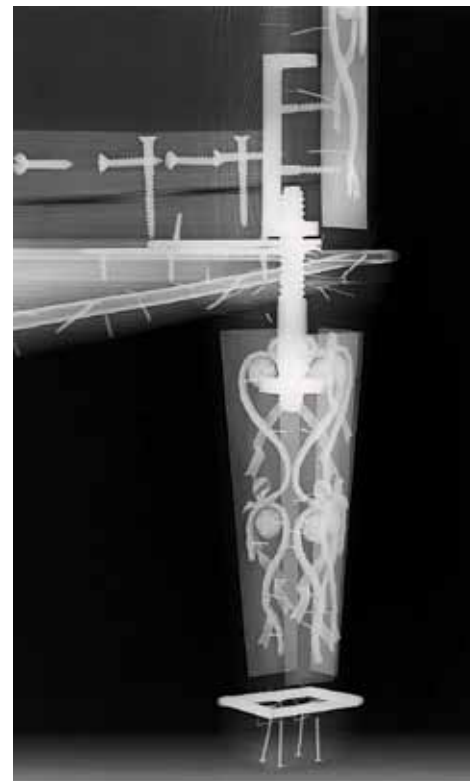
Inside the three commodes, the layout is similar, but the hidden mechanisms in the London and Munich examples are more sophisticated. The large frieze drawer, the doors, and the top interior drawers of the latter are opened by different actions of a single key in one keyhole, which is concealed by an ormolu rosette on the frieze drawer when not in use. The mechanism is weight- and spring-driven. On either side of the interior of the three commodes, the upper drawer can be swung sideways to access hidden compartments with secret drawers. The top of the front compartment lifts up on the London commode; it is covered with a tambour on the New York commode, giving access to a well.

The finest mounts on the London commode are Paris-made; Neuwied examples are used in less-prominent places. The duotone gilding and surface chasing of the bow-tie handles on the drawers are of the highest level that the workshop of François Rémond produced. The similarly delicate frieze mounts were replaced on the New York commode with a bold scrolling ornament, probably the work of the Paris bronze caster Étienne Martincourt.

Januarius Zick, who frequently worked for David Roentgen, certainly designed the marquetry scenes on the front of the commodes as well as the ones on the sides, and undoubtedly Roentgen's engraver Elie Gervais produced the line drawings for the marquetry cutter to work from. The central scene on the front features well-known characters from the Italian theatrical tradition known as the *commedia dell'arte*, which enjoyed a revival during the second half of the eighteenth century. Pictured are the clever servant Harlequin at right, his sweetheart, the lady's maid Columbine, in a flower-decorated straw hat on the left, and the aged Anselmo with a tricorne and walking stick in the



Cat. 32, proper left side



Cat. 32, X-ray radiograph of one of the detachable feet, revealing an internal iron rod threaded at both ends and secured with square iron nuts

center.⁵ The scenes on the sides of the three commodes depict two musicians in an airy room with an arched casement window: on one panel, a violinist and a cellist share a trestle stand with two sheets of music on it as they play. Brass horns hang on the wall. In the other panel, two woodwind players rest at a table. On the wall behind them are two oboes, and a bassoon leans against the music stand on which sheets of music are propped (see app. 1.3, p. 224).

The New York commode is branded twice on the uprights of its paneled back with a double V beneath a crown, which is the inventory mark of Versailles (see p. 130). Although it is uncertain that the back panel is original to the piece, it is not impossible that the commode originated in the private apartments of Louis XVI. Indeed, records of the king's expenditures mention the payment of 2,400 livres on April 11, 1779, "to the Germans for a big commode."⁶ But in an inventory of 1792, the scenes on the sides of that same commode are said to depict Astronomy and the Arts, rather than musicians.⁷ This may represent a misunderstanding on the part of an inventory taker who did not recognize

the oboes as musical instruments and thought the bassoon was a telescope (compare cat. 35 and fig. 21, p. 24, where telescopes are depicted). Moreover, the inventory was almost certainly made in a hurry, for the furniture was to be removed from Versailles and sold in Paris for cash to support the Revolution. Specific woods, including their coloration, and small chased ornaments mentioned in the inventory are found on the New York commode and not the other two, yet it is surprising that no mention is made of the commedia dell'arte scene. Another inventory of Versailles furnishings, made in 1793, that documents a smaller commode owned by the comtesse d'Artois, a sister-in-law of Louis XVI, does mention the commedia dell'arte scene.⁸ But the measurements given in the inventories for the two commodes make Louis XVI's slightly larger example a better match with the New York commode.⁹

MB/WK



Cat. 32



Cat. 33

BERLIN SECRETARY CABINET

David Roentgen,
1778–79, 1786
Oak, pine, walnut,
mahogany, cherry, and
cedar, veneered with
curly maple, burl maple
and mahogany (both
stained), and with mar-
quetry in maple (partially
stained), hornbeam,
apple, walnut, mulberry,
tulipwood, and rose-
wood; ivory, mother-of-
pearl, gilt bronze, brass,
steel, iron, and silk
141³/₈ × 59⁷/₈ × 34⁵/₈ in.
(359 × 152 × 88 cm)
Kunstgewerbemuseum,
Staatliche Museen zu
Berlin (O-1962,24)

PROVENANCE

Delivered to the succes-
sor to the Prussian
crown, later King
Frederick William II, on
December 20, 1779.

The Berlin secretary cabinet is the most important piece of furniture from the Roentgen manufactory and one of the finest achievements of European furniture making.¹ The model was produced in three variants (of which this one is the third) and sold to three of the major European rulers in the waning years of the *ancien régime*. Developed on David Roentgen's initiative, it played a key role in the history of his manufactory, both in the evolution of its production techniques and in its economic success. The piece is essentially a writing cabinet crowned with a chiming clock. In it the Neuweid artisans brought to perfection the exquisite colored marquetry called *à la mosaïque* as well as ingenious mechanisms and precise timepieces. The doors and drawers could be opened automatically at the touch of a button—to the music of flute, cymbal, and glockenspiel—as could the entire interior desk area, various secret jewel boxes, and hidden compartments. Complexity and sheer size make the Berlin cabinet anything but a conventional piece of furniture. It was both a monument to its designated royal owner and one that proclaimed the fame of its creator.

The manufactory's major endeavor in the 1770s was the development, manufacture, and sale of the three secretary cabinets. The project, probably initiated in 1773–74 and completed in 1779, was a decisive step in the manufactory's rise as supplier to the most splendid of European courts. All of the cabinets were produced at Roentgen's own risk in the hope of attracting the attention of the highest European nobility and thereby ensuring further sales over the long term. The first buyer, in the summer of 1776, was the imperial governor of the Austrian Netherlands, Charles Alexander of Lorraine, who may have had some discussion with David Roentgen about a grand cabinet. Three years later King Louis XVI of France purchased the second version, of which only portions survive. Finally, in December 1779, the third was delivered to the Prussian heir-presumptive, later King Frederick William II, whose portrait medallion appears in the central

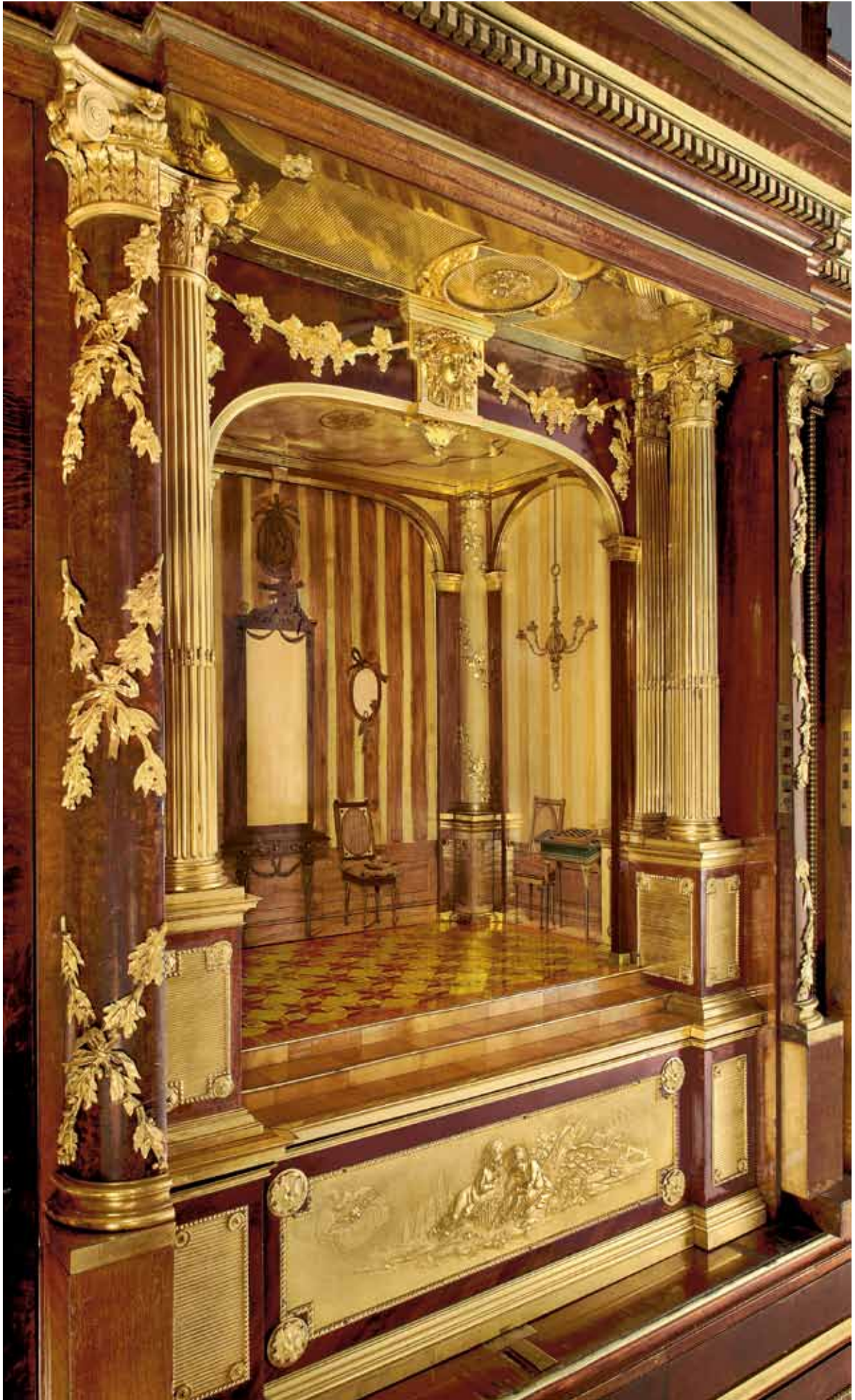
door, under the clock (see fig. 37, p. 38). Scaled to command respect, the Berlin cabinet cannot be taken in at a single glance. As the eye glides across the surface, it is captured by nearly a dozen different delights: the seven large marquetry allegories relating to the liberal and applied arts, the royal medallion, the exquisite clock dial, and the cupola topped by a gilt-bronze Apollo.

A remarkable document entitled "Description of the Cabinet or Writing-Commode Created in Neuweid, with a Top Section Housing a Chiming Clock," in all likelihood written by David Roentgen himself in connection with the first version, extolled the regal piece's virtues and provided a brief introduction to its complex mechanisms.² "At the summit," supported on the shoulders of a golden, winged Time, "rests a beautiful clock that every two hours plays well-composed pieces on a clavier, accompanied by a transverse flute (and also repeats them as often as one wishes); the clock runs for eight days, indicates the date, the rising and setting of the moon, the seconds, has two brass cylinders, and plays eight pieces . . . that have been especially selected."³ A precision clock with a second hand and a music box, both from the Kinzing workshops, are among the especially prized features of the Berlin piece.⁴ Fascinating are not only the large repertoire and the choice of music—an inscription above the clock face reads "Andante, Menuett, Polonaise, Allegro"—but also the way the instruments are combined as though in an orchestra.

The colored marquetry panels, after designs by the Koblenz court painter Januarius Zick, are extremely detailed.⁵ David Roentgen boasted that his marquetry panels contained a wealth of figures "so lifelike that I can freely subject myself to the criticism of any painter."⁶ A marquetry showpiece lies behind the three cabinets' center doors: in the Berlin example an entire miniature interior is revealed, with its wallpaper, chairs, a chandelier, and even the game tiles and cards lying on the two tables.⁷ The whole illusion is continued in the gleaming parquet floor.









This marvelous room with three mirrors is framed by a dark mahogany proscenium adorned with exquisite gilt bronzes, including festoons of vine leaves and bunches of grapes, Corinthian capitals with each leaf applied separately, a Medusa head, *milleraies* panels with punched hatching, and a large gilded relief plaque with putti below.

Behind this plaque is housed the most ingenious of the cabinet's mechanisms, which opens small doors, hidden compartments, and swivel drawers (see details) so numerous that the piece has been referred to as a "machine": "One turns a key, and suddenly a writing desk, at which one can write quite comfortably while standing up, appears by itself, automatically opens and tilts downward to form a writing surface, and just above it a lectern appears on which to place something to be copied or to read, and at the same time two compartments open out on either side holding inks, boxes for sand, and writing utensils; all this can easily be folded back together at will and slid back into its proper place."⁸ The operation—a swift and automatic sequence of transformations—is astonishing, as are the way the various parts emerge from the smallest of spaces and the sound created by the movement of the weights and springs. The case containing the mechanism weighs nearly sixty-six pounds (see also Daniela Meyer and Hans-Werner Pape's appendix on mechanisms in this volume).

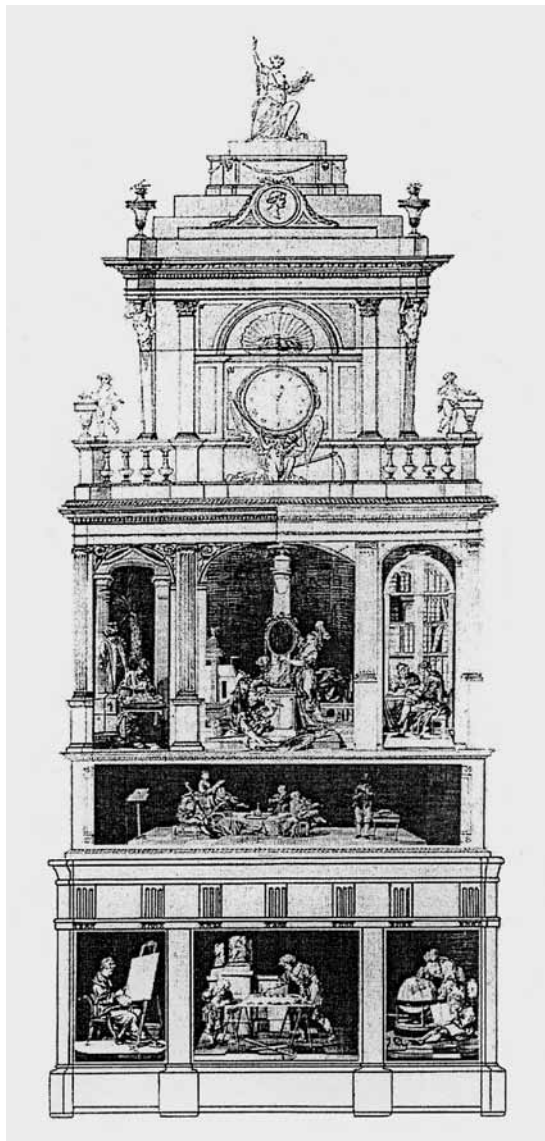
The design of the three secretary cabinets was based on English prototypes. Like an early large writing desk (see cat. 25), the first version (see fig. 21, p. 24) is still indebted to the "desk and bookcases" of Thomas Chippendale, yet it fails to exhibit a coherent architectural form.⁹ By contrast, the Berlin version presents consistent architecture and balanced proportions inside and out (doubtless the Paris version originally did as well; see fig. 71, p. 140). According to David Roentgen, the wealth of mechanical features incorporated into the design was largely the work of the *mechanicus* Johann Christian Krause, for many years one of the workshop's most important masters.¹⁰

In the earliest years the Berlin secretary cabinet was probably displayed in the crown prince's chief residence in Potsdam, the so-called Kabinetthaus on the Neuer Markt.¹¹ In December 1786, after Frederick William had ascended the throne, David Roentgen called on him, and doubtless on that occasion he delivered a new center door with a marquetry scene showing the apotheosis of the king, which was exchanged for the original one (see also cat. 35).¹² The famous cabinet was then placed in the royal apartments in the Berlin Palace,¹³ where it stood in an anteroom hung with green damask and portraits of other European royals and military commanders.¹⁴

AS

RECONSTRUCTING THE VERSAILLES SECRETARY CABINET

FIG. 71. Georg Himmelheber. Reconstruction drawing of David Roentgen's secretary cabinet for Louis XVI. 1994. Drawing. Private collection



According to the furniture historian Pierre Verlet, “the most costly, complicated and cumbersome, if not the most beautiful piece of French Crown furniture,”¹ was a monumental secretary cabinet made by David Roentgen for Louis XVI of France. Roentgen spent three months of uncertainty in Paris, waiting for a positive answer regarding an object that he had made on pure speculation. In March 1779 the French king relieved his doubt, buying the cabinet at a cost of 80,000 livres, the largest amount ever paid before or after by the royal household for a single piece of furniture.² Roentgen himself made sure that the French and German press spread throughout Europe the news of the sale and the extraordinary price it achieved. For the first time, the cabinetmaker from Neuwied had sold one of his masterpieces to a sovereign of one of Europe’s superpowers.³

Louis XVI’s passion for clocks and all mechanical devices has traditionally been cited as the reason for the king’s willingness to pay such an astronomical price. In fact it was Marie Antoinette who enticed her husband to buy the cabinet for her as a gift.⁴ She then had a miniature with her portrait set into an allegorical marquetry panel, with which the original middle portion of the superstructure was replaced and presented to the monarch.

The cabinet’s original form was essentially a version of the slightly later Berlin example (see cat. 34 for a description).⁵ A victim of the French Revolution, it is believed to have been transferred to Paris in March 1792. In 1793 it was offered for sale as national property and failed to find a purchaser; in 1826 it was finally sold to an unknown French buyer for 3000 francs. As early as 1791, Guillaume Benemann had supplied five drawings suggesting ways to transform various parts into other objects.⁶ After the 1826 sale, the cabinet was taken apart in order to convert some pieces into a variety of smaller objects with marquetry surfaces. The owner hoped to appeal to the moneyed nobility and the returning members of the French aristocracy after the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy (ca. 1814–30). Assuming they could regain their hôtels or country estates, which had been plundered of all contents, they would need new furniture to replace what had been lost.

The fate of the cabinet’s shell remains a mystery, although several existing pieces of furniture, without marquetry, are similar enough in design to be considered actual sections of the grand cabinet, or at least close adaptations possibly influenced by its dramatic form. A rolltop desk formerly in the Salgo Collection is extremely close to one of the drawings that Benemann provided in 1791;⁷ a large cabinet from the collection of Marella Agnelli reflects the form of the cabinet’s base but is far too wide to be its original frame with different panels added;⁸ and a medal cabinet from the collection of Karl Lagerfeld, with bronze roundels of ancient heads inserted into a later case, could have been the movable *médallier* section inside the grand cabinet.⁹ The subject merits further study. In the meantime, we are fortunate to be able to present on the following pages several elements of the formerly grand secretary cabinet, accompanied by Georg Himmelheber’s reconstruction drawing, which shows where these pieces would have been placed (fig. 71).

MARQUETRY PANEL FROM THE FORMER VERSAILLES SECRETARY CABINET



David Roentgen
ca. 1776–78
Maple, cedar, boxwood,
mahogany, and oak
(all partially colored)
27½ × 20⅞ × 1⅞ in.
(69.7 × 52.9 × 2.7 cm)
Bayerisches National-
museum, Munich
(78/395)

PROVENANCE

Delivered to Versailles as part of the large secretary cabinet in 1779; likely transferred with the cabinet to Paris on March 29, 1792; later in the Duveen Collection, New York (sale, Sotheby Parke Bernet, New York, June 16, 1978, lot 62, to Dalva Brothers, New York).

The pictorial imagery for the cabinet was designed by Januarius Zick and carried out in marquetry by Johann Michael Rummer. The panel seen here, showing an allegorical scene alluding to Astronomy and Geometry, was the original central door. Reflecting the age of enlightenment and scientific study, the figure at the right studies a forecast for an eclipse and another measures distance on a globe. The key personage is the young scientist who holds a telescope, trying to catch a good look at the comet as it passes by. Because the phenomenon of comets was not completely understood by scientists, their appearance still caused anxiety in the eighteenth century, when two separate occurrences were witnessed. One was Halley's Comet, which had been recorded earlier and reappeared as predicted in 1758. The second was the comet Biela, observed in 1772 by Jacques Leibax Montaigne. Both helped to

further the contemporary desire to probe more deeply the mysterious heavens.¹⁰

In order to accommodate the queen's new central door (see cat. 36), Astronomy and Geometry were reconfigured and moved to the right door in the lower section (see Himmelheber's reconstruction opposite and cat. 34). These changes were repeated in the Berlin cabinet, but the two removed original panels remained with the piece until 1945.¹¹ The small inserts of veneer that cover the former keyholes of this door are still visible, as are the extensions on the top that were rounded and are now rectangular. Despite Roentgen's best efforts, his original pictorial concept—the seven liberal arts as a reflection of the humanist *studiolo* (or the embodiment of learning)—is preserved in its entirety, and in its original sequence, only on the Brussels secretary cabinet (see fig. 21, p. 24).¹²

MARQUETRY PANELS FROM THE FORMER VERSAILLES SECRETARY CABINET

David Roentgen,
ca. 1776–78
Boxwood, maple, ash,
and walnut
Overall $31\frac{3}{4} \times 44\frac{3}{4} \times 1$ in.
(80.8 × 113.8 × 2.5 cm)
Bayerisches National-
museum, Munich
(L 83/198)

PROVENANCE

Same as cat. 35; sold
in 1826 and taken apart,
remounted as a top
of a writing table;
[Bernheimer, Munich,
until 1983].

These three panels, which decorated the doors of the upper section of the cabinet as reworked to include the image of Marie Antoinette, represent Arithmetic and Grammar flanking a scene celebrating the queen as patron of the arts. The Metropolitan Museum owns a drawing by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin that documents a similar allegorical tradition (fig. 72). The current design was made between 1776 and 1778 by Januarius Zick, who adapted comparable French drawings and prints as inspiration.¹³ The goddess Minerva stretches her arm to hang a medallion on the column of fame. The sculptor seated below may be chiseling the queen's name into the pedestal. Minerva's shield (adorned with the head of Medusa) is on the ground and her ancient costume drapery flows to the right with the wind, as does the weathervane on the temple's roof in the background. Yet here she is the patron of fame and the arts, not the angry goddess of war. The carefully calculated detail indicates that Roentgen probably assessed the program with the queen or one of her close advisers; his three-month stay in Paris provided him with time to have the replacement door made while he was there. Alternatively, it

is possible that the cabinetmaker had foreseen such a change might be necessary and included an extra door among the other items brought from Neuwied. This allowed him the opportunity to individualize the object for the new owner. The revised iconography constituted an allegory distinguishing the anointed monarchs from everyone else; David would reuse the theme in a gilt-bronze group commissioned from Louis-Simon Boizot on an object intended for Russia (fig. 47, p. 47).¹⁴

The interlaced L in the center medallion is a substitute for Marie Antoinette's miniature portrait, which was sold separately in 1797.¹⁵ Important parts of the cabinet's mechanism had already broken down during the last year of Louis XVI's reign (see p. 9). Like other marquetry panels from the Versailles cabinet, these three were later incorporated as the top surface of a *bureau plat* (flat writing desk).¹⁶ A comparison between these panels and Georg Himmelheber's reconstruction drawing reveals that, as in the case of catalogue 35 above, the upper rounded spaces were filled to form corners and a veneer patch was added to cover the right keyhole.



FIG. 72. Gabriel de Saint-Aubin. *Allegory on the Marriage between the Dauphin and Marie Antoinette*. 1770. Brush and gray wash, accents in pen and brown ink, over black chalk, margins tinted with blue-green wash; $8\frac{7}{8} \times 6\frac{3}{4}$ in. (22.1 × 17.1 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1937 (37.165.106)



MECHANICAL TABLE, INCLUDING PARTS OF THE FORMER VERSAILLES SECRETARY CABINET

David Roentgen,
ca. 1776–78 and ca. 1827
Mahogany and oak,
veneered with tulipwood,
satinwood, and bird’s-
eye maple; top: oak and
poplar, veneered with
sycamore (stained), ash,
and boxwood
Marquetry $33\frac{7}{8} \times 52\frac{1}{4} \times$
 $20\frac{1}{4}$ in. ($86 \times 132.5 \times$
 51.5 cm)
Musée National des
Châteaux de Versailles et
de Trianon (Inv. no. V
5789)

PROVENANCE

Tabletop and parts of the
interior manufactured
and delivered as part of a
large secretary cabinet
for King Louis XVI,
Château de Versailles,
in 1779 (secretary sold
in 1826; table with top
sold Hôtel Drouot, Paris,
November 5, 1993,
lot 144).

Like the two panels discussed on pages 141–42, parts of this table were reused from the grand secretary, most notably the inside of the original sloped fall front, which was embellished with a figural scene of musicians. That panel was skillfully divided about 1827 and the figural marquetry of the outer surface today forms the top of a *bureau plat* in the National Gallery in Washington (see fig. 33, p. 34). The concert scene, also found on the Brussels and Berlin secretary cabinets, was investigated by Gerhard Croll, who identified the sheet music of the soprano with the aria “Più non si trovano” in Giovanni Battista Pergolesi’s opera *L’Olimpiade*, which was fashionable in 1770s Europe.¹⁷ The aria’s title refers to true love but literally means “more cannot be found.” It is plausible that Roentgen wanted to proclaim that these three sophisticated secretary cabinets were the pinnacle of eighteenth-century marquetry-decorated works.¹⁸

An astonishingly large group of Roentgen marquetry pieces were transformed by the workshop of Jean-Baptiste BÉfort (1783–1840) into tabletops of varying sizes. The name of the nineteenth-century cabinetmaker was later revealed during an extensive restoration of the object, when conservators

discovered one of David Roentgen’s business cards, which was used to hold parts in the correct position, as well as the calling card of BÉfort’s wife. The spring-driven writing-and-reading mechanism from the older cabinet was installed behind the center flap in the new table’s apron to add movement to the piece. Certainly the maker was familiar with Roentgen’s work and had seen one of the Roentgen’s dressing tables (see cat. 49) of the 1780s, which incorporated the same mechanism except that it was pulled out manually.¹⁹

The top of this table, the only marquetry part of the original cabinet to have returned to Versailles, is decorated in an intricate geometric design influenced by high Baroque parade-square architecture, with all perspective lines meeting in the center of a semicircular form. Laurel swags and other hangings inlaid into the parquet background also help to guide the eye toward an imaginary focal point. It is ironic to note that the beautiful marquetry work of this and other *bureau plat* tabletops would necessarily have become at least partially covered with papers and writing utensils, assuming the desks were actually used. WK





AUTOMATON OF QUEEN MARIE ANTOINETTE, CALLED *LA JOUEUSE DE TYMPANON* (THE DULCIMER PLAYER)

David Roentgen,
ca. 1782–84
Mahogany [*acajou moucheté*], thuja burl wood, and oak; ivory and textiles; brass and iron
Stand $48 \times 47\frac{7}{8} \times 22\frac{5}{8}$ in. ($122 \times 121.5 \times 57.5$ cm);
podium case
 $44\frac{1}{8} \times 18\frac{1}{8} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ in. ($112 \times 46 \times 14$ cm);
H. of figure $20\frac{7}{8}$ in. (53 cm); instrument
 $12\frac{3}{8} \times 27\frac{3}{4} \times 14\frac{3}{8}$ in. ($31.5 \times 70.5 \times 36.5$ cm)
Musée des arts et métiers de Paris
(07501-0001)

PROVENANCE

Delivered in December 1784 to the court of Louis XVI, king of France and Navarre, at Versailles, for his queen, Marie Antoinette, who gave it to the Cabinet de l'Académie des Sciences, Versailles, in March 1785; subsequently transferred to the Conservatoire des arts et métiers, Paris (later the Musée des arts et métiers de Paris).

The desire to create a machine that is able not only to imitate human movements but also to respond intelligently to commands is as old as science itself. Before modern times, self-operating machines were associated with divine intervention; for example, the continual motion of a clock was seen as a metaphor for the universe, which had been created by the greatest of all mechanics, God Almighty. Successful attempts to give life to a human creation are recorded in ancient myths. Callistratus, a Greek writer of the third or fourth century A.D., described a stone statue of Memnon in Ethiopia that had the power of speech and that saluted the rising sun and shed tears when it set.¹ Ovid's story of Pygmalion, in which an actual woman is freed from the marble that encases her, is one of the earliest descriptions of a female android in literary history. During the Renaissance, the desire to create and imitate life led to the invention of automatons to grace the princely collections called *Kunstkammern*. Combining the skills of inventors and artisans, the androids exemplified the shift from a theistic worldview to a mechanistic one and illustrated the triumph of scientists and artisan-mechanics over theologians.

Late eighteenth-century Europe was charmed by three doll automatons—*The Musician*, *The Draftsman*, and *The Writer*—built by the Jaquet-Droz family of watchmakers in Neuchâtel, Switzerland, as “living” advertisements for Swiss watches.² *The Draftsman* is a child who can draw four pictures,

one of which is thought to portray Marie Antoinette and Louis XVI. *The Musician* is a beautifully dressed female organist who makes music by pressing with her fingers the keys of a real instrument. An inward and outward movement of her chest makes her seem to breathe.³

In February 1785 Prince Johann Friedrich Alexander zu Wied-Neuwied wrote Count Philipp Otto von Dönhoff that David Roentgen had brought to the French court “a doll that plays music on a clavichord [*sic*]. The queen had it appraised by two academicians: 800 louis d'or. He [Roentgen] accepted only 500.”⁴ No record of the automaton exists before its arrival at Versailles. Even Prince zu Wied, who had appointed Roentgen Privy Councillor for Commerce to his court, had not been told about the dazzling object while it was in production.⁵ It is likely that both the cabinetry and the clock-making workshops at Neuwied—and everybody else involved—had been sworn to secrecy, as this was to be an unprecedented market coup: Roentgen would take a royal patron by surprise with a beautiful automaton that bore a striking resemblance to her. The figure is indeed a close likeness of Marie Antoinette, a music lover and an accomplished performer on several instruments. The pieces the automaton plays are by Christoph Willibald Gluck, who had taught the queen music when she was a child in Vienna. At Versailles she was known to sing Gluck's compositions in private moments.⁶







The figure's dress—which can be changed, as there are two in existence—is embellished with lace. The original dress was restored in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The full skirt conceals a mannequin body with joined parts. The rest of the mechanism is covered by the podium that supports the figure and the instrument. The dog-collar pearl necklace (the latest fashion) harmonizes with the queen's coiffure. She wears a diadem consisting of two strings of pearls, reflecting ancient statues of the richly attired earthly Venus, the goddess of profane love.⁷

Roentgen's cabinetry for the piece is a neoclassical masterwork. The rectangular lines of the stand and podium are softened by the curving ones of the instrument's case. The tapering legs are embellished on all sides with gilded *milleriaies* panels, and their surfaces are veneered with exquisite *acajou moucheté*, a deep red mahogany with dark spots, one of the most precious veneer woods in the eighteenth century. The contrast it makes with the yellow (thuja) burl wood of the podium is also highly effective.

We do not know whether Marie Antoinette was pleased and flattered or frightened by the “double”

that everyone else admired. The fact remains that several months after its arrival, the queen asked her physician, François de Lassone, to present *La Joueuse de Tympanon* to the Académie des Sciences. In March 1785 the doctor sent a note to the prestigious college of the academy to say that it would be desirable if the committee arrived at the dinner hour, as examination of the machine would not take much time.⁸ His intentions were clear: “It won't take long” meant that the queen's generous offer was the equivalent of a command and that Lassone had Her Majesty's authority to enforce her wish to see the automaton preserved in the academy's collection. Marie Antoinette's apparent ambivalence toward *La Joueuse* may have saved the marvelous machine from destruction during the Revolution.

Lassone described the work as “a small, automated female figure [that] plays admirably several pieces of music on a kind of dulcimer in the shape of a small harpsichord. This figure, with her elegant features, proportions, and movements, strikes the strings of the instrument in the correct rhythm with the two small metal hammers she holds in her hands, which move with the greatest precision.”⁹ Jan Jaap Haspels explains the mechanism: “The non-changeable brass music cylinder has 16 notation lines with brass pins (8 melodies, played with two hands/hammers) as well as 16 cam wheels for the sideways movements of the lower arms. The dulcimer has double strings: 2 × 23 strings for 23 notes. The hammer heads describe two circle segments with the elbows as pivot points.” Haspels goes on to say that despite the automaton's “charm of movement, her apparently effortless playing and the delicate execution of [the] program,” the music itself does not rise to the level attained by purely musical mechanisms in which a series of sounds is made with hammers, for *La Joueuse* cannot play more than two notes at the same time.¹⁰ Its musical limitations should not lessen our admiration of this mechanical marvel, however. Considering the economic pressures on Roentgen and his collaborator, Peter Kinzing, a step-by-step development of the musical aspect of the automaton, with time allotted for experimentation and improvements, would have taken too long and cost too much money. Besides, the goal was to surprise the queen, to give her aesthetic pleasure.

The fame of Roentgen and Kinzing spread far and wide, and both men were rewarded with high honors: David Roentgen had received the title *ébéniste mécanicien* (cabinetmaker and mechanical engineer) to the king and queen in 1779; Kinzing was subsequently named clockmaker (*horloger*) to the queen.

WK

INKSTAND

All four sides of this stand, which was designed to hold writing equipment, have slightly raised central sections and two flanking panels. Each side is veneered with a single sheet of mahogany, and the shape of the panels—square or rectangular—is echoed by a gilt-bronze bead molding within. The upper edge of the stand is decorated with a brass-covered bead molding (partially missing). The top is fitted with two concave pen trays and a center section where an inkwell and a box for sand once flanked a rectangular compartment likely meant to hold a seal. Four gilt-bronze paw feet support the stand's canted corners, each of which is mounted with a fluted bronze pilaster strip scrolled at the base and partially covered by an acanthus leaf. This corner decoration is reminiscent of the one on Roentgen's letter box of about the same date (cat. 40). The disposition of this inkstand is similar to the base of one of Roentgen's table clocks (cat. 57).

During the Renaissance, many inkstands were made, but most contained only an inkwell. The present example is very distantly related to grotesquely shaped or decorated Renaissance inkstands made to be displayed in princely curiosity cabinets and to be admired from all angles. During the reign of Louis XIV, the *escritoire*, a portable writing desk equipped with penholder and sander, became very fashionable in France.¹ At that time,

documents were often signed in public, and owning the necessary apparatus to do so was a sign of the user's high status.

The eighteenth century was the great age of letter writing in Europe, and much attention was lavished on writing implements. The inspiration to produce this unusual model can be traced to French inkstands documented as early as 1762, which show a similar arrangement of receptacles on the top and were decorated on the sides with twelve colorful Sèvres porcelain plaques set in a gilt-bronze framework.² There are variants of this French stand in the Wallace Collection, London, at Waddesdon Manor, Buckinghamshire, and in the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles.³ Catering to the neoclassical taste that prevailed about 1780, David Roentgen replaced the colorful decoration of the French inkstand with a flame-grained mahogany veneer that covers the surface on all sides like a *moiré* silk drapery.

A historical photograph (fig. 41, p. 43) of a now-lost drawing table that Roentgen delivered in 1794 to the Prussian court shows an inkstand much like this one on the desktop.⁴ When this unpublished inkstand was part of the Henry P. McIlhenny collection on Rittenhouse Square in Philadelphia, it was kept on an architect's table by Roentgen of the same high quality and in the same style.⁵ It is not known if McIlhenny acquired the two objects from the same source. WK

David Roentgen,
ca. 1780–83/85
Walnut, ormolu, gilt
brass, and gilt bronze
3½ × 11⅝ × 9⅜ in.
(9 × 29.4 × 23.8 cm)
Philadelphia Museum
of Art, The Henry P.
McIlhenny Collection
in memory of Frances P.
McIlhenny, 1986
(1986-26-113)



LETTER BOX

David Roentgen,
ca. 1780–85
Mahogany, veneered
with mahogany;
gilt bronze
7½ × 14¼ × 9¾ in.
(19.1 × 36.2 × 24.4 cm)
Ruth S. Stanton,
New York

PROVENANCE
(Sale, Sotheby's, Monaco,
July 3, 1993, lot 130);
Karl Lagerfeld, Paris; (his
sale, Christie's, Monaco,
April 29, 2000, lot 304).

At one time this mahogany box belonged to the fashion designer Karl Lagerfeld, who owned at least three other objects made at the Roentgen workshop.¹ He is not the only highly gifted individual in modern times who has appreciated the cabinet-maker's inventions. Other celebrated designers, such as Hubert de Givenchy and Jean-Paul Guerlain, and contemporary artists such as Georg Baselitz have collected works by Roentgen.²

This is not an all-purpose box, but a type specifically meant to hold correspondence (called *coffret à courrier* in French). It is the only example of its kind known to have been made in the Neuwied workshop. Such boxes were kept near the owner's writing desk. Letters written at night were dropped through an opening under a swiveling slide on the

lid's top. A trusted servant—the chamberlain at a princely court or a personal valet—had a key to the fall front, and in the morning he would collect the letters inside and send a courier off to deliver them.

The box's silhouette is architectural. The canted corners are highlighted with brass channeling and inlaid strings that end in a Greek key motif. The beaded oval between rectangles on the front is a simplified version of the decoration on some showy Neuwied boxes (see cat. 41) and a variant of that on commode drawers and clavichords (see cats. 52, 55, 61). The lid, with its concave molding at the sides, is reminiscent of earlier tea chests (see cat. 2). The unusual spiral-band motif occurs also on chairs made in Neuwied (see cat. 53). Its ability to catch light enlivens the outline of the box. WK





COFFER

David Roentgen,
ca. 1785–89
Mahogany, veneered
with mahogany; leather;
gilt bronze
12 $\frac{5}{8}$ × 22 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 15 in.
(32 × 56.5 × 38 cm)
Private collection,
Germany

PROVENANCE

Probably acquired from David Roentgen by Marie Joséphine, comtesse de Provence (wife of the future King Louis XVIII of France), who gave it to her confidant Madame de Gourbillion; (sale, Sotheby's, Monaco, April 30, 1976, lot 76); (sale, Christie's, Monaco, June 17, 2000, lot 310).

The coffer is a marvel of disguise with its spring-rising compartments, false bottoms, tambour lids, and a variety of inside spaces.¹ A larger and more elaborate version of the Berlin box (cat. 51), it differs from that example mainly in having an additional storage compartment in the lid and, in the base, a button-operated drawer that opens to the front. The cover of the drawer can be tilted for use as a reading stand or unfolded to form a leather-covered writing surface. The appearance of this large box with its stepped lid above an imposing facade decorated with laurel swags is reminiscent of a triumphal structure such as a textile throne canopy or the center front elevation of a stone palace. Covering the keyhole is a medallion with the profile head of Plato, the ancient Greek philosopher, an allusion to writing (see cat. 65). When slid over the keyhole, it looks like a heraldic shield hung over a stylized mantle, referring to the princely cloak of purple lined with ermine. The swags of laurel leaves that surmount the mantle are an emblem of everlasting fortune.²

In a period in which heraldic symbolism was extremely dominant, such sophisticated details were vital for a luxury object to be appropriate for a patron's own use as well as for presentation as a diplomatic gift. Even by the lofty standards of the

Roentgen workshop, such accessories represented a zenith of princely ostentation, and several coffers of comparable complexity and design are mentioned in inventories and other documents as having belonged to the French royal family and members of the Versailles court. For example, Christian Baulez uncovered a description of “un coffret forme de nécessaire” in an inventory of the time of the Revolution.³ Another object similar in size and appearance to the coffer here belonged to Madame de Narbonne, lady of honor of Madame Adélaïde, a daughter of Louis XV.⁴ A nearly identical box with the silhouette of King Louis XV in the medallion on the front went in 1918 to the State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg, from the S. E. Jewdomova collection.⁵ A third example is today in a United States collection but was once in the collection of Lord Clifton.⁶ Closely related boxes are in the Musée du Louvre and the Hermès collection, Paris.⁷ A coffer of similar size but with less elaborate mounts is depicted in a watercolor painted in 1957 in preparation for the reconstruction of the large library designed by Carlo Rossi in Pavlovsk Palace, Saint Petersburg, destroyed in World War II. The object must have existed at that time, but its current whereabouts are not known.⁸ WK





THE APOLLO DESK

David Roentgen,
ca. 1783–84
Hornbeam, pear wood,
rosewood, oak,
cedar, veneered with
mahogany; gilt bronze
60⁵/₈ × 63³/₄ × 36⁵/₈ in.
(154 × 162 × 93 cm)
The State Hermitage
Museum, Saint
Petersburg (EPR-5089)

PROVENANCE

Delivered to Catherine
the Great, March 1, 1784.

Veneered in mahogany, with exotic woods inside, the Apollo desk was designed in David Roentgen's late architectural style to allude to a three-story palace. The top story conceals a central compartment and two drawers decorated on the front with a bronze plaque depicting putti representing an Allegory of Science. Enthroned above the plaque on a stepped pedestal is the bronze figure of Apollo, god of arts and sciences.¹ A bronze balustrade supporting vases encircles open areas on either side of the central section. When a key is turned, a multipart writing and reading surface unfolds mechanically from the compartment. Intended for use when writing at the desk while standing, it is augmented by a tilted stand that opens up to support papers and by small lidded side drawers that hold writing materials.



FIG. 73. French or German. Frieze ornament with the same visual reference to reading and writing seen on the right-hand side of the large relief below. Before 1783. Gilt bronze. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1906 (07.225.510.404)







The central section of the desk is concealed by a slant-front lid decorated on the outside with exquisite bronze sphinxes, the ancient symbol of female wisdom, as well as other mounts and moldings, and on the inside with geometric marquetry in dark mahogany and light pear wood. When the slanted lid is lowered, an interior cabinet is revealed beyond the marquetry writing surface. The front of the central compartment is a bronze plaque decorated in relief to resemble the columned facade or grand interior hall of a palace; on the steps in front of the facade lies the bronze figure of Catherine II's favorite Italian greyhound, Zémire (see fig. 46, p. 46). On either side of the cabinet is an open archway with drawers stepped up and back to resemble a staircase hall leading to the upper regions of the imaginary palace. Pressing a catch causes those drawers to spring open, and when the figure of the dog is pressed, the



whole facade is lowered, revealing a panel of eight pigeonholes for documents. The facade then rises and moves back, to be replaced by a five-drawer panel decorated on the front with bronze medallions and ring-handles (see also cats. 35–37).² As this panel of drawers moves into place, the musical mechanism of the desk begins to play. Another lever opens caskets in the desk's writing surface.

The lower story of the desk resembles yet another architectural facade, reminiscent of a tripart triumphal arch. Eight massive Doric columns support an entablature decorated with a frieze of coin-shaped bronze medallions between triglyphs. A catch opens the doors on each side, revealing drawers (see detail).

The back of the desk is also divided into three horizontal sections. Mechanical parts are contained in the upper story. The musical mechanism, designed by Peter Kinzing, is located in the lower story: four

melodies are recorded on metal cylinders, and the tunes are changed by pressing a lever.

This marvelous desk was created to impress Roentgen's primary Russian client, the empress Catherine II. Roentgen took it to Saint Petersburg on speculation, and Catherine bought it without reluctance (see Koeppel essay, p. 14; Rappe essay, pp. 45–46). She was proud of the desk and fond of showing it to visitors. About 1790 she ordered the desk to be put on public view at Saint Petersburg's Russian Academy of Sciences. It was moved back to the Winter Palace in the early nineteenth century.³

The Apollo desk was thoroughly restored in the workshops of the State Hermitage Museum in 1983. At that time an album was created, documenting and illustrating all of the desk's machinery and internal structures. The musical mechanism was restored in 2012.

TR

CHILDREN'S ARCHITECT'S TABLE

David Roentgen, ca. 1783
Oak, veneered with
mahogany; gilt bronze,
brass; gilded and
tooled leather
24 × 26¾ × 18⅞ in.
(61 × 68 × 46 cm)
The State Hermitage
Museum, Saint
Petersburg (EPR-48)

PROVENANCE

Delivered to Catherine
the Great, Saint
Petersburg, 1784.

This unusually small table is modeled on large multifunctional tables that Roentgen supplied to Russia in large numbers (see cat. 44).¹ The form is known as an architect's table because its various surfaces offer the opportunity to read, write, or draw.² This example has rectangular downward-tapering legs, which are decorated on the two exterior sides with gilt-bronze *milleraies* panels and feet capped in bronze. The wide drawer front was adorned with two handles. One is now missing; the areas where the backplates were attached reveal the original rich mahogany color. When the drawer is opened, a leather-covered slide can be pulled out and used as a writing tablet (it is easier to handle papers on a leather surface than on polished wood). When the tablet is pushed back, small drawers to

hold writing utensils are revealed. The two-panel hinged lid can be raised and the upper part used as a reading stand. A very useful feature is the molded bookrest that pops out when the lid is raised.

This table and its pair were most likely created by Roentgen for the grandsons of Catherine II—Alexander (the future Alexander I) and Konstantin (fig. 74)—who were about six and five in spring 1784, when the table was delivered.³ The brass *sabots* on the legs were elevated as the boys grew. The boys later learned cabinetry from Christian Meyer, a master cabinetmaker who worked in Saint Petersburg in the same style as Roentgen. Having furniture such as this piece custom made for them when they were small children may have inspired them to learn the craft when they were older. TR



FIG. 74. Richard Brompton.
*Grand Dukes Alexander
and Konstantin*. 1781. Oil on
canvas, 82⅝ × 57⅝ in.
(210 × 146.5 cm). The State
Hermitage Museum,
Saint Petersburg (EPR-
GE 4491)



ARCHITECT'S TABLE

David Roentgen,
ca. 1780–95
Oak, mahogany, walnut,
pine, and cherry,
veneered with mahog-
any; gilt bronze, brass,
iron, steel; partially
tooled and gilded leather
31 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 44 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 27 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.
(81 × 112 × 70 cm)
Cooper-Hewitt, National
Design Museum,
Smithsonian Institution
(Inv. no. 1952-160-1)

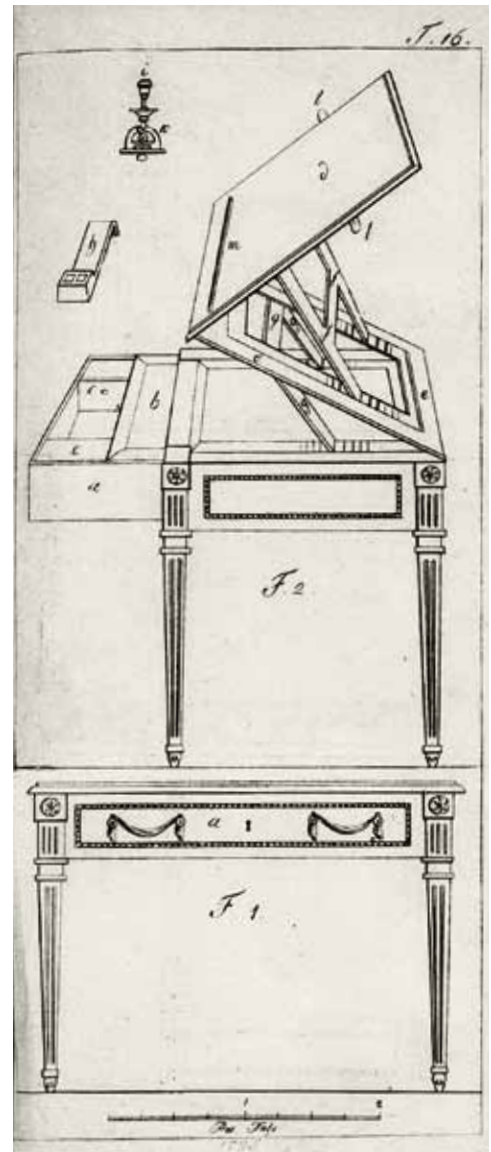
PROVENANCE

Miss Susan Dwight
Bliss, 1882–1966.

This mechanical table has a rectangular double-hinged top veneered with flame-grained mahogany. It can also serve as a console. A horizontal molding, on which reading, writing, and drawing materials may be propped, emerges automatically when the top is raised. Below is a long frieze drawer decorated with *millerailles* banding and moldings and mounted with drapery-swag handles. The interior is fitted with a leather-covered writing slide above a nest of moveable drawers. The square, tapering legs decorated on all sides with *millerailles* panels have gilt-bronze profiles and moldings and brass block feet. Because of the expense associated with gilding, the molding on the tops of the legs were gilded only on the three visible corners (see detail below). All four legs are screw-topped to permit easy transport. Latches underneath the tabletop can be turned outward to hold adjustable candlesticks.

Relying for its effect on beautifully figured polished mahogany and exquisite metal mounts rather than on colorful marquetry, the present piece is typical of David Roentgen's neoclassical style. It also represents a late stage in the long evolution of this model's design (see cats. 8, 17). More than forty versions of this type of table are known, differing only in the degree of their embellishment, the materials used, and the round or square shape

FIG. 75 (far right). Designs for an architect's table. Page from *Journal des Luxus und der Moden*. 1795. Engraving. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Thomas J. Watson Library



of the legs. An invoice indicates that in a shipment of 1786 Catherine the Great received no fewer than nine such tables "for writing while sitting and standing."¹ The versatility of the smaller versions made for her grandsons (see cat. 43) must have persuaded the empress to order more.² Several examples are still in Russian collections, including one at Pavlovsk Palace (see fig. 76, p. 162).³ An engraving after Roentgen's original design was illustrated in a 1795 edition of the Weimar *Journal des Luxus und der Moden* (fig. 75).⁴ The



FIG. 76. Interior of Pavlovsk Palace, Saint Petersburg, showing a Roentgen architect's and writing table, ca. 1785–86



accompanying text describes the table in enthusiastic detail, asserting that it was ideal for the “businessman who must write to many people, frequently, and at length.”⁵

The French call this form a *table à la Tronchin*, after the Swiss physician Théodore Tronchin. An advocate of the value of fresh air, exercise, and a moderate lifestyle, Tronchin would have recommended it to patients who worked many hours in a seated position.⁶ Roentgen supplied an architect’s

table to the Prussian court (see fig. 42, p. 43),⁷ and a nearly identical example belonged to Édouard Colbert de Maulévrier, French minister plenipotentiary to the archbishop-elect of Cologne (who was also a patron of Roentgen’s).⁸ Colbert may have visited the famous workshop at Neuwied and acquired the fine mahogany table himself. A portrait of him and his family seated at it suggests that the marquis was very proud of his purchase of “Neuwied work” (see fig. 35, p. 36). WK

GAME TABLE



In the eighteenth century, when dicing and playing cards, chess, and backgammon had become widely popular, game tables furnished many upper- and middle-class houses, and they were frequently bought in pairs.¹ Yet space was often at a premium in the intimate rooms fashionable in those times, and patrons sought furnishings that could perform multiple tasks. This piece functions as a console table, which can be pushed back against a wall when not in use, and as a desk for writing and reading or a table for playing cards and chess. It also contains a concealed backgammon box that is released by a spring. The top's surface and the sides are veneered with superbly grained mahogany, framed only on the recessed area below the top (the apron) with brass moldings. The corner blocks are inset with brass fluting and supported on square, tapered legs that can be removed, facilitating transport. In its construction and mechanics, the table is in the tradition of the examples decorated with chinoiserie inlay that Roentgen made for Duke Charles Alexander of

Lorraine (see cat. 27), and of a game table with floral and figural marquetry in Munich (cat. 24).

Documenting the high esteem in which Neuwied furniture was held at the Russian court in Saint Petersburg are two watercolors that show a pair of game tables in the Armory Room at Gatchina Palace, near the capital (fig. 77).² One of them shows the tables covered, probably in leather, for protection when not in use.³ Other examples are currently on display in Pavlovsk Palace, outside Saint Petersburg.

This table bears the stamp of the cabinetmaker Pierre Macret, indicating that at one time it furnished a Paris residence, and further that the French also appreciated its restrained design in the "English manner," with mahogany and gilded mounts. Macret likely repaired the table shortly after its arrival in Paris. As there is no guild stamp on the piece, it seems that he simply wanted to leave his mark on it, or even, perhaps, to claim it as one of his own products.

David Roentgen,
ca. 1780–83

Oak and walnut, veneered with mahogany, maple, holly (the last two partially stained); iron, steel, brass, gilt bronze; felt and partially tooled and gilded leather
30⁷/₈ × 38³/₄ × 19¹/₂ in.

(78.3 × 98.3 × 49.5 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Pfeiffer Fund, 2007 (2007.42.1a–e, .2a–o, aa–nn)

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Switzerland; (sale, Sotheby's, Zurich, December 7, 1994, lot 257); private collection, Germany.



FIG. 77. Edward Petrovich Hau. *The Armory Room in Gatchina Palace, Russia*. 1875. Watercolor, 15¼ × 18 in. (38.8 × 45.7 cm). Private collection. Roentgen game tables can be seen beside the two front pillars.

An inventory made in 1810 of the assembly room at Weimar Palace, where Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was privy counselor to Duke Karl August von Sachsen-Weimar-Eisenach, lists a “game table veneered with mahogany, and decorated with brass moldings. With a hidden ‘Tocadille [backgammon board],’ 3 feet 4 inches long, 1 foot 8 inches deep. By Röntchen.”⁴ WK



CAT. 45, DETAIL OF LEG REMOVED FROM TABLETOP



THE CHATSWORTH ENSEMBLE

In February 1785, when Prince Johann Friedrich Alexander zu Wied-Neuwied wrote to his relative Count Philipp Otto von Dönhoff in faraway eastern Prussia, near the Baltic Sea, to say that David Roentgen had delivered a doll to the queen of France (see cat. 38), he also reported that Roentgen “works on more precious pieces, again for the Empress [Catherine the Great]. Simultaneously he will deliver a piece ordered [by] the King of Sweden. He also sold to London.”¹ We cannot be sure if the London sale refers to the Chatsworth ensemble, four Roentgen pieces published here together for the first time

(cats. 46–49), but we consider it likely given that the prince’s letter focuses on deliveries to important dynasties of Europe, among which the dukes of Devonshire can be counted.² William Cavendish (1748–1811), husband of the famous Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, portrayed in 1787 by Gainsborough, was both a very wealthy and a very discerning patron. In an 1811 inventory of Devonshire House, the couple’s home in London,³ a rolltop desk is listed in the duke’s bedroom as “a mahogany cylinder writing table (Rutgen?).”⁴ The name “Rutgen” (certainly for Roentgen) is likely that of the maker.

FIG. 78. The Chatsworth ensemble (cats. 46–49) seen in situ with additional items from the Devonshire collection



Assuming that the prince's February 1785 letter does refer to the Chatsworth pieces, the forms of the furniture items for the ensemble were either fully developed or in progress during 1783–84.⁵ Because the transport to London took several weeks, the crates would have had to leave Neuwied (or Paris) before the end of 1784 in order to arrive in early 1785.⁶

The divergent decorative elements on the four items suggest that they were created as stock pieces and thus did not originate as a commissioned group, yet the ensemble provides another example of Roentgen's careful study of the preferences and

demands of his stylish clients. In this case he adapted four basic forms to accommodate a multitude of daily tasks: a dressing table for the morning toilette, which could also serve as a music stand and book rest; a desk and chair for correspondence; and a small oval table that could be used as a portable writing surface. All feature carefully chosen woods and luxurious finishes: both the tabletops, the roll-top surface, and the chair back are veneered with large sheets of mahogany; their extraordinary grain patterns extend even to the mirror back and the tambour slides inside the dressing table.⁷

46

ROLLTOP DESK



David Roentgen,
ca. 1783–84
Oak and mahogany,
veneered with mahogany;
gilt bronze and brass
53⁷/₈ × 53¹/₈ × 35 in.
(137 × 135 × 89 cm)
Chatsworth House Trust

PROVENANCE
Acquired in 1785, per-
haps directly from David
Roentgen, by William
Cavendish, fifth Duke of
Devonshire (d. 1811);
by descent.

In his Parisian advertisement of 1781, David Roentgen refers to “Bureaux de différentes formes,” followed directly by “des Fauteuils de cabinet,”⁸ implying that one type would complement the other. Indeed, the mahogany rolltop with swiveling chair (see cat. 47 below) was a sought-after combination, and despite his high prices, Roentgen sold many of them.⁹ The Chatsworth desk—featuring a pull-out writing surface above a base with three

drawers, and a raised central plateau crowned with a cast gilt-bronze gallery flanked by steps—is ideal for comparing the degrees of variation within this furniture type available from the workshop: the closest example with respect to the rolltop form is a smaller desk with four legs formerly at Pavlovsk Palace (cat. 59). Similar decorative details, such as triglyphs with paterae above the brass channeling, and handles shaped as ribbon-tied laurel wreaths

enclosing a rosette within a beaded border, also appear on rolltop desks formerly in the Berlin Stadtschloss and at the Kunstgewerbemuseum in Berlin.¹⁰

Horizontal brass moldings and *milleriaies* ornament on all sides of the legs, and to a lesser extent on the superstructure's paneled back, allowed the Chatsworth rolltop to be freestanding. Further refinement is achieved with gilt-bronze capitals on the legs and urn-shaped vases on round pedestals on the sides. When the covers of the urns, symbolizing eternal flames, are removed, they become socket candleholders.¹¹ Documentary evidence from as early as 1780 points to François Rémond as the designer of the bronze ornament. The gilt-bronze relief flanking the rolltop mechanism is evidently adapted from ancient classical designs. Especially costly are the piastre or nailed-coin (as it

is sometimes called) ornaments. The interlinked segments of the piastres appear circular but are actually shaped like a stylized quatrefoil; the motif occurs only on pieces with a princely provenance (see fig. 12, p. 13).¹²

When the desk is opened, one finds two sets of steps flanking a pigeonhole above *milleriaies*-ornamented panels simulating three recessed drawers. The steps, which conceal two real, spring-operated drawers, are divided by four protruding pedestals that actually hold the writing surface in place. Above the pedestals are pilasters capped by gilded impostes. The convex shape of the pilaster bases adds a sculptural note to the inner facade as well as a sense of outward movement that contrasts with the steps leading inward. A comparable inner fitting and a similar cylinder mechanism are present in the desk in Weimar (cat. 67).¹³

47

SWIVEL ARMCHAIR

David Roentgen,
ca. 1783–84
Walnut and mahogany,
veneered with mahogany;
leather (replacement);
brass, steel, and horn
36 × 31¼ × 26¾ in.
(91.5 × 79.5 × 68 cm)
Chatsworth House Trust

PROVENANCE

Acquired in 1785, almost certainly en suite with a rolltop desk (cat. 46), perhaps directly from David Roentgen, by William Cavendish, fifth Duke of Devonshire (d. 1811); by descent.



This chair's elegant, architectural design includes an arched padded back and armrests that flow downward, ending on either side in rounded hand pieces with stepped brackets underneath. The four gilt-bronze beaded-frame apron segments on the base of the seat are also finely veneered in the round, so that the lower part of this rotating chair type has no distinctive front or back orientation. The woodwork is relieved only by simple mounts highly characteristic of the workshop: bands of *milleraies* on the tapering legs and triple brass fluting on all the protruding elements. The back is veneered on the outside with book-matched flamed mahogany that is set off by a central vertical panel with three brass inlaid channels. The green leather cover is a later addition.

In 1784 the Russian prince Grigory Potemkin (1736–1791) ordered one of Roentgen's chairs. When Roentgen returned to Russia in 1786, he sold to Catherine the Great eight round chairs and two of a smaller variant that were highly embellished with gilded mounts.¹⁴ Count Carl Friedrich Heinrich Levin von Wintzingerode (1778–1856), likely the illegitimate son of Philippine von Hessen-Kassel (1745–1800; see fig. 85, p. 190), inherited at least two examples and was portrayed sitting in one (see fig. 79).¹⁵

The chair type was revolutionary for its day, not only in France but especially in Scandinavia. The Neuwied design certainly was known firsthand in Sweden as it is documented in several local variants.¹⁶ The curved, padded back appears to embrace the human figure in comfort. Possibly this was why Thomas Jefferson, who tried to transform his estate at Monticello into an American monument of the French *art de vivre*, commissioned a similar chair, individualized by candleholders added to its sides.¹⁷ Jefferson's revolving chair at Monticello was long thought to have been his own design, but the form is so close to Roentgen's that the American must have seen a comparable model during his stay in Paris.¹⁸

More evidence of Roentgen's influence has recently been found in a chair at Mount Vernon, made for George Washington. In 1790 the first president recorded a payment of seven pounds to the New York cabinetmaker Thomas Burling for an "uncommon chair" (fig. 80).¹⁹ As with Roentgen's version, the wood frame construction is visible beyond the leather padding, except that in this case the padding of the chair covers the curved sides and the entire back. Finding an appropriate veneer and knowing the technique for applying it to the sides and back required resources that were probably not available in New York at the time. Roentgen's innovations were "uncommon" indeed.



FIG. 79. Carl Wilhelm Friedrich Oesterley. *Count Carl Friedrich Heinrich Levin von Wintzingerode*. ca. 1840. Oil on canvas, 47 ¼ × 35 ½ in. (120 × 90 cm). Private collection



FIG. 80. Thomas Burling. "Uncommon chair." 1790. Mahogany and white oak veneered with mahogany, leather, bone, iron, brass, and other metals; H. 36 ½ in. (92.7 cm), seat 17 ½ × 24 ¾ × 24 ⅞ in. (44.5 × 62.9 × 61.3 cm). George Washington's Mount Vernon, Virginia, Purchase, 1905 (W-159)

OVAL TABLE

David Roentgen,
ca. 1783–84
Oak and mahogany,
veneered with mahogany;
tooled leather; brass
and gilt bronze
30½ × 28 × 20⅞ in.
(77.5 × 71 × 51)
Chatsworth House Trust

PROVENANCE

Acquired in 1785, perhaps
directly from David
Roentgen, by William
Cavendish, fifth duke of
Devonshire (d. 1811);
by descent.



Several small oval tables are included in this volume, all variants of one basic design (see cats. 19–22, 54). As the neoclassical style developed, the bodies of such tables were reduced in height in order to improve the overall proportions. Because all four sides of the slender legs seen here are decorated with gilt-bronze *milleraies* panels, there was no space to join them with stretchers, a feature already seen in an example executed in the workshop a decade earlier (cat. 19).

The exquisitely balanced placement of the gilded mounts and the inspired exploitation of the veneer's grain on the top of this example make it the epitome of fine cabinetry in the full neoclassical

style. A molding in lighter wood topped with brass encloses three-quarters of the top, giving the narrow body an elegant lift and preventing items from slipping off. The corner blocks are accented by three short brass-lined grooves below a raised panel decorated with a gilt-bronze disk that combines highly polished and matte surfaces. The front drawer is fitted with a writing slide covered with green tooled leather with gilding around its edges. As the drawer is pulled out, two hinged compartments along the sides spring open. All four apron panels are outlined with gilt-bronze beaded moldings. Casters attached to brass *sabots* on the feet make it easy to move the table about.²⁰

DRESSING TABLE



David Roentgen,
ca. 1783–84
Oak and mahogany
veneered with mahog-
any; mirror glass and
horn; gilt bronze
30³/₈ × 38 × 26¹/₈ in.
(77 × 96.5 × 66.5 cm)
Trustees of the
Chatsworth Settlement

PROVENANCE
Acquired by William
Cavendish, fifth Duke
of Devonshire (d. 1811);
by descent.

The importance of this table was recognized only a few years ago. The item had been separated from the other three Chatsworth objects and moved to a different part of the mansion. The ensemble was reunited after its recent conservation. A reference in the duke's bedroom inventory may point to the table's active role during the duke's morning *lever*.²¹ When the drawer is pulled out by its swag handles (see cat. 61), a scissor mechanism causes the top to slide back, revealing a three-part interior and an adjustable mirror with hinged support flanked by a pair of tambour wells with back-sliding jalousies. A central fall front reveals a narrow drawer below a board that folds out to form a writing surface. Two narrow hinged compartments flanking the small drawer swing out to hold a sander and

inkwell. The fold-out writing surface above can be raised on an adjustable ratchet to create a reading stand. Narrow *milleriaies* ornament frames the swag handles; horizontal friezes defined by recessed beaded moldings placed all the way around allow the table to be freestanding. The legs are detachable for traveling.

This type of a multifunctional table, similar in form to the architect's table (cats. 17, 44), was produced in many variations. The elaborate sliding mechanism is based on a design developed in the 1760s to accommodate a whole spectrum of domestic activities (see cat. 16). The current table model was created for use only while seated. A weight-driven, standing-desk-and-lectern variant was incorporated into the upper part of the three



FIG. 81. David Roentgen. Dressing table originally in Gatchina Palace. ca. 1785. Mahogany, gilt bronze, mirror glass; $31\frac{3}{4} \times 38\frac{1}{8} \times 26\frac{1}{2}$ in. (80.7 × 96.9 × 67.2 cm). Private collection

secretary cabinets (see cats. 34–37) and a few parade desks (see cats. 42, 64).

Grand Duchess Maria Feodorovna of Russia owned several examples of the Chatsworth type. On April 13, 1786, she wrote to her administrator about furniture expected to arrive at her favorite residence, Pavlovsk Palace: “Dear Küchenbecker, . . . The day after tomorrow you will receive three small Roentgen-tables and the toilette table. Please send my old Roentgen-cabinet to Kamennooostrovsky.”²² A very fine example of smaller proportions is still in the former Grand Duke Paul’s dressing room at Pavlovsk.²³ The look and some of the interior fittings appear in French models, including a *poudreuse* documented in 1779 as a “petite table à plateau

coulissant” and bearing the stamp of the *ébéniste* Jacques Brulle (master 1776, d. 1779).²⁴ A less mechanically elaborate model was produced about the same time by various Paris cabinetmakers, among them Jean-Henri Riesener (1734–1806), who delivered several to the French court.²⁵

Similarly proportioned and decorated tables of this type, all differing slightly in ornamentation, and many differing in size, are at Coburg Castle, Schloss Ludwigsburg, at the Rheinisches Landesmuseum in Mainz and in private collections (see fig. 81). Several have retained their original utensils; one belonged to Duchess Amalia of Sachsen-Weimar-Eisenach in the Wittumspalais, Weimar.²⁶

WK



FIG. 82. David Roentgen. Clock. ca. 1780–90. Mahogany, gilt bronze, brass; 18½ × 11¾ × 6½ in. (7 × 29 × 15.5 cm). The David Collection, Copenhagen (Inv. no. M 26). The clock incorporates a dual flintlock mechanism that, upon the striking of the alarm, opens the lid and lights two candles.

Its severe architectural form and restrained detailing make the case of this clock as imposing as a classical building or monument. Very much in the Roentgen style is the use of finely grained mahogany veneer, applied in a single sheet from the frieze at top down to the base, combined with brass inlay and gilt-bronze mounts (see also fig. 82). The stable base, large enamel dial with bold roman numerals, and steel hand that indicates the day of the month make it the ideal timepiece for a desk-top. In fact, a similar clock that belonged to a descendant of David Roentgen until 1904 is seen standing on the top of a writing commode in a contemporary photograph (see fig. 83, p. 182);¹ the Russian Academy of Sciences in Saint Petersburg displays a related model on a Roentgen rolltop desk.²

In keeping with the quiet elegance of the case, the movement, attributed to Élie Preudhomme, marks the half hours with one bell tone.³ The dial is signed “Jean Thomas / Petersbourg.” Thomas was a Swiss clockmaker who lived in Saint Petersburg in the early nineteenth century, repairing and trading clocks. Only a few clocks made by him are known.⁴

David Roentgen,
ca. 1780–90
Oak, pine, and mahogany,
veneered with mahogany;
brass, gilt bronze, and
enamel
18¼ × 12½ × 8¼ in.
(46.4 × 31.8 × 21cm)
The Metropolitan
Museum of Art, New York,
Gift of The Ruth Stanton
Family Foundation,
in honor of Wolfram
Koeppel, 2002 (2002.237)

PROVENANCE
Private collection,
New York.

WK

CASKET

David Roentgen,
ca. 1785–95
Pau amarello (yellow-
heart) wood, pearwood,
boxwood, oak, maple
(stained), and walnut,
veneered with maple
burl (stained gray),
maple, and hornbeam;
brass, gilt brass, gilt
bronze, steel; iron key,
partly blued (original?);
and linen (jalousie)
7¼ × 12⅞ × 7⅞ in.
(18.3 × 32.7 × 20 cm)
Kunstgewerbemuseum,
Staatliche Museen zu
Berlin (1935,93)

PROVENANCE

Schloss Ahrensburg
(Schleswig-Holstein) or
Schloss Stadthagen
(Lower Saxony), until
transferred by the state
in 1918.

The strictly architectural design of this small box, which probably held jewelry and gemstones, gives it a surprisingly monumental appearance.¹ The front is adorned with a gilt-bronze relief, and there is a gilt-bronze handle at each end. The burl-wood veneer, which must originally have been stained a blue gray but is now a rust brown, was polished to imitate marble. The mounts are of matte gilt bronze.²

Even after opening the lid, one is denied access to the contents, for a delicately striated panel covers the entire inner case. It can be pushed aside like a jalousie to expose an unexpectedly shallow compartment. Only after using the key a second time—now inserting it upside-down—does the suspected space below become accessible. As the key is turned, an insert case that fills the entire interior is raised. If the jalousie is opened completely, a flat drawer beneath the false bottom springs out to the side.

High-quality bronze mounts imitative of classical antiquity played a major role in the Roentgen manufactory's style.³ Most of them were produced in Paris, as was the finely chased relief on this box depicting three putti engrossed in the study of

mathematics, surrounded by writing tablets and books. A French mantel clock by Nicolas Sotiau dating from the 1780s is adorned with the same relief, but with no extra brass background on the sides.⁴ This suggests that the present relief was designed not for this box but for a framed panel of lesser width, and that the brass side areas were extended to accommodate the box's wider proportions.

A counterpart with the same relief recently came to light, confirming that the box was produced in an edition of two or more.⁵ Although nearly identical in construction, it has a different arrangement of elements (there is a drawer at the base) and multiple smaller inserts. Neoclassical mahogany boxes of varying shapes and with different fittings are known, in which many of the features of the Berlin piece are repeated. Common to almost all of them are the stepped lid and the slightly raised panel emphasizing the center of the front.⁶ The superb large coffer in catalogue 41 (see below) has two inset cases of nearly identical construction. AS



CAT. 41, OPEN VIEW SHOWING INSET CASES



CLAVICHORD



David Roentgen, 1785
Oak and pine veneered
with mahogany, box-
wood, ebony, and
other woods (partly
stained); ivory; gilt
bronze and brass
31 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 67 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 32 $\frac{1}{4}$ in.
(81 × 171 × 82 cm)
Private collection

PROVENANCE

Catherine the Great,
Saint Petersburg, March
1786; Grand Duchess
Maria Feodorovna and
Grand Duke Paul
(reigned as czar 1796–
1801); (Rudolph Lepke's
Kunst-Auctions-Haus,
Berlin, April 2, 1930,
lot 304); [Paul Graupe,
Berlin, 1931]; Theodor

When closed, this clavichord in a case (*clavecin engainé*) resembles a type of executive desk called *bureau plat*, which the Neuwied workshop made in numerous variants.¹ Superbly grained mahogany veneer is applied to the top and sides of the case, and the rectangularity of the top is emphasized by a double string inlay in ebony and boxwood around the tabletop edge. The gilt-bronze swag handles on the front are enclosed within metal borders, the broad one decorated with closely spaced, parallel lines (the *milleriaies* pattern seen on many Roentgen mounts). The side panels are ornamented with gilt-bronze beading and rippled gilt-bronze borders. The corner blocks are inset on both sides with brass fluting that underscores a disk with a central knob. The square, tapering legs are detachable, and each is decorated on the two outer sides with inserted gilt-bronze *milleriaies* panels, like the ones on the front of the case. A *bureau plat* by Roentgen in the Cleveland Museum of Art is decorated in very much the same manner.²

The prominent handles suggest that the front is a long drawer but, in fact, after a catch is released it

falls forward, revealing a keyboard with thirty-six ivory and twenty-five ebony keys. The instrument can be pulled forward, thus offering a look at the mechanism. The panel above the keyboard is decorated with inlaid floral swags and a long oval cartouche enclosing the names of the cabinetmaker and Peter Kinzing, who was responsible for the musical mechanism. The ornamental details recall English designs, the fashionable *gout à l'Anglais*, and especially those of the neoclassical English designer Robert Adam.

This clavichord was part of a small group of sophisticated musical instruments made during the last phase of the Neuwied workshop's stylistic development,³ probably for sale in Russia, where the combination of beautifully grained wood and gilt-bronze mounts had great appeal. It is likely one of two that Catherine the Great purchased in 1786.⁴ Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries it remained in the Russian imperial collection and was displayed at the Pavlovsk, Gatchina, and Tavrichesky (Tauride) palaces in Saint Petersburg. In 1928, after the Russian Revolution, the



Jensen (his sale, Arne Bruun Rasmussen, Copenhagen, May 29, 1963, lot 12); Steinway & Sons Collection, New York, 1987; (Sotheby's, New York, May 16, 1987, lot 126).

administration of Gatchina Palace selected it for sale abroad, with, among other things, one hundred paintings, twenty-five oriental carpets, and forty-three French gilt-bronze objects, and it entered a Scandinavian private collection in 1930.⁵ One similar clavichord remains in the State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg, and a differently decorated example is part of the collection of the dukes

of Sachsen-Coburg-Gotha at Coburg Palace in Vienna.⁶ A visually restrained version was recently identified in storage at the Château de Versailles.⁷ The Metropolitan Museum owns a clavichord signed “Kinzing,” whose case was possibly made in the court workshop of the princes zu Wied-Neuwied in Neuwied Palace.⁸ WK

ARMCHAIR

David Roentgen,
ca. 1780–90
Mahogany; leather
(replaced); partially
gilt bronze
35 × 25⁵/₈ × 24 in.
(88.9 × 65.1 × 61 cm)
Kravis Collection

PROVENANCE

(Sale, Christie's, London,
December 12, 1996, lot
212); [Aveline, Paris].

The production of seating furniture was never a substantial output of the Roentgen workshop. The Roentgens' guild-exempt status proved to be of great economical advantage, however, for they were able to make seating furniture as well as case furniture, unlike the French *ébénistes*. There are early commissions in the English taste that Abraham Roentgen made in Herrnhag in the 1740s, possibly working in cooperation with Johann Friedrich Hintz. A note of 1754 regarding the Frankfurt Fair mentions "chairs [and] armchairs," and in 1756–57, Frankfurt Privy Councillor Johann Caspar Goethe, father of the famous writer, received from Roentgen carved armchairs in the "French" manner in cherry (as a local substitute for the far more expensive mahogany).¹ Among those early examples, the most sumptuous were part of the important group of objects created for the archbishop-elect of Johann Philipp von Walderdorff (see cat. 13). The ensemble that the Roentgens delivered to Wörlitz Palace in 1771 included four chairs (see fig. 11, p. 12), and two related flat banquettes in the same style have survived.² This form of chair became a display object depicted in marquetry scenes on later commodes (see cat. 33 and Mechthild Baumeister's appendix in this volume). A delivery to Brussels of "three folding chairs" is recorded in 1779, but nothing is known about their design.³

As the workshop's focus shifted to transforming mahogany into neoclassical furniture shapes, chair designs changed significantly as well. The example here has an arched top rail with acanthus-cone finials that occur in other Roentgen pieces

(see cat. 29 and fig. 49, p. 52). The trapezoidal pieced back is slightly curved and centered with a tapering pilaster strip with *milleriaies* inserted and crowned by a medallion. Gilt-bronze beaded moldings articulate the form throughout. Ribbed brass panels adorn the curved arm supports for the shaped armrests. A twisted-rope band and panels framed by beaded molding decorate the seat rail, which is supported by tapering turned mahogany legs with fluting and gilded *sabots*.⁴

Distinguishing details such as the twisted-rope brass band (see cat. 40), beaded panels above channeled tapering legs, and reeded disk ornaments relate the chair to a *duchesse* that was part of David Roentgen's estate.⁵ There are several round-back desk chairs with similar legs (see cat. 47). The present form also exists as an armchair and as a side chair, with the back carved in the form of coiling serpents. Several of the serpent-back chairs are documented, one being formerly in the collection of the marquise de Vibraye.⁶ Josef Maria Greber published another chair in the Ball collection.⁷ It has small knobs at the outer corners of the top rail, as does the serpent-back chair mentioned above, which were likely used to hold the loops of a cushion suspended over the back to make the chair more comfortable. The refined elegance and attention to minute detail demonstrate that the Roentgen workshop was several years ahead of current fashion, even in France. The simplicity of the decorative accents has more in common with the Directoire style than the late expressions of the ancien régime neoclassicism.

WK



PAIR OF OVAL WRITING TABLES

David Roentgen,
ca. 1785–92
Oak, mahogany, pine,
cherry, tulipwood, maple,
and holly, veneered
with mahogany; tooled
leather; copper and
gilt bronze
H. 29 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (74 cm);
top 29 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 19 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.
(74 × 50 cm)
Ruth S. Stanton,
New York

PROVENANCE

[Seligmann, Paris]; (sale,
Sotheby's, Monaco,
June 14–15, 1981, lot 90);
Keck Collection, Bel Air,
Calif. (sale, Sotheby's,
New York, December
5–6, 1991, lot 279).



The mechanical oval table, whose popularity probably fueled much of the Roentgen manufactory's turnover, served as a widespread advertisement for the high quality of Neuwied furniture. Constant features throughout the decades of the table's manufacture are the mechanical devices; the use of fine woods, including *acajou moucheté*, the most expensive variety of mahogany; and, in the neoclassical versions, superbly finished gilt-bronze mounts. Its development culminated in these two examples (see also cats. 19, 20, 48). These tables are unusual in having a *tableau* (undertier) with fashionably

concave sides mounted between the legs, providing additional surface space and more legroom.¹ They also reflect the tendency throughout the neoclassical period to reduce the height of the frieze and so to improve the overall proportions (compare cat. 19).

The top is mounted three quarters of the way around with a pierced gilt-bronze gallery, and the frieze drawer is furnished with a gilt-tooled green-leather-lined slide that conceals small drawers and a well to hold writing materials. The drawer front is decorated with a beaded gilt-bronze molding, and on either side over the legs are gilt-bronze roundels



above triglyphs and cast-bronze rectangular capital moldings. When the frieze drawer is fully extended, a spring mechanism releases the two hinged curved sides, revealing storage compartments. The square, tapered, detachable legs are inset with rippled gilt-bronze *milleriaies* panels on the outside. Gilt-bronze block shoes with casters make it possible to move the table with ease.

Small differences can be observed between these two tables. Perhaps they were produced singly and paired later in their history. Much more likely, they were part of the Neuwied workshop's stock

and sold as part of a set of objects that were finished by various cabinetmakers; this practice is documented as early as the 1750s in the atelier of Abraham Roentgen, who produced several small sets of furniture.² No fewer than seven oval tables of "yellow wood," one of "gray wood," and eleven of mahogany "with and without gallery" were part of David Roentgen's delivery to Saint Petersburg in March 1786.³ WK

ROLLTOP DESK

David Roentgen,
ca. 1785–90
Oak, with mahogany
veneer; tooled leather;
gilt bronze and brass
56 ¾ × 52 ¾ × 32 ½ in.
(144 × 133 × 83 cm)
Hessische Hausstiftung,
Museum Schloss
Fasanerie, Eichenzell/
Fulda, Germany
(Inv. no. FAS M 89)

PROVENANCE

The landgraves and
grand dukes of
Hessen-Kassel.

The lower section of this magnificent desk contains three wide drawers whose horizontality is balanced by four pilaster strips decorated with three vertical channels inlaid with brass. A large single sheet of flame-grained mahogany veneer covers all three drawers; it was cut and laid down in such a way that the pattern is *en papillon*, or bilaterally symmetrical, like a butterfly's wings. In similar fashion, the curved rolltop is veneered across with one continuous layer of wood, broken visually into three fields by beaded gilt-bronze moldings. The sides of the desk are similarly veneered, but there the grain of the wood runs vertically. Behind the roll-back cover are six drawers with lion-mask pulls; *milleriaies*-decorated support panels hold the writing surface in place. The top story of the desk contains three drawers mounted with delicate floral arabesque bronze panels within narrow *milleriaies* borders. At the summit a stepped platform is crowned by a

low gilded gallery with small urns at the corners and gilded rosettes and a *milleriaies* panel on the front.¹ The sturdy feet and vertical fluting above are reminiscent of the lower ornamentation of a bed, a unique curiosity in Roentgen's oeuvre (fig. 84, p. 185).

A similar desk was part of the estate of David Roentgen (fig. 83). Sold in the early twentieth century to the Schlossmuseum in Berlin, it disappeared at the end of World War II.² The clock seen on the top of the desk in the photograph is also decorated with floral spray ornament in the brass-filled fluting and was clearly part of the desk's ensemble.³ The fact that Roentgen's family kept those valuable objects for more than a century testifies to the high esteem in which they held David's memory and the artistic achievement of his workshop.

This desk in the Hessen collection was made during the years when Landgravine Philippine von Hessen-Kassel (see fig. 85, p. 190), born a princess



FIG. 83. David Roentgen.
Rolltop desk with clock.
ca. 1785–90. Walnut and
maple veneered with
mahogany, leather, gilt
bronze and brass; with
clock 72 × 49 ¼ × 32 ½ in.
(183 × 125 × 83 cm).
Whereabouts unknown





of Brandenburg-Schwedt and closely related to the Prussian royal family, acquired many pieces of Roentgen furniture.⁴ In 1785, after the death of her husband, Landgrave Friedrich II, she moved from Kassel to a residence in Hanau, where she could live openly with her longtime companion and business adviser, Count Georg Ernst Levin von Wintzingerode (1752–1834). A shrewd and sophisticated man of the world, Wintzingerode was aware of the prestige value of Neuwied furniture and may have encouraged the landgravine in her collecting. Eventually, she owned several Roentgen tables, writing desks, rolltops, swiveling chairs in different sizes (see cat. 47), and timepieces, including a model of the very expensive Apollo clock (see cat. 63). But

we do not know if she was involved in the commissioning of this desk or if the couple ever visited Neuwied. Certainly, they made frequent excursions along the Rhine. Neuwied attracted other aristocratic travelers, and Roentgen maintained a showroom in the town where furniture of the highest quality was offered for sale.⁵

The landgravine shared her enthusiasm for Roentgen's furniture with her sister Dorothea, Duchess of Württemberg, mother of Empress Maria Feodorovna of Russia, one of Roentgen's most extravagant patrons.⁶ All three princely ladies owned an obelisk-shaped Roentgen clock with a Franklin movement (see cat. 58), which attests to their discriminating taste. WK



FIG. 84. David Roentgen. Bed. 1785–90. Mahogany, gilt bronze, and gilt brass. Les Arts Décoratifs, Paris

THE STROGANOV DESK

David Roentgen,
ca. 1785–90
Oak, cherry, and walnut,
veneered with birch
burl wood; brass and
gilt bronze
45³/₄ × 44¹/₄ × 24 in.
(116 × 112.5 cm × 61 cm)
Bayerisches National-
museum, Munich
(L75/222)

PROVENANCE

Count Alexander
Sergeyevich Stroganov,
Saint Petersburg;
(sale, Rudolph Lepke's
Kunst-Auctions-Haus,
Berlin, May 12–13,
1931, lot 214); private
collection; (Sotheby's,
London, June 20, 1975,
lot 77).

This desk designed for the Russian market offers a good illustration of David Roentgen's genius for simplifying his manufacturing operations. It belongs to a small group of desks that share a basic design and vary only in a number of ornamental details, the preciousness of the veneer, and the types of mounts. A second example is in the Princely Liechtenstein Collection in Vienna, and a third is privately owned.¹ A slightly different model, built on a larger scale, is represented here by a desk from Weimar Palace, the residence of Duke Karl August von Sachsen-Weimar (cat. 68).²

Architectural in form and with harmonious proportions, this desk's superstructure is centered on an imposing rectangular *cartonnier* with a pierced gilt-bronze gallery surmounted by eight urns. It is flanked by low, stepped wings, each with a gilded gallery on top. Golden laurel swags across the central section accent a tambour slide that rises like a theater curtain when the writing panel is pulled out. There are spring-operated drawers in the wings, and the one on the right is fitted with an inkwell and a pounce-pot sander. On the sides of the desk there are paneled friezes with beaded moldings and additional spring-driven drawers. The square, tapering legs topped with gilt-bronze collars have *milleriaies* panels on all sides.

The Russian nobility took delivery of Neuwied furniture mainly in the second half of the 1780s,

when the last two shipments arrived in Saint Petersburg. Prince Grigory Potemkin was one of Roentgen's first noble Russian clients, and a sale of a chair to him is recorded as early as 1784.³ After the collapse of the Russian Empire in 1917, such showy pieces were scorned and many were sent by the Russian revolutionary councils for auction in the West. It is interesting to remember that one hundred twenty-five years earlier, impoverished and desperate noblemen in France had put their luxury furniture up for sale or their property was confiscated, and Russian grandes like Prince Alexander Andreyevich Bezborodko and Count Alexander Sergeyevich Stroganov bought the choicest pieces for their palaces.⁴ Stroganov was a connoisseur of international reputation, who had lived in Paris between 1771 and 1778 and could not have missed the much-publicized establishment of the workshop of David Roentgen on the rue de Grenelle.⁵ Several Roentgen pieces from his collection bear witness to his grand lifestyle.⁶

The Saint Petersburg palace of the Stroganovs was confiscated by the state in 1918. After the famous sale of pieces from the family's collection at Rudolph Lepke's auction house in Berlin in 1931, the palace was handed over to the Institute of Horticulture and has since been partially restored. WK





David Roentgen, ca. 1785
Oak, with burl-wood
vener; silk; gilt bronze
and brass
23¼ × 12¼ × 8¼ in.
(59 × 31 × 21 cm)
Private collection

PROVENANCE

Commissioned by one
of the princes zu Wied,
probably Johann
Friedrich Alexander
(1737–1791); by descent.

The case of this clock is in the shape of a truncated obelisk, echoing on a smaller scale the imposing lines of the Roentgen workshop's somewhat later clock with a Franklin movement (cat. 58). The fronts of both clocks are centered on a pilaster strip with brass-filled channeling beneath the dial.¹ The base of this one, however, is mounted with a gilt-bronze gallery that, despite its diminutive size, seems to protect the obelisk like a guardrail. Also unlike the Franklin clock, this timepiece has beaded moldings on the sides that complement the shape of the panels they ornament.² The hours are marked on the face in roman numerals, the five-minute intervals with arabic numerals. The clock has an eight-day movement and sounds the hours and quarter-hours on two bells. The back door is lined with silk to augment the bell chimes, and doors on the sides give access to the mechanism and to the space where the key is stored.

The choice of an obelisk for the shape of this clock reflects the European interest in Egyptian art that had begun in Rome earlier in the century, and that had reached the German-speaking countries by the 1780s.³ In ancient Egypt, obelisks signified hope and resurrection. The pyramid shape symbolized

strength and durability. Egyptian obelisks had tapered shafts and pyramidal apices that were sheathed in gold or electrum, and they were generally made of red granite, as suggested by the wood of this clock's burl veneer, which was originally much redder in tone. This timepiece has no golden apex, but a gilt-bronze urn stands on the top, perhaps to suggest that although it is the clock's task to measure time, it cannot slow or stop time's passage. This unique model is one of Roentgen's most extravagant designs.

Along with cases for longcase and other monumental clocks, as well as the clocks incorporated into large pieces of furniture (see cat. 34), the Roentgen workshop produced small decorative clock cases, probably beginning in the 1750s.⁴ Most models for clocks and wall-mounted pieces were manufactured in cooperation with a group of Neuwied clockmakers, many of whom were part of the Kinzing family. Several such clocks bear the signature "Achenbach." Hermann Achenbach participated in the creation of the longcase clock now in the Metropolitan Museum (cat. 26), and the movement of the present clock is also attributed to him.⁵

WK



OBELISK CLOCK WITH A FRANKLIN MOVEMENT

David Roentgen,
ca. 1785–90
Thuja burl wood;
gilt bronze, partially
silvered brass, and steel
75 × 21 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 7 $\frac{5}{8}$ in.
(190.4 × 53.8 × 19.3 cm)
Private collection,
Germany

PROVENANCE

Sale, Sotheby's Zurich,
November 13, 1979, lot
31A; [Seligmann, Paris;
sale, Sotheby's, Monaco,
June 14–15, 1981, lot 92,
to Dalva Brothers];
[Dalva Brothers, Inc.,
New York].

The distinctive appearance of this clock model sets it apart from Roentgen's earlier Chippendale-inspired longcase clocks (see cat. 26) and the monumental ones with musical devices (see cats. 63, 66). The unusual shape of the case, which is reminiscent of a tall pyramid or obelisk (see also cat. 57), efficiently accommodates the arc of the pendulum as it swings. Decorated with brass-filled grooves, the long pilaster strips under the dial serve as the door to the clock's movement. Behind the dial is a square gilded plaque with disks in the spandrels. On the stepped top, four gilded urns surround a gilded bust on a high pedestal. The case's exquisite craftsmanship radiates the ideal of neoclassical restraint while producing a subtle effect of great luxury. About two dozen clocks of this type are known to survive, some with conventional movements.

Nearly all of David Roentgen's important timepieces were made in collaboration with Peter Kinzing, a Neuwied clockmaker who supplied Roentgen with other sophisticated mechanisms and instruments for his furniture, including musical ones (see cat. 63). Kinzing's contribution here is an improvement on the famous clock with a three-wheel movement, a four-hour spiral-ring dial, and a single

minute hand invented in the 1760s or 1770s by Benjamin Franklin.¹ Kinzing's dial has three concentric rings rather than Franklin's spiral (a modification that had already been made by Franklin's friend James Ferguson); however, like Franklin's dial, each ring is divided into four sections, the outside edge is marked with the 240 minutes that make up four hours, and every tenth minute is numbered. It was difficult to determine the correct hour on Franklin's dial, and it was probably Kinzing who designed a mechanism that solved the problem: a hand visible through an aperture in the minute hand points to the appropriate concentric ring.²

The multitalented Benjamin Franklin became known in European intellectual circles during the 1740s through his scientific publications, and with the general public after 1752, when he performed his famous kite experiment proving that lightning is electricity. He traveled in Germany and spent the years 1776–85 in Paris, where he was lionized by the French, who were fascinated by his scientific novelties. He may even have met Roentgen and Kinzing, who made several business trips to Paris during those years. As Ian D. Fowler has observed, "It is very probable that Franklin's fame and popularity inspired Roentgen and Kinzing to begin constructing a clock à la Franklin."³

Roentgen sold various examples of the present clock in Russia; one is still in the collection at Pavlovsk Palace.⁴ In addition to many other pieces of Roentgen furniture, Philippine von Hessen-Kassel (fig. 85) owned a Franklin clock, which Count Georg Ernst Levin von Wintzingerode inherited and eventually left to her Württemberg relatives (see cat. 59 and the entry for cat. 55).⁵ In October 1797 the town council of Leipzig bought from Roentgen a Franklin clock with similar crowning mounts, which were stolen in the second half of the twentieth century.⁶

Roentgen's pyramidal case design was stylistically ahead of its time. It inspired cabinet- and clockmakers far into the nineteenth century, when woods popular in the Biedermeier period replaced the precious woods and mounts used by Roentgen.⁷

WK



FIG. 85. Johann Heinrich Tischbein the Elder. *Landgravine Philippine von Hessen-Kassel*. 1783. Oil on canvas, 53 × 37 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (134.5 × 96 cm). Hessische Hausstiftung, Museum Schloss Fasanerie, Eichenzell/Fulda, Germany (FAS B 27)



ROLLTOP DESK

David Roentgen,
ca. 1785–86
Oak, veneered with
pau amarello (yellow-
heart) and mahogany;
gilt bronze and copper
44½ × 40½ × 27¼ in.
(113 × 103 × 69 cm)
Ruth S. Stanton,
New York

PROVENANCE

Catherine the Great,
Saint Petersburg;
Grand Duchess Maria
Feodorovna (inv. label
575); gift from the grand
duchess to her youngest
daughter, Grand Duch-
ess Catherine Pavlovna;
dukes of Württemberg;
private collection,
Germany; [Daxer &
Marschall, Munich].

David Roentgen's rolltop desks are perhaps the best-known style icons of his oeuvre. This one is likely the "small Cylinder-top writing desk of yellow wood costing 250 rubles, plus 90 [for transport and packing]" listed in an invoice dated March 23, 1786, and delivered to Empress Catherine II (see fig. 47, p. 47).¹ Four years earlier, Catherine's daughter-in-law Maria Feodorovna had visited her own ancestral home at Montbéliard, then an exclave of the duchy of Württemberg and today part of the Franche-Comté. Presumably on that occasion she saw similar rolltop desks that David Roentgen brought especially from Neuwied to show potential patrons.

The yellow wood mentioned in the invoice is not a stained local German wood but the exotic yellowheart (*Euxylophora paraensis*), a hardwood also known as pau amarello. It is admired for its special golden yellow color, but a pale yellow is not uncom-

mon and the sapwood can be almost white.² The texture ranges from slightly coarse to fine, and the grain is usually dense and even; however, some sheets of veneer may have a curly or figured grain. When splashed with sunlight, the wood glows with an almost mystical radiance.³

The present desk is less elaborately fitted and not as richly mounted as other, royal showpieces (cats. 55, 64), but it has an understated elegance that was appreciated by arbiters of taste across Europe. It is also one of the smallest rolltops made at the manufactory (variants veneered with mahogany and yellowheart are in Russian palace collections).⁴ The veneers are complemented by finely chased gilt-bronze mounts that may have been supplied by François Rémond. In a calculated use of motifs, the desk is mounted with gilded disks, milleraies panels, and beading. The top rolls up and





disappears into the desk, exposing a central open compartment with two adjustable shelves. It is flanked on either side by a pigeonhole with stepped platforms that conceal spring-operated secret drawers. A leather-lined slide extends the space for writing; below it are three large drawers. Square, tapering legs terminate in block feet. The highest of the stepped platforms on top of the desk is enclosed on three sides by a pierced gallery decorated with gilt-bronze chased with a pattern of laurel leaves (compare cat. 29).

The German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, a blunt and sometimes pitiless critic, sang Roentgen's praises and even visited his Neuwied workshop. So impressed was he with the master's rolltop creations that he himself designed a model inspired by "Neuwied work," as Roentgen's marvels of disguise and technical virtuosity are called in contemporary inventories.⁵ WK

FIG. 86. A 1930s photograph showing a Roentgen rolltop desk similar to cat. 59 in situ at Gatchina Palace, Saint Petersburg, placed as it was during the reign of Paul I (1796–1801), next to the emperor's campaign bed. The high quality and efficiency of Roentgen's furniture, especially his rolltop desks, made them integral to the everyday lives of the Russian rulers, from Catherine the Great to Nicholas II.



FALL-FRONT SECRETARY ON STAND



David Roentgen,
ca. 1785–90
Oak, veneered with
mahogany and thuja burl
wood; gilt bronze, brass
48 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 36 $\frac{5}{8}$ × 13 in.
(124 × 93 × 33 cm)
Private collection

PROVENANCE
Delivered to Catherine
the Great, March 1786;
Russian imperial
collection (Christie's,
London, March 26, 1981,
lot 80).

One of David Roentgen's most celebrated models was a secretary on stand (the type is called *secrétaire à abattant* or *secrétaire en cabinet* in France, where they were popular).¹ This style of writing desk features two parts: a cabinet-like top with a fall front, behind which are shelves, drawers, or pigeonholes in different combinations, and a lower section with a drawer supported on legs. When the drawer is pulled out to the point of resistance, compartments swing

open on the curved sides. The curved, open side shelves echo the top in their D-shape and gilt-bronze galleries. The interior of this desk is veneered with yellowish brown thuja burl wood and fitted with drawers and compartments. When closed, the beautifully grained mahogany fall front displays its large gilt-bronze circular molding, within which is a gilt-bronze roundel framed by floral sprays. The chamfered corners of the secretary are decorated

with brass fluting, topped by a neoclassical patera, or disk. In a detailed account of 1795, Grand Duchess (later Empress) Maria Feodorovna described a similar secretary on stand (not by Roentgen) in her boudoir at Pavlovsk Palace, near Saint Petersburg, adding that it had “precious objects and knick-knacks placed on top” and on the small shelves.² It was part of a decorative scheme that included two such secretaries mounted with colorful Sèvres porcelain plaques, as well as several Roentgen pieces.³ Carved and gilded seating furniture and a Russian porcelain table completed what must have been a

stunning display, which was later sold or moved to other palaces (see fig. 88).

This secretary looks quite different from the standard model because a gilt-bronze relief was included within the rather chaste roundel. A seated putto emblematic of learning is shown writing with a quill pen. Several books are tumbled together behind him, and on the left a cockerel is perched on a low wall surrounded by the rays of a rising sun. The scene illustrates Horace’s famous admonition, “Carpe diem” (Seize the day) or perhaps Seneca’s observation in “De brevitae vitae” (On the



FIG. 87. David Roentgen. Fall-front secretary on stand, formerly in Gatchina Palace, Saint Petersburg. ca. 1785. Oak, mahogany, brass, gilt bronze; 48 × 37 × 16⁷/₈ in. (122 × 94 × 43 cm). Private collection, New York. In this version, the legs feature *milleraies* ornament on three sides.



Shortness of Life), meaning that the only way to remain unconcerned by the passage of time is to study philosophy. In the account books of the bronze worker and gilder François Rémond, an entry for April 20, 1787, describes a similar gilt-bronze medallion: “[Reimbursement] for the casting, chiseling, and matte gilding of a flat relief in the form of a medallion with a floral surround.”⁴ The present secretary is probably the one described in an invoice for furniture delivered in March 1786 to Catherine the Great as number 24, “a small writing

table with fall front and a bas relief and matte gilded floral garlands.”⁵

Another version of the same desk model bears the inventory numbers of Gatchina Palace (fig. 87) and those used by Antikvariat, the Soviet agency responsible for selling art to Western countries after the revolution. In that example, even the interior is fitted exclusively in mahogany, and attention is focused on the form of the desk and the beauty of the wood, as no relief occupies the center of the front.⁶

FIG. 88. A 1930s photograph showing Roentgen furniture in situ at Gatchina Palace, Saint Petersburg (the first reception room of Alexander III [r. 1881–94])

WK

COMMODOE

David Roentgen,
ca. 1785–90
Oak, walnut, and pine,
with drawers in oak
(stained reddish) and
mahogany veneer;
partially gilt brass, iron;
marble (replaced)
Chest without marble
top: $32\frac{1}{4} \times 41\frac{7}{8} \times 20\frac{1}{2}$
($82 \times 106.5 \times 52$ cm)
Kunstgewerbemuseum,
Staatliche Museen zu
Berlin (W-1984,168)

PROVENANCE

[Berlin art market, 1984].

With its elegant proportions, exquisite flame-grained mahogany, delicate gilded mounts, and outstanding workmanship inside and out, this commode perfectly exemplifies the neoclassical style as interpreted by David Roentgen.¹ One of the finest of his manufactory's creations, it belongs to a group of commodes—ten of which are known—that were likely produced between the early 1780s and the beginning of the 1790s and which are based on the same design.² Deviations occur above all in the widths (between $41\frac{3}{8}$ and $57\frac{7}{8}$ in.; 105 and 147 cm), in the accentuation of the center of the frieze by a round or a diamond-shaped medallion, in the choice of a marble or a wood top, and in the differing quality of their execution.³ Less obvious are differences in the moldings (beaded or plain) used to decorate the friezes, in the style of the rosettes, and in the choice of gilded or reeded flutings. In one case a mount hangs below the body of the chest. There were five neoclassical commodes in David Roentgen's delivery to Catherine the Great in 1786. Most were finished in mahogany, and they cost—in addition to the considerable freight charges—between 120 and 216 rubles.⁴ A year later the Prussian king Frederick William II paid 350 thalers apiece for two “richly ornamented” commodes.⁵

The drawer pulls in the form of a cloth swag, which are characteristic of the Roentgen manufactory

and many of its successors, were presumably the invention of Abraham Roentgen, for in a portrait of him from 1772, he is presenting a drawing of this pattern, based on a model from antiquity (see figs. 10, p. 11, and 15, p. 16). Roentgen's pulls were surely commissioned from different bronze casters in Germany, and they were later produced in Paris as well.⁶ The bronze caster and gilder François Rémond delivered 140 examples to Roentgen in the years 1780–81, and in the years 1782–86 he sent another 36 to Roentgen's Paris representative, Jean-Gottlieb Frost.⁷ For his pulls, including their casting, chasing, and gilding, Rémond charged between 6 and at least 8 livres apiece, depending on size and quality—meaning that the four pulls for this commode cost at least 10 gulden.⁸

This example has the letters CA branded on the back, indicating that it was once owned by Duke Karl August von Sachsen-Weimar, who had a particular interest in Neuwied furniture.⁹ He was in the party of the Prussian king on November 9, 1792, when the king visited Neuwied's Moravian community “in the company of his privy councillor and agent for the Lower Rhine, our brother David Roentgen.”¹⁰ In 1798 he supported Johann Wilhelm Kronrath's desire to be established as the successor to the Roentgen workshop in Weimar. AS





TILT-TOP TABLE

Workshop of David
Roentgen, ca. 1785–90
Mahogany; gilt bronze
and brass
H. 29 1/8 in. (74 cm);
diam. of top 22 1/2 in.
(57 cm)
Ruth S. Stanton,
New York

PROVENANCE

Private collection,
Sologne, France (sale,
Antoine Ader, Drouot-
Richelieu, Paris,
July 4, 1997);
[Galerie Maurice
Ségoura, Paris]; (anony-
mous sale, Sotheby's,
London, December 7,
2000, lot 124).

The circular top of this small table, or *gueridon*, has a pierced wood gallery with brass banding. The top is supported by a fluted block above a pillar in the form of a stylized Ionic column with brass moldings. The pillar, in turn, rests on a three-legged base decorated with gilt-bronze disks and panels of *milleriaies* ornament. The top can be both turned horizontally and tipped up, and gilt-brass casters under the feet make the whole piece easy to move. A larger, almost identical table stamped with the last name of the cabinetmaker was in the same Paris sale in 1997. One other similar example, also stamped, came up for auction in Paris in 2000.¹

All the elements of this table, but especially the pierced gallery, which is not executed in gilded metal in the French manner but skillfully crafted from wood, distinguish it from every other contemporary table. It is extremely forward-looking; indeed, when several design specialists first saw it, they thought it was a stylish item from the early twentieth century. The veneers contrast most beautifully with the gilt-bronze mounts, and the flame-grained mahogany is of superb quality. The way the structural parts of the table are accented by the mounts represents a great aesthetic achievement.

The gallery is not only decorative but it would also have prevented objects from sliding off the edge. The revolving top made it possible for a host

to serve tea or plates of delicacies to a small company of guests in privacy, without the presence of servants. A much larger example of this table with a blue-gray marble top (fig. 90) might have been used as a supper table, as the top could accommodate more dishes and utensils.² The marble, excavated from quarries near the Lahn River, a tributary of the Rhine, makes the structure rather top-heavy, and the tilting function may have been useful only to store the table.³

The French provenance of several known examples of this model and the fact that most are stamped suggest that this one was specifically tailored to the French market; however, a Russian destination is also a possibility. An account of the objects delivered to the imperial Russian court in Saint Petersburg in March 1786 lists “two round tables for use in three ways [folded, as turntable, and in different places], the top of turquoise blue marble” and “two round tables of yellow wood, having a matte-gilded column in the center.”⁴ Another round table of about 1790–95 featuring a traditional tripod stand combined with an innovative support consisting of three thin, elegantly turned columns was sold by Roentgen to the Reuss-Ebersdorf family after his workshop had downsized dramatically in the mid- to late 1790s (see fig. 89).⁵

WK



FIG. 89. Johann Philipp Eduard Gaertner. *The Writing Room of Prince Wilhelm and Princess Marianne in the Berlin Palace* (detail). 1852. Watercolor and graphite, 7 7/8 × 12 7/8 in. (20 × 32.6 cm). Hessisches Staatsarchiv Darmstadt (Inv. no. StAD,D23, case 1/13). A Roentgen armchair and tilt-top table are visible.



FIG. 90. David Roentgen Tilt-top table. ca. 1790. Mahogany, bronze, marble; H. 28 in. (71 cm), diam. 35 7/8 in. (91 cm). Private collection



APOLLO CLOCK

David Roentgen,
ca. November 1789
Oak and maple,
veneered with walnut
burl wood; enamel; gilt
bronze and steel
89³/₈ × 24 × 20⁷/₈ in.
(227 × 61 × 53 cm)
Roentgen-Museum,
Neuwied (Inv. no. 4055)

PROVENANCE

Sold in Russia between
1789 and 1791; Countess
Elizaveta V. Shuvalova,
her palace in Saint
Petersburg; nationalized
after the 1917 revolution;
(sold at Rudolph Lepke's
Kunst-Aucktions-Haus,
Berlin, November 6–7,
1928, lot 80).

The Apollo clock now in the Roentgen-Museum, Neuwied, is one of the best-known and best-documented pieces of Roentgen furniture in existence, not only because it is aesthetically pleasing and very well preserved, but also because of its dramatic history.¹ Like other objects with a Russian provenance in this volume, its story began with a long and doubtless eventful journey from Neuwied to Saint Petersburg. The date 1789 on the musical mechanism indicates that David Roentgen sold the clock sometime during his last visit to Russia. He and his wife arrived on the shores of the Neva River in February of that year and did not return home until March 1791.² In all probability, Catherine the Great was not the purchaser, for she had already acquired several Roentgen clocks and her interest in Neuwied furniture had sharply declined by February 1790, when she wrote a bitter note to Baron von Grimm in Paris.³ The clock was recorded, together with an equally famous Roentgen fall-front secretary, in a historical photograph of the boudoir of Countess Elizaveta V. Shuvalova in Saint Petersburg in 1902.⁴

After the fall of the Russian Empire and the Bolsheviks' seizure of power in October 1917, imperial and aristocratic residences such as the Winter Palace and the Shuvalov and Stroganov palaces were plundered.⁵ In the aftermath of the violence, the luxurious furniture that remained unharmed was condemned as symbolic of the extravagant lifestyle of the czars and nobility.⁶ Many pieces were

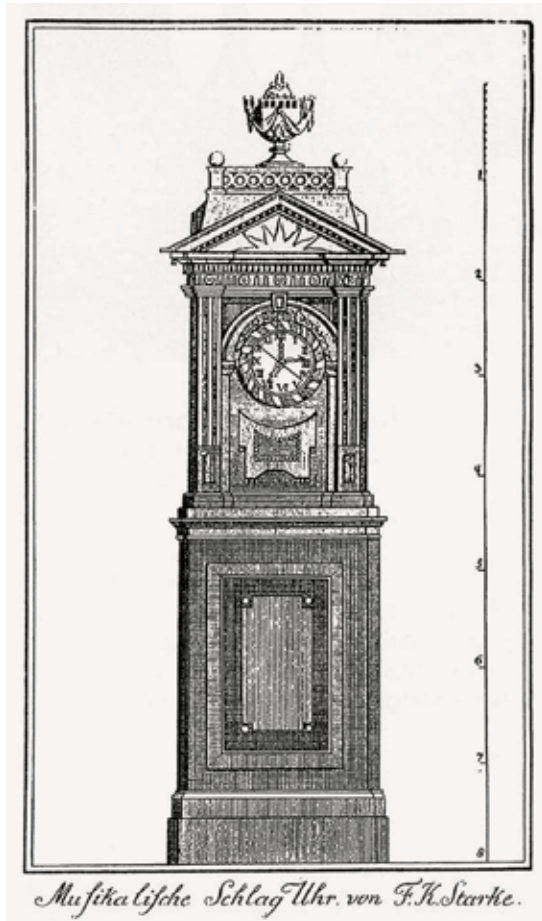
sent by the Soviet government to be sold on the Western art market to generate much-needed hard currency.

The Shuvalovs' Apollo clock went under the hammer at one of the legendary auctions of works of art from Russian collections that took place in Berlin at Rudolph Lepke's auction house. Officials in the small town of Neuwied did not miss various notices in the press announcing what would be an unprecedented spectacle, and Mayor Krups and District Magistrate Grossmann were sent to Berlin as representatives of Neuwied at the auction.⁷ As Grossmann later recollected: "The sale proceeded rapidly. The estimates were surpassed with only a few exceptions . . . the Roentgen furniture sent a tremor through the audience. . . . The first clock [of two on sale] started at 6,000 marks and advanced immediately to 20,000. Considering that the [Apollo] clock was the most beautiful item besides the secretary, and that the further development of the bidding was unforeseeable, Mayor Krups and the signatory [Grossman] bid up to 24,000 [marks]. . . . the hammer fell; the price of 27,600 [which included the premium] was paid immediately to the Girozentrale, Berlin."⁸ Thanks to the Soviet decision to divest Russia of some of its prime Roentgen furniture, the Kreismuseum in Neuwied acquired the Apollo clock, which would become the celebrated nucleus of an important collection of Roentgen pieces in today's Roentgen-Museum, Neuwied.





FIG. 91. F. K. Starke.
Drawing of a clock. 1797.
Published in *Neue
Miscellaneen artistischen
Inhalts*, edited by Johann
Georg Meusel, 1797



The Shuvalovs' Apollo clock is the most lavishly embellished piece in a series of related examples that currently number about eighteen.⁹ The model was the focus of discussion in several articles regarding the type in general, the specific function of certain aspects of its movement, and the small dissimilarities between individual versions.¹⁰ The workshop developed these stylish musical clocks with organ and stringed-instrument-playing mechanisms about 1785. Like the Roentgen clock with two columns (see cat. 66), they are the product of a collaboration among three great artisans: David Roentgen, the clockmaker Peter Kinzing, and the piano- and organ-builder Johann Wilhelm Weyl (and members of his family).¹¹

The upper part of the clock's case bears a striking resemblance to one of the main gates of Paris, the Barrière des Bons-Hommes by Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, which was contemporary with the clock's creation.¹² A symbiosis of Time and Music (suggesting that good must prevail in the end) is represented by the gilt-bronze figures of Chronos and Apollo, with his lyre. The latter, very likely modeled by the academician Louis-Simon Boizot, is mentioned in David Roentgen's description of





FIG. 92. Unknown French or German master working with David Roentgen. Designs for mask motifs. 1780s. Drawing, $3\frac{7}{8} \times 10\frac{1}{4}$ in. (9.8 × 26.2 cm). Private collection



his Berlin secretary cabinet of 1778–79.¹³ The aged Chronos holds up the clock's dial, and his charge, the cycle of the year, is symbolized by the garland over the dial, with its flowers for spring, wheat for summer, grapes for autumn, and holly leaves for the winter months. The frieze above the dial is set with gilded triglyphs above guttae, alternating with four metopes containing gilded roundels depicting day and night (fig. 92; see also cat. 68).¹⁴ The pediment is inset with a relief depicting a lyre and cupids.

The movement consists of weight-driven trains (groups of wheels and pinions), that run for eight days. The train that registers the time of day has a dead-beat pinwheel escapement; the hour-striking train is of the rack-and-snail type. The musical train consumes a great deal of energy, and in order to achieve a duration of eight days the clock plays only every third hour. The hour and half-hour are struck on two bells. The music features forty flutes, accompanied by a dulcimer with sixty strings. One music cylinder (of possibly six) survives; it plays four pieces, each about fifty seconds long.¹⁵ Understandably, clocks of this model became prestige objects; they indicated to the world that their owner

was familiar with the latest music-recording devices and had a cultivated ear. So complex is the sound produced that it gives the illusion of having one's own chamber orchestra.

The Shuvalovs' Apollo clock is the only example with this relief ornament on the lower case that can be attributed to François Rémond. It is finely cast and displays a musical trophy, cooing doves, flowers, and ribbon-tied foliage on a veneered panel with a gadrooned and pearled ormolu frame. The same relief appears on a full-front desk in Copenhagen (fig. 14, p. 14) and is documented in historical photographs (see fig. 88, p. 197). The ornament was also used by the French cabinetmaker Jean-Henri Riesener for his royal furniture.¹⁶

A print published in 1797 shows a clock of related design by F. K. Starke with a large urn on the top (fig. 91). A clockmaker of that name and period is recorded in the town of Marburg, in Hessen, not far from David Roentgen, who in 1797 was still selling pieces from his workshop's stock.¹⁷ Clearly Roentgen's work was greatly admired, and his creations continued to be emulated even in the workshop's twilight years. WK

ROLLTOP DESK

David Roentgen,
ca. 1787–88
Oak, fir, and Scots pine,
veneered with mahogany
and maple burl wood; gilt
bronze and steel
66¼ × 61¾ × 35¼ in.
(168.3 × 155.9 × 89.4 cm)
The J. Paul Getty
Museum, Los Angeles
(72.DA.47)

PROVENANCE

Possibly Louis XVI, Palais
des Tuileries, Paris, later
Château de Versailles
(sold at an auction of
confiscated royal prop-
erty); possibly Count
Iljinski, [M. Court, Paris,
in 1857]; (sale, "M. le
comte de M.," Paris,
November 12, 1859, lot 1,
to Migeon); [possibly
Samson Wertheimer,
London, until 1892]; (sale,
Christie's, London, March
15, 1892, lot 637, to Jack-
son); Count János Pálffy,
Vienna (until d. 1908);
his heirs (sale, Glückselig
und Wärndorfer, Vienna,
March 7, 1921, lot 209, to
Castiglione); Baroness
Marie de Reitz, Vienna;
[French and Company,
New York, 1960s].

The rolltop desk was the most mechanically and aesthetically demanding model produced by the Roentgen manufactory. As Michael Stürmer has observed, it rose out of the realm of furniture "to become an architectural monument of high aspiration and grand allure."¹ The stepped base of this unusual example, with its eye-catching veneer and twelve columnar legs, illustrates his point very well.² Like other heroic objects, the desk has inspired many legends. It is said to have been among the possessions of Napoleon at the Château de Malmaison, which was from 1800 to 1802 the de facto seat of the French government.³ But according to a different tradition (also undocumented) the desk was spirited away in 1793 to Russia by Count Iljinski. Yet another story has it that the Louisiana Purchase Treaty of April 30, 1803, was signed on the desk—which is why it was lent by the firm of French and Company, its owner in the 1960s and early 1970s, to the State Department in Washington and put on display in the Thomas Jefferson State Reception Room.⁴

The monumental desk is fitted with numerous complicated mechanical devices that are spring- or weight-operated. When the writing panel above the frieze is pulled out, the heavy cylindrical top rolls back into the carcass, revealing an architectural arrangement of double columns flanking archlike pigeonholes and drawers disguised as grand staircases (see cats. 42, 46). The ornate interior facade should be compared with the interior of other Roentgen rolltops in this volume, from relatively modest examples intended for private use to objects of prestige, where symbolism was as important as practical utility (see cats. 46, 59, 67).

Behind the large gilt-bronze plaque on the top is a reading and writing stand that unfolds at the turn of a single key and compartments that hold an inkwell and sander (see the appendix by Daniela

Meyer and Hans-Werner Pape in this volume). The image on the plaque depicts the seven liberal arts, which summarizes in a single scene the entire program of the grand secretary cabinets (see cat. 34).⁵ François-Aimé Damerat sculpted the mount designs for the desk, as documented in François Rémond's account book for 1787 (see cat. 63, and fig. 93, p. 206).⁶ The varied jewel-like mounts are purposefully placed across the rich veneer. Similar mounts featuring a different ornamental program appear on a desk in the Badisches Landesmuseum, Karlsruhe.⁷

The narrow panels on either side of the rolltop's curved frame are decorated with lion-masks; the heraldic animal's expression is one of confidence, not aggression. Like the lions on Johann Philipp von Walderdorff's writing desk (cat. 12) the lions here are a symbol of supreme authority. Stylized lion-masks appear elsewhere on Roentgen furniture: they are applied as small pulls on the drawers inside a commode that may once have belonged to Louis XVI (cat. 32). Lion-masks also appear on the monumental secretary cabinet (fig. 21, p. 24) and longcase clock (cat. 26) that Roentgen supplied to Charles Alexander of Lorraine. Lion mounts are used as well on Roentgen's secretary cabinet for the Prussian heir presumptive (cat. 34). Roentgen seems to have reserved the image of the king of beasts for objects intended for rulers, and if true, that would support the supposition that this desk has a royal provenance.⁸

Columnar legs like the ones seen here appear on two Roentgen side tables now in a private collection and an oval table formerly in a Rothschild collection.⁹ The fact that the side tables bear the stamp ROENTGEN NEUWIED points to the French market and its rigorous guild regulations. The whole group may conceivably have formed an ensemble at one point. WK



FIG. 93. François Rémond, after a design by François-Aimé Damerat. Frieze ornament. ca. 1785–90. Gilt bronze, 4½ × 16½ in. (10.5 × 41 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1906 (07.225.510.416)







CABINET FOR GEMS

David Roentgen,
ca. 1788–89
Oak and mahogany,
with mahogany veneer;
gilt bronze and brass
96½ × 50 × 19¾ in.
(245 × 127 × 50 cm)
The State Hermitage
Museum, Saint
Petersburg (EPR-152)

PROVENANCE

Delivered to Catherine
the Great, Saint
Petersburg, before
June 22, 1789.

This cabinet, built to hold carved gems in the collection of Catherine II, is one of five by Roentgen. Each of them has a bronze number affixed to the upper section, probably indicating the order in which it was made or reflecting its inventory order (this one is number 3). We know that the first two cabinets arrived in Russia in the spring of 1787 and that the sum of 10,000 rubles was paid for them.¹ In the State Hermitage Museum those cabinets are still used to store antique carved gems. In February 1788, acting for Catherine II, palace administrator Stepan Strelalov commissioned three more cabinets from Roentgen. They arrived in Russia in June 1789 and cost the empress 26,000 rubles (see fig. 48, p. 48). They are identical to the first two, and at present they are used for storing carved gems from Western Europe. All the cabinets were created by special commission; their unique design distinguishes them from Roentgen's usual production.

These are monumental structures. Crowned with a bronze balustrade with vases at the corners, the upper section is supported on a base with a hemispherical coffered niche in front decorated with exquisite inlaid rosettes. Three bands of luxurious bronze decoration adorn the doors. The upper and lower bands—horizontal above vertical—display arabesque ornaments. In the central band are semicircular arches, which echo the silhouette of the niche in the base. The arches contain gilt-bronze portraits of the ancient philosophers Plato (below) and Cicero (see also fig. 9, p. 11). Behind the doors are four rows of twenty-five drawers each. Bronze



garlands, moldings, rosettes, and bouquets frame and emphasize the structural details.

So rich and diverse is the ormolu decoration on these cabinets that they resemble the work of a jeweler. Yet we know that François Rémond made them, working with Jean Martin and Jean-Pierre Bureau, the finest modeler and designer, respectively, of arabesque ornament in France.²

Cabinets three, four, and five were restored in the workshops of the State Hermitage Museum in 1990. TR

FIG. 94. Unknown French or German master working with David Roentgen. *Plato*. Possibly early 1770s. Drawing, 9¼ × 7½ in. (23.4 × 19 cm). Private collection





David Roentgen,
ca. 1785–90
Oak, veneered with
mahogany; gilt bronze,
brass
83 × 29 × 18 7/8 in.
(210.8 × 73.7 × 48 cm)
The Nemours Founda-
tion (Inv. no. 83-27)

PROVENANCE

Possibly Marie Antoi-
nette, queen of France,
or Marie Thérèse of
Savoy, comtesse d'Artois,
Versailles, until ca. 1793;
probably purchased by
Gouverneur Morris,
American minister
to the French court;
W. McMurtrie (from a
sale at the Auction
House, Philadelphia,
ca. 1816); John Gibb,
Philadelphia (by lottery);
[Ferdinand Keller, Phila-
delphia, to Watmough, in
1884]; J. G. Watmough
(until his death; estate
sale, in 1913, to Keller);
[Ferdinand Keller, Phila-
delphia, to duPont, in
April 1919]; Alfred I.
duPont.

This musical clock is likely to have been the first Roentgen object to reach the United States.¹ Although the clock has not been identified in any eighteenth- or nineteenth-century documents, oral history attributes its first American owner as Gouverneur Morris. One of the nation's founding fathers, Morris was a co-author and signer of the United States Constitution. As President Washington's first minister to France, from 1792 to 1794, he was also an arbiter of French aristocratic taste.² While that aristocracy foundered during the Revolution, Morris and other wealthy Americans took the opportunity to purchase French luxury objects.³

The two bronze putti and the Apollo relief on the top were added in the first half of the nineteenth century.⁴ They are part of the history of the clock, documenting a change in style, yet they detract very much from the austerity and grandeur of the original design. The clock was made by a group of highly specialized artisans and can be considered both a scientific and an aesthetic achievement. It not only tells time but also celebrates the human skill involved in accurately marking time's passage by proudly displaying the interior works, which in most clocks are hidden; moreover, the glazed upper section is elevated on two Doric columns. The object is thus a true monument—and not in miniature, but proportioned for a stately public room or library. The movement, by Peter Kinzing, who with Roentgen signed the right-hand plate, includes a musical device that is set in motion every hour or every three

hours, as well as on command. Three cylinders of the original six survive (nos. 1, 4, and 5); one of them plays four tunes on a twenty-seven-note dulcimer and a nineteen-note rank of wooden pipes.⁵ All three of the surviving cylinders in the present clock feature compositions by Christoph Willibald Gluck, who is known to have written pieces especially for David Roentgen's use. Cylinder number 5 plays four pieces by Gluck, for clavichord and two flutes, including selections from his opera *Iphigenia in Aulis*. Another, based on an ode by the German poet Friedrich Klopstock, represents the only known eighteenth-century version of this piece.⁶

Examples of the same clock model were made for the French royal family and the Russian imperial collection,⁷ one of which is in the State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg (fig. 95).⁸ The first melody on the Hermitage clock is "Dance of the Blessed Spirits," from Act 2 of Gluck's opera *Orpheus and Euridice*.

Because each clock mechanism was created individually, the cylinders are in most cases not interchangeable with other Roentgen and Kinzing clocks. Gerhard and Renate Croll noted that two compositions from barrel 4 and four from barrel 5 from this clock are not included with music on any other Roentgen and Kinzing cylinders investigated so far.⁹ It must have been a delight for Roentgen's sophisticated and aristocratic patrons to hear these recordings, otherwise available only at rare chamber-orchestra concerts, if at all.¹⁰ WK



FIG. 95. David Roentgen. Longcase clock. ca. 1785. Oak veneered with mahogany, brass, gilt bronze; 75 5/8 × 28 7/8 × 18 7/8 in. (192 × 73.5 × 48 cm). The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (EPR-6199)



ROLLTOP DESK

David Roentgen,
ca. 1785–93
Oak, with mahogany
veneer; gilt bronze, brass
59 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 59 × 34 $\frac{1}{4}$ in.
(152 × 150 × 87 cm)
Klassik Stiftung
Weimar, Museen
(Inv. no. N 16/81)

PROVENANCE

Probably acquired
directly from David
Roentgen by Duke
Karl August von Sach-
sen-Weimar or his wife,
Luise von Hessen-Darm-
stadt, in 1797–98.

In 1797–98 David Roentgen took several loads of his fine furniture to Weimar for the inspection of Duke Karl August von Sachsen-Weimar and Duchess Luise, who were rebuilding their palace, the Residenzschloss. This rolltop desk was probably among their purchases. In its neoclassical style and architectural appearance, as well as in such details as the gilded mounts, it resembles a *bureau plat* with superstructure that was no doubt acquired at the same time (cat. 68).

The body of the desk is supported on eight legs, which have gilt-bronze collars and panels of *milleriaies* decoration on the show sides. A storage shelf extending between the legs is curved in the center to provide legroom. Above the legs are three low spring-operated drawers punctuated by gilded lancet motifs. The division of the desk into three sections is established by the placement of the legs and carried

up through the rolltop—where gilded framing elements showcase the sheets of flame-grain veneer—and its interior to the superstructure.¹ Consistency is further achieved by the repetition of mounts such as the *milleriaies* paneling—which appears on the legs, on the rolltop, and between the compartments inside the desk—and the gilded gallery ornament that crowns the lower shelf and the superstructure, there with the addition of eight gilded urn motifs. Larger urns also appear on either side of the rolltop, surmounted by ornaments symbolizing eternal flames; the ornaments can be removed and inverted to serve as sockets for candles.

Behind the rolltop are three compartments with spring-operated stepped drawers acting as bases (see fig. 97 and cat. 46). The superstructure contains a central drawer flanked by two lower and narrower drawers. As with the *bureau plat* also in the

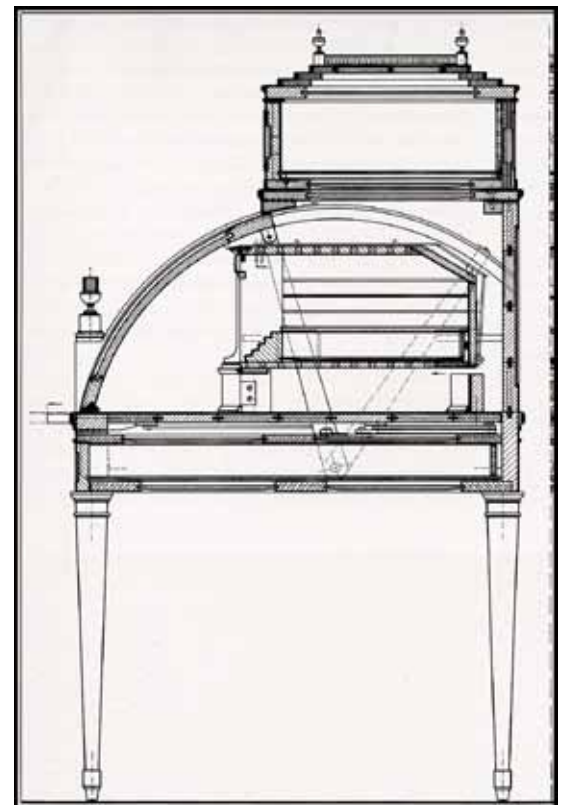


FIG. 96. David Roentgen's rolltop desk (cat. 67), wrapped in string, in the Red Room of the Residenzschloss, Weimar. Late 19th-century photograph

FIG. 97. Hans-Werner Pape. Design showing interior workings of a ca. 1785 Roentgen rolltop desk now in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg. 1977. Drawing. Private collection



Residenzschloss collection, the fronts of those side drawers are adorned with a delicate gilded floral motif and the central drawer front bears medallion-masks—in this case, however, featuring only the god Mercury (see cat. 63).

The Roentgen manufactory produced numerous examples of this desk, executed on the same template but varying in the richness of their gilding and in their ornamental motifs.² Rarely, however, was a shelf included beneath the body of the desk, as is the case here. A Roentgen invoice gives the price of a very similar piece of the same date as nearly 2,000 reichsthalers—roughly five times what a well-to-do bourgeois family would spend annually.³

An 1801 inventory of the furnishings of the Residenzschloss mentions “a large rolltop desk by

Roentgen” in the living room of Duchess Luise’s apartments, and it may well have been this example.⁴ Following the death of the duchess, her daughter-in-law Grand Duchess Maria Pavlovna appropriated the desk for her own use. The incident suggests that there was a continuing fondness for Roentgen’s furniture in the ducal family and reveals the grand duchess’s own characteristically Russian taste for the cabinetmaker’s work.⁵ A photograph taken in the Red Room after the death of a later Weimar duke (fig. 96), shows the desk tied up with string and an official seal dangling from it. These security measures indicate that the deceased ruler and his immediate family had used it to store important documents.⁶

TS

WRITING DESK

David Roentgen,
ca. 1785–93
Oak, with mahogany
veneer; gilt bronze
48 × 65³/₈ × 36³/₈ in.
(122 × 166 × 92.5 cm)
Klassik Stiftung Weimar,
Museen (Inv. no. N 17/81)

PROVENANCE

Probably acquired
directly from David
Roentgen by Duke
Karl August von Sach-
sen-Weimar or his wife,
Luise von Hessen-Darm-
stadt, in 1797–98.

This *bureau plat* with superstructure has a three-part cabinet at the back of the writing surface for filing and storage. It is a fine example of David Roentgen's mature style, in which furniture assumes the look of architecture. Its eight legs taper downward and are square, yet they appear columnar with their gilt-bronze fluting and collars. Lanceolate mounts above each leg punctuate the space between three low spring-operated drawers, each of which is decorated with gilt-bronze mask-medallions. The lancets and masks extend across the front of the desk like a frieze on a building facade.¹ The horizontality of the desktop, underscored by the parade of medallions along the front, and the multiple columnar legs with their verticality emphasized by the fluting, create a geometrical effect that is a hallmark of neoclassical architecture and design.

The cabinet resembles a miniature temple or pavilion; its detailing echoes the vertical-horizontal interplay of forms in the desk as a whole. The wings each contain a spring-operated drawer decorated on the front with pearl-string beading and delicate floral mounts and are crowned with pierced gilded galleries that extend to the sides of the writing surface. The much larger central compartment has a stepped roof. Two pairs of columns beneath triglyph motifs, all in gilt bronze, flank the arched opening, which reveals three shelves when the slatted shutter is pushed aside. There is additional interior space under the hinged top.

The *bureau plat* with superstructure was a type of library furniture manufactured by Roentgen in the mid-1780s. A particularly sophisticated specimen

is the Stroganov desk (cat. 56). Other examples are less magnificently decorated and have simpler mounts.² The medallions on this desk are seen on other Roentgen works of the period, notably, a roll-top purchased for the Residenzschloss at the same time as this piece (cat. 67), and Countess Shuvalova's Apollo clock (cat. 63), which were manufactured during the same years. The origin of the design for the mounts is unknown, although they probably came from a German or French workshop. A preliminary drawing (fig. 92, p. 205) shows them in detail: Mercury with his winged helmet, Diana, goddess of the moon, and Apollo, the sun god.

Duke Karl August von Sachsen-Weimar became personally acquainted with Roentgen and his work in November 1792, during a visit to Neuwied in the retinue of King Frederick William II of Prussia. The nearly complete destruction of the Residenzschloss, the ducal palace in Weimar, during a fire in 1774, had led to a major rebuilding campaign spearheaded by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe beginning in 1789. Goethe had been to Neuwied as early as 1774,³ and in 1797–98 Roentgen made a series of trips to Weimar, where he met with Goethe and the duke. Since Roentgen was accompanied by members of his workshop and wagonloads of furniture, his likely aim was to sell off some of his remaining inventory there.⁴ The records of the Residenzschloss from those years are incomplete; however, this desk was probably among the many splendid and avant-garde pieces of Roentgen's furniture with which the duke and his wife outfitted their new palace.⁵ TS





COIN CABINET

Christian Meyer and
Heinrich Gambs, early
19th century; doors
by David Roentgen,
ca. 1786–87
Mahogany and oak
veneer; gilt bronze
and brass
72 × 24 × 14⁵/₈ in.
(183 × 61 × 37 cm)
The State Hermitage
Museum, Saint
Petersburg (EPR-155)

PROVENANCE

Door models delivered
to Catherine the Great
at Pella Palace, near
Saint Petersburg, 1787.

Despite its unified neoclassical appearance, this coin cabinet is composed of three parts created at different times by different cabinetmakers. The doors are small-scale models ordered from Roentgen by Catherine II in 1786 for Pella Palace, which she was building near Saint Petersburg. Like the other furnishings Roentgen was making for Pella, they arrived in Russia in 1787, part of Roentgen's third delivery. But work on the palace was halted that same year, at the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish war, and the actual doors were never built.

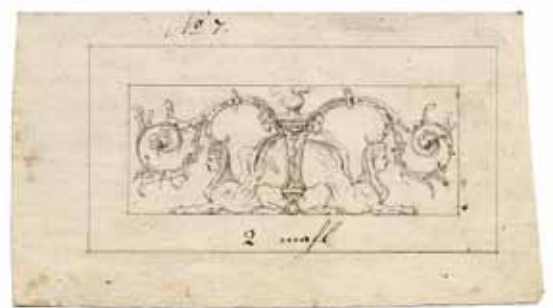
Burkhardt Göres has surmised that the door models were created in conjunction with a project developed by the Russian architect Ivan Starov, who was in charge of designing Pella Palace.¹ But the leaves of the door models are decorated with bronze arabesque ornament created in Paris by Roentgen's frequent collaborator François Rémond.² Therefore, the link with the Russian architect remains in doubt. Moreover, the original drawings for the bronze mounts on the doors have been preserved (figs. 98, 99).³

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Christian Meyer, a German cabinetmaker based in Saint Petersburg, used Roentgen's models as the doors for a cabinet meant to hold carved coins. Meyer used not only the door models but also a cabinet by Roentgen with forty-eight drawers that was part of the 1787 shipment from Neuwied.⁴ The bottom of the cabinet was finished somewhat later by a different master, Heinrich Gambs, who also worked in Russia but had studied in the Neuwied atelier. TR



FIG. 98. Unknown French or German master working with David Roentgen. Designs for upper door mounts. 1780s. Drawing, 4 × 6³/₄ in. (10 × 17.2 cm). Private collection

FIG. 99. Unknown French or German master working with David Roentgen. Designs for lower door mounts. 1780s. Drawing, 4¹/₈ × 7¹/₄ in. (10.5 × 8.4 cm). Private collection







APPENDIXES
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THE HIDDEN HISTORY OF A ROENTGEN COMMODO

MECHTHILD BAUMEISTER



APP. 1.1. David Roentgen. Commode (cat. 32). ca. 1775–79 (with later alterations). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Jack and Belle Linsky Collection, 1982 (1982.60.81)

In 1982 a commode from the workshop of David Roentgen, richly decorated with marquetrie scenes and gilt-bronze mounts, entered the collection of the Metropolitan Museum (cat. 32).¹ Surviving physical evidence, combined with the comparative study of similar intact Roentgen commodes and related marquetrie panels in other collections, has aided in our understanding of its original appearance.

The Metropolitan's commode is closely related to two nearly identical versions, one in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (cat. 33), and the other in the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich.² All three examples were executed with canted front corners and detachable feet (see X-ray detail of cat. 32, p. 132) and share a common design incorporating four protruding stiles running from frieze to feet, dividing the

front into three vertical sections. A single drawer, spanning the entire width of the case, is incorporated into the frieze. On the front of each commode a large, almost square central door concealing a shelved compartment is flanked on both sides by a narrower door covering a set of three drawers. The topmost interior drawers swing sideways on hinges to reveal secret compartments with small drawers (see details of cats. 32, 33, p. 133). The turning of a single key in the frieze drawer lock operates the drawer and releases an elaborate spring-loaded mechanism that automatically opens the three doors below.

The central doors and the sides of the three commodes are decorated almost identically.³ The marquetrie scenes on the large doors show a stage with three characters from the Italian *commedia dell'arte*. The side panels depict musicians in a

light-flooded room with a tall casement window. On one side a violinist and a cellist play from two sheets of music on a stand, with a pair of large brass horns hanging on the wall behind them (app. 1.6). On the other side, two woodwind players rest at a table (app. 1.3). Two oboes hang on the wall, and a bassoon leans against the music stand with two sheets of music on it. A notable discrepancy is that the positions of the side scenes of the Metropolitan's commode are reversed (compare app. 1.1 with cat. 33, p. 131). These pictorial marquetry are based on designs by Januarius Zick that were rendered as line drawings for cutting marquetry by Elie Gervais. Since each panel was executed individually there are variations in the interpretation of the design and degrees of refinement in details. Interestingly, the musical notation is different on the three commodes. The music depicted on the Metropolitan's example presents the beginning of a piece in allegro tempo for "Primo" and "Secondo" parts, while different scores for "Basso" and "Violino," including the indication "Fini" for the end, appear on the London and Munich commodes. Only the composition illustrated on the New York commode is playable.⁴

The wood species and colorants used for the related marquetry scenes on the three commodes are very similar, whereas the surrounding surfaces are decorated differently. On the New York commode, green-stained hornbeam and tulipwood, now faded,⁵ were chosen, whereas stained burl wood veneer—in all likelihood originally gray in appearance—was used on the London and Munich examples.⁶ The decoration on the interior of the New York commode is also markedly different. The central compartment and the inside of the doors are clad in plain mahogany, and the veneered mahogany drawer fronts are framed with cross-grain banding of alternating strips of green, brownish, and unstained hornbeam veneer (see cat. 32, p. 133).

The drawer fronts on the related pair are decorated with much more elaborate designs of stained burl wood (see cat. 33, p. 133), and the central compartment as well as the interior faces of the doors are embellished with stained maple, all of which were probably once gray.

Several significant features point to an earlier date of manufacture for the Metropolitan's commode. Major stylistic indicators are the concave shape of the sides and of the outer bays on the front, as well as the elongated scrolls, berried laurel garlands, and ribbons with bows, typical of Roentgen's work, that are attached to gilded brass plates on the stiles and feet.⁷ An interesting detail is the rococo side chair displayed on the center stage of the New York commode as opposed to the distinctly neoclassical version on the Munich and London commodes. Technically, the New York commode incorporates simpler mechanical devices and locking mechanisms: only the three doors open automatically, whereas on the related pieces, specific turns of the key in the frieze drawer not only release the three doors but also set the hinged interior drawers in motion, driven by concealed lead weights (app. 1.2).⁸ Only the New York commode has secondary locking mechanisms that allow the doors to be opened and locked independently. Hidden behind a small hinged rosette on each of the two center stiles are circular keyholes providing access to additional locks for these three doors.⁹ A large hinged rosette is located in the center of the top drawer on the London and Munich commodes, concealing the keyhole for their entire locking mechanism.

Much of the New York commode's storied past is revealed upon close inspection of its many parts. On each of the center uprights of the paneled back, a branded double V surmounted by a crown implies that the commode was once at Versailles (see cat. 32, p. 130).¹⁰ The various historical documents referring to the



APP. 1.2. Rear view of London commode (cat. 33) with its paneled back removed. Turning the key in the frieze drawer has triggered the large lead weight on the proper right side to fall, which caused the top interior drawer to open, while the smaller weight is raised.

purchase or ownership of Roentgen furniture by the French king and the royal family include two commodes.¹¹ The red brocatelle marble top on the New York commode is presumably a replacement for the original blue-gray marble mentioned in the historical inventories describing the Roentgen commodes owned by Louis XVI and the comtesse d'Artois and preserved on the Munich and London examples.¹² The paneled oak back marked with the two Versailles stamps was unscrewed during a recent examination, disclosing grooves in the rear walnut posts that were originally intended to receive the back as it was slid in place from above (app. 1.4). Currently, however, there are no corresponding tongues on the outer edges of the back frame. The absent tongues, combined with the different widths of the outer frame members and other small inconsistencies, suggest that the back was cut along both sides as well as the bottom and may have come from a different piece of furniture that belonged to the palace.¹³ The crowned double V stamp was generally used to mark furniture purchased by the Garde-Meuble de la Couronne and not pieces acquired privately by the king and other members of the royal family. Exceptions to this rule apparently existed because the 1792 description of Louis XVI's Roentgen commode mentions a Versailles brand mark, which supports the possibility that the Metropolitan's commode could be this piece.¹⁴ In addition, there are no vestigial screw holes sug-

gesting that the back had been previously used in a different piece of furniture, so it might be original to this commode and modified for reasons yet unknown.¹⁵

A major intervention occurred when the two marquetry scenes with musicians, including their pine substrates, were rather crudely sawn out of the sides of the New York commode. For this purpose the original oak drawer runners, joined to the sides of the commode with sliding dovetails, were released from their grooves by a saw cut along the top edges (see apps. 1.3, 1.4). Even more surprising is that the two panels were reunited with the commode at a later time, a fact beyond dispute because of the exact match of the saw kerfs as well as the continuous grain pattern of the pine substrates. Between these two events, presumably, strips of wood were inserted into vertical grooves cut in the back surface of both detached panels, most likely to counteract warping of the pine substrates, which are veneered on only one side.¹⁶ It is puzzling that there is no evidence to suggest how the panels were used while they were separated from the commode. Back in their original locations, they are now secured with wood wedges that are glued in place and by wood cleats screwed to the back of the marquetry panels and sides of the commode. On the exterior, the seams are concealed by gilded brass frames with a torus molding. Elemental analysis confirms that the frames were not part of the original decoration of the commode.¹⁷

APP. 1.3. Detail of the proper right side of the New York commode. Removal of the ormolu frame revealed the saw kerf around the marquetry panel. Behind the replacement frieze mount and its veneered back panel lies a pattern of square recesses cut in the original pine substrate, intended to receive threaded posts and nuts protruding from the reverse of the original mount.

APP. 1.4. Reverse of the proper right side of the New York commode showing the continuous grain pattern of the pine substrate of the reunited marquetry panel and the side of the commode (the back surface of the inserted panel has been stained). The groove in the rear post was intended to receive the back panel.

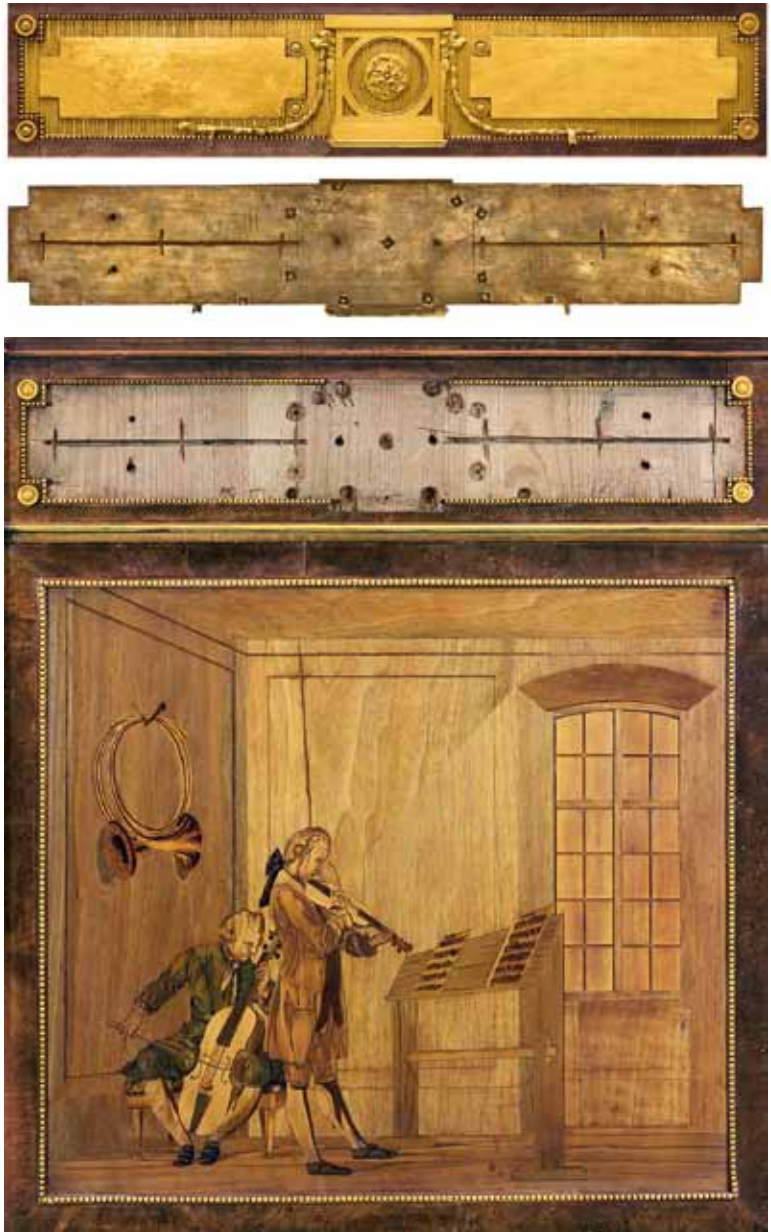


The original mounts likely resembled the beaded ormolu molding seen on the London and Munich commodes (app. 1.6), where it is sandwiched between two strips of stained wood and inserted in grooves cut into the substrate. If a similar framing system had been used on the New York commode, it would explain the current gap surrounding the marquetry panels, which is much wider than the saw kerf alone.¹⁸

The pictorial marquetry on the three commodes, with its extraordinary detail and realism, was predominantly executed in the so-called *à la mosaïque* technique, which was invented in the Roentgen workshop and is generally associated with their furniture dating from 1769 to the early 1780s.¹⁹ Individual sections of single elements, such as the jackets of the two musicians (see detail, p. 220), were sawn from the same piece of light-colored veneer like holly or maple and then divided into batches that were stained using solutions of three different concentrations of the same colorant. When dry, the sections were reassembled like a puzzle, and the completed design element was inlaid in a recess cut with knives and chisels into a background veneer that had already been glued to the wooden substrate.

On the side doors of the Metropolitan's commode, the marquetry that depicts empty stage sets was created in quite a different fashion. Unlike the *commedia dell'arte* scene on the central door, in which the originally red curtains were created using the mosaic technique,²⁰ the appearance of light and shadows on the curtains of the side doors was produced with differently colored wood species. Elemental analysis also revealed that different colorants were used to stain the green stripes in the borders of the curtains on the center and side stages.²¹ Certainly, the marquetry of the empty stages—which are duplicates rather than mirror images, a solution unthinkable for the Roentgen workshop—is not original, and likely the doors themselves are of later manufacture as well.²²

The side doors of the London and Munich commodes have oval marquetry panels with more meaningful vignettes of spectators watching the center stage from theater boxes. They are set inside beaded ormolu moldings surrounded by stained burl wood with recessed spandrels containing gilded rosettes (see cat. 33, p. 131). Two oval marquetry panels representing the same spectator scenes are preserved in Les Arts Décoratifs, Paris (app. 1.7). A recent examination revealed that their dimensions and the curvature of their back surfaces match the concave shapes of the side door framings on the New York commode (see cat. 32, p. 133).²³ When one of the panels was treated in the 1980s, a later cross-grain tulipwood border was temporarily



removed, revealing recessed spandrels quite similar to those on the side doors of the Munich and London commodes (see app. 1.7).²⁴ It can therefore be concluded that the four corners of the doors were cut off to create the current oval shape, while the originally concave vertical edges on the front side of the panels were removed before the addition of tulipwood borders. These observations strongly support Pierre Ramond's proposal that the oval panels came from the side doors of the New York commode.²⁵ If so, they would have been executed with features closely following those seen on the London and Munich side doors but on a concave substrate, with the spandrels and the rosettes, presumably placed inside them, curving outward.

In 1984 William Rieder observed that the scrolling ormolu frieze mounts on the large drawer and sides of the New York commode are replacements.²⁶ They are mounted to separate oak panels that are veneered with green-stained wood and tulipwood and secured with wood

APP. 1.5. Detail of the London commode illustrating the front and back of the frieze mount on the proper right side

APP. 1.6. Detail of the proper right side of the London commode. Removal of the original ormolu frieze revealed recesses cut in the pine substrate to receive threaded posts with nuts and bars with pins protruding from the reverse of the back plate.

APP. 1.7. David Roentgen. Oval marquetry panel. 1775–79. 21 1/8 × 13 1/4 in. (53.7 × 33.6 cm). *Les Arts Décoratifs*, Paris (19283A). This panel may have originated from the proper right door of the New York commode. A 1980s conservation treatment revealed recessed spandrels, filled with a whitish putty, beneath the later tulipwood border.



APP. 1.8. Detail of the New York commode showing the proper left section of the front frieze drawer with its replacement mount and back panel removed

screws inserted from inside the case and drawer (apps. 1.3, 1.8). Behind them are recesses cut in the pine substrate intended to receive threaded posts and nuts protruding from the reverse of the original mounts, which would have consisted of ormolu ornaments on a decorative ormolu back plate. Also present are several holes for the attachment of the original plates to the case. Rieder

noted that the outlines of the original mounts correspond to the shape of the rectangular frieze mounts on the London and Munich commodes. The recent removal of the frieze mount on one side of the London commode revealed a similar pattern of recesses in the pine substrate, but with differences in scale, placement, and method of attachment (see apps. 1.5, 1.6). Grooves similar to those following the perimeter of the original mounts on the New York commode are also present in the pine substrate of the London commode, where they receive the beaded ormolu moldings framing the large gilt-bronze back plates. Of great interest are the inset corners and cut grooves that survive intact on the flat center field of the New York commode's top drawer. On the lateral fields of the drawer front, as well as on those on the sides of the commode, the grooves for the beaded molding and about half of the inset corners on the sides were chiseled away to make room for the back panels of the replacement mounts, which are flat on the reverse (see apps. 1.3, 1.8). This indicates that four of the five original mounts of the New York commode were set into concave recesses and were themselves concave, including the beaded moldings, following the overall design of the commode. Most likely, rosettes such as those on the London commode were placed inside the inset corners, and they would have conformed to the curvature of their substrate, much like the rosettes on the original side doors.²⁷





APP. 1.9. Nineteenth-century tabletop decorated with marquetrie panels identical to the commedia dell'arte scene and the interiors with musicians found on the New York commode. Whereabouts unknown

It is probable that all these alterations to the Metropolitan's commode took place in the years following the French Revolution, when it was fashionable to remove the impressive marquetrie panels and the gilt-bronze mounts from furniture associated with the ancien régime. The marquetrie scenes were either turned into individual wall decorations, like the panels now in Les Arts Décoratifs, or incorporated in new furniture. Such was the fate of the large secretary cabinet Louis XVI bought from David Roentgen in 1779, which was dismantled about 1827 (see pp. 140–45).²⁸ On the New York commode, the words "left" and "right" written in French appear twice on the reverse of the veneered panels behind the replacement frieze and drawer mounts, implying that the alterations took place in France. They are written in two different hands, and the handwriting of one set suggests that the mounts could have been replaced as early as the late eighteenth century.²⁹

Two other pieces of furniture cast light on the history of the Metropolitan's commode, pointing to the previous existence of at least a fourth similar commode that suffered an even more drastic fate. One is a table published by Hans Huth in 1928.³⁰ The table's top is decorated with the same commedia dell'arte marquetrie scene found on the Metropolitan commode's central door (including the rococo chair) flanked by scenes identical to the side panels with musicians (app. 1.9).³¹ The other is a mid-nineteenth-century French cabinet-on-stand attributed to Alfred Beurdeley (1808–1882) that incorporates two oval marquetrie panels in a beaded ormolu frame, three ormolu drawer mounts, and four tall *milleriaies* plates, all identical to those on the London and Munich commodes (app. 1.10).³² The Beurdeley cabinet and the tabletop were possibly made from reused elements of the same Roentgen commode. The continuing appreciation of the pictorial marquetrie decorating this group of

commodes from David Roentgen's workshop is also reflected in a close copy of the commedia dell'arte scene on the door of a Parisian cabinet (ca. 1867) by Charles-Guillaume Winckelsen (1812–1871).³³

The Roentgen commode at the Metropolitan Museum continues to intrigue as the circumstances that led to its extended sequence of alterations remain difficult to grasp. Particularly puzzling is the reintegration of its original side panels. Despite these alterations, the commode's superb marquetrie, fine original ormolu mounts, and accomplished cabinetry with ingeniously integrated mechanical devices serve as a testament to the mastery of the Roentgen workshop.

APP. 1.10. Attributed to Alfred Beurdeley. Cabinet-on-stand, constructed with reused elements of an unknown Roentgen commode. Mid-19th century. 64 × 60 × 26¼ in. (162 × 152.5 × 66.5 cm). Private collection



PAINTING IN WOOD
 INNOVATIONS IN MARQUETRY DECORATION
 BY THE ROENTGEN WORKSHOP

HANS MICHAELSEN



APP. 2.1. In a reconstruction of the diamond marquetry on an Abraham Roentgen folding table of ca. 1760–65 (see cat. 5), the interplay between the brown tones of walnut and the reddish-yellow striping in tulipwood is accentuated by dark violet strips of rosewood and engraved mother-of-pearl and maple rosettes.

A highlight of the many technological achievements of Abraham and David Roentgen's workshop in Neuwied—which included structural improvements, mechanical refinements, and the incorporation of musical mechanisms—was its marquetry. Among the hallmarks of the Roentgen operation, these tour-de-force works were distinguished, especially in the 1770s, by their artistry and painterly effect. In the years between 1750 and 1780, the workshop's development of marquetry techniques went hand in hand with improvements in dyeing and staining technologies and can be divided into four stages, which overlap to some extent.

**GEOMETRIC MARQUETRIES IN
 PRECIOUS MATERIALS (1750–60)**

The palette of early marquetrys from the Roentgen workshop was derived primarily from the natural colors of various woods, employed in conjunction with masterfully engraved inlays of brass, mother-of-pearl, ivory, and bone. During

Abraham Roentgen's years in London, he not only perfected his engraving technique,¹ but also developed a unique geometric mosaic design using exotic woods and precious accent materials. Consisting of a gridlike pattern of square and diamond-shaped fields, which could be extremely fine on pieces meant to be especially costly,² Abraham's geometric marquetry was characteristic of this early period (app. 2.1). The interplay of wood tones and precious materials, together with the constantly alternating directions in the wood grain, helped to produce highly varied patterns and a lively coloration, as seen in the well-preserved multifunctional tables by Abraham Roentgen in the Berlin and Frankfurt museums (cats. 5, 9).

Special jigs and cutting gauges were used to produce the tiny diamonds, triangles, and squares in the correct size. For a precise fit, the rough-cut individual pieces were exactly planed in jointing boxes, after which they could be fitted together to form the overall pattern.³ Precision

was crucial, for the slightest discrepancies in the dimensions of the individual pieces could lead to major inaccuracies in the overall design.

MARQUETRIES IN EXOTIC MATERIALS WITH PARTIAL PAINTING (1760–65)

Large commissions from Johann Philipp von Walderdorff, the archbishop-elect of Trier, enabled the Abraham Roentgen workshop to expand its selection of costly materials and to incorporate pictorial marquetry in its designs, and to color the veneers with transparent washes or glazes. This new stage is most perfectly represented by a secretary with exquisite marquetry decor created for Walderdorff about 1760–65, now in Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum (cat. 12).

For marquetry based on engravings,⁴ working drawings were created, the individual sections separated and transferred onto veneers of the appropriate color and texture, and then cut out with a fret saw. Once fitted back together, the resulting design elements were inlaid, using knives and chisels, into the background veneer, which had already been glued to the furniture substrate.⁵

In addition to plain native woods, expensive exotic and burl woods were used to represent different colors and textures.⁶ These were supplemented by ivory (sometimes stained green), tortoiseshell (underlaid with red paint or gold leaf), mother-of-pearl, brass, copper, and silver. The contrasting colors and textures of these materials were employed together with hot-sand shading (achieved by dipping a piece of veneer in hot sand to darken its edges, producing a three-dimensional effect) and delicate engraving in ornamental marquetry as well as pictorial representations of coats of arms, interior vignettes, city views, and bucolic scenes.

Introduced during this stage was the application of colored washes to marquetry surfaces to enhance the coloring of the design. Red tones and shadings, brown hatching, green and gray-blue washes, and white highlights lent the compositions a spatial depth and produced a painterly effect. These partial surface applications were protected only by a thin coat of varnish, and were accordingly prone to fading or loss, yet their effect can still be seen on the Walderdorff secretary as well as on a sofa from a private collection (cat. 7).⁷

FLORAL MARQUETRIES USING COMPLEX COLORING TECHNIQUES (1765–69)

This brief phase saw the replacement of surface washes with deeply penetrating dyes,⁸ which produced more vibrant and permanent variegated colors on the marquetry veneers and at the same time allowed the manufactory to use

less of the expensive exotic species of wood. Typical of the furniture made at this time are decorations with elaborate floral marquetry based on prints, especially plates in flower books, which were abundant during the eighteenth century.⁹ Professional draftsmen turned these prints into working drawings for the marquetry cutters.

The individual pieces of the floral motifs were cut out with a fret saw, shaded in hot sand, and colored with a variety of stains, then reassembled and inserted into the background veneer. The flowers in the background of the design were placed first, and the remainder of the image was built up piece by piece toward the foreground.¹⁰ A technique characteristic of this phase was the so-called saw engraving, or the adding of lines to individual marquetry elements by means of closely spaced cuts with the fret saw. This not only ensured that the "engraving" would be permanent, but it also allowed for deeper penetration of the colorants, so that colors have often been better preserved in areas containing such saw cuts (see fig. 43, p. 45, and cats. 14, 15).

For elements such as rocailles, flowers, and musical instruments, engraving was frequently added with a burin and filled in the traditional manner with a black mastic or—in a more unusual technique characteristic of the workshop—with vermilion or red lead pigments bound in resin and oil.¹¹ Occasionally one sees the end grain of tiny pegs placed into predrilled holes to represent stamens in flowers or similar details on butterflies and insects.¹²

MARQUETRY À LA MOSAÏQUE (1769–80)

The origins of yet another new technique were already visible toward the end of the 1760s,¹³ for example in a multifunctional table of about 1769 (cat. 16). In addition to the traditional inlay technique, the table includes areas in which the marquetry surfaces are made up of tiny stained pieces fitted together in the manner of a jigsaw puzzle. This type of inlay, which David Roentgen referred to as *à la mosaïque*,¹⁴ must therefore have been developed around the time of the Hamburg lottery (see fig. 6, p. 8). With this new technique, the application of washes, shading, and engraving became obsolete; instead, larger sections of maple veneer were now cut with a fret saw into small pieces representing shadows, halftones, and light areas. These elements, some only a millimeter wide, were then sorted and placed in one of three concentrations of dye baths, where the colorants could penetrate into the front and back surfaces of the veneer as well as along its edges. This process worked faster and resulted in a more deeply dyed veneer, guaranteeing a more intense and permanent coloring.



APP. 2.2. Reconstruction of a rose in the *à la mosaïque* technique from a Roentgen corner cabinet of 1770–75, now in the Schlossmuseum Gotha. The individual sections of the rose have been cut from a continuous piece of maple veneer, then sorted and dyed with three concentrations of indigo solutions. The outline of the rose motif is traced onto the gray-stained-maple ground veneer with gravers and knives, and the matching recess created with knives and chisels.

APP. 2.3. Design attributed to Philippe de Lasalle. Detail from a textile, Lyon, ca. 1770–75. These bouquets against a light background, with each flower woven in three shades, may have inspired the shapes and coloring of Roentgen marquetrys.

Once the individually dyed pieces were fitted back together, the resultant, almost seamless transitions of color made it possible to translate the painterly effect of a design almost perfectly into marquetry (app. 2.2). In the course of the 1770s, this innovation became a distinguishing feature of Roentgen furniture, as did the increasing use of figural marquetry.¹⁵

The idea of translating the gradual color transitions of a painterly image into a working drawing employing isolated regions of separate shades of colors may have come from the pictorial designs for tapestries, embroideries, silk paintings, and printed fabrics, which had long employed three gradations of each color in their compositions (app. 2.3). Traditionally, wallpaper printers also worked with two to three printing blocks in different shades. The engravings frequently used as marquetry designs achieved their effects of light and dark by means of various densities of hatchings, the contours of which could be translated into a marquetry drawing.



In some cases, the marquetry is known to be based on original drawings by the painters Januarius Zick (1730–1797)¹⁶ (see cat. 25) and Johannes Juncker (1751–1817),¹⁷ or the engraver Elie Gervais (1721–1791)¹⁸ and his coworkers, all specifically tailored to the pieces of furniture being produced (see cat. 23). Translating these designs into marquetry required skilled artisans who could switch from the traditional technique to the new three-shade marquetry. For this purpose the workshop drew on a young team of which Michael Rummer (1747–1821),¹⁹ Heinrich Streuli (1752–1840),²⁰ and Johann Anton Reusch (1740–1821)²¹ are known by name. The *mechanicus* Johann Christian Krause (1748–1792), the workshop's technical coordinator, was surely involved in the refinement of staining and dyeing techniques the new marquetry required.²²

Because the workshop tended to make repeated use of certain well-developed marquetry designs, it is possible to reconstruct the production process. Comparative study of recurring floral marquetrys, for example, has shown that each visual element (such as a flower or a leaf) was a single, labor-intensive creation. The working drawing, at first seemingly complicated, was simplified by being divided into large sections that were transferred onto a sheet of veneer with a consistent grain.²³ Beginning from the outside, the marquetry cutter worked more or less freely, following the drawing only approximately,²⁴ a skill that required years of experience, drawing talent, and spatial imagination.²⁵

Comparison of different versions of the same figural design also reveals deviations—some minor, others more obvious—in the internal cut lines, reflecting the relatively free interpretation of the image. Slight shifts in the outlines of whole design elements within the overall composition also resulted from the individual arrangement of the prepared sections as they were inlaid into the base veneer or picture background.²⁶ Furthermore, depending on the size and shape of the surfaces available, new compositions could be created by combining individual elements from other designs and creating different backdrops (see apps. 2.4–2.8).²⁷ In figural depictions one notes, in addition to the delicate sawing technique, extremely fine inlay work, with which the most minute nuances were achieved, especially in the figures' heads. Artisans used knives and gravers to cut tapering recesses into the already inlaid compositions, placing in them minute pieces of wood—some of them dense end grain—to create the desired effects (see cat. 30).²⁸

The floral and pictorial Roentgen marquetrys from this last period—with palettes of three shades each of green, blue, red, yellow, and brown²⁹—differ from all comparable European



APP. 2.4



APP. 2.5

RECONSTRUCTION OF THE ROENTGEN WORKSHOP'S MARQUETRY TECHNIQUE FOLLOWING THE PATTERN OF A CHINOISERIE VIGNETTE FROM A ROENTGEN ROLLTOP DESK, 1778–79, IN THE KUNSTGEWERBEMUSEUM, BERLIN (1910, 49)

APP. 2.4. Tracing of the outlines and internal drawing of the original marquetry.

APP. 2.5. The sixty-six pieces of the coat, dyed in three shades of green, are fitted together.



APP. 2.6



APP. 2.7



APP. 2.8

APP. 2.6. The completed backdrop is inlaid into gray-stained maple veneer; the platform is executed in walnut, the table and stool are natural and stained mulberry veneer.

APP. 2.7. The nearly finished figure is placed on top of the backdrop and the recess cut into ground veneer of gray-stained maple.

APP. 2.8. The completed design: the final details are inlaid by cutting recesses directly into the applied marquetry. The surface is treated with a glue size and copal varnish. The strong contrasts between the veneers stained with natural dyes and the silver-gray ground give some idea of the original color intensity of Roentgen marquetries.

works in the variety and intensity of their colors and in the degree to which the colors have been preserved. Maple was the predominant wood used for staining, although ivory-colored holly was used occasionally as well; both are even in structure and produce relatively consistent and brilliant colors. The three color values, almost seamlessly shading into each other, made it possible to reproduce designs in a largely naturalistic manner. The resulting painterly effect is further enhanced by the fact that the varied penetration of dyes into marquetry pieces of different sizes produced gradual shadings in themselves

APP. 2.9. Detail from the right side of a Roentgen rolltop desk, ca. 1773–75, in the Residenzmuseum, Munich. Characteristic of the mosaic technique, the tulip is rendered in yellow mulberry wood with two shades of brown, the right rose in holly veneer in three shades of red, the left rose in two shades of purple, and the leaves in three shades of green. The marquetry has been abraded, not only revealing the original coloration of the stained veneers, but also resulting in losses of fine detail in the knife's handle. Originally, the maple background veneer most likely appeared gray but has since turned brown.



(app. 2.9).³⁰ Designs used repeatedly could easily be varied as needed by choosing different combinations of colors, producing new effects.³¹

Early neoclassical Roentgen furniture no longer seems to fit within the context of eighteenth-century pastel-colored interiors.³² Not only have some of the marquetry's colors faded with age, but the dominating background veneers, especially, have darkened dramatically to the point that they almost look like walnut (see app. 2.9). Historical descriptions of Roentgen furniture, beginning as early as about 1765–66, repeatedly mention the light gray color of the maple veneers that make up the marquetry backgrounds,³³ and to this day one can still discover a lighter gray with a slight shimmer—where hardware has been removed or where furniture interiors have been protected from light and air—in otherwise browned maple veneers. Particularly striking evidence of the original coloring of the background veneer is provided by the portrait of Susanna Maria Roentgen, painted by Johannes Juncker in 1771. In it a typical marquetry box from the Roentgen workshop with inlaid roses in three shades of blue on a gray ground is pictured (see fig. 17, p. 19).

Reconstructions based on the analysis of original materials and on historical recipes have produced a silver-gray coloring on maple veneers using iron-nitrate stains (see apps. 2.6–2.8).³⁴ The browning that has occurred over time on formerly gray veneers can be traced to the ultraviolet portion of the light spectrum and to residues

of nitric acid in the wood, which trigger photochemical processes or degradative reactions affecting the lignin.³⁵

Curly maple was preferred by the Roentgen workshop for background veneers because of its typical rippling texture. Radial cuts through the undulating fibers in the trunks of certain maple trees reveal a pattern of alternating light and dark stripes running nearly perpendicular to the direction of growth. The characteristic ray patterns that appear in such cuts were also prized for their shimmering effect. These features were emphasized by chemical staining, so that the silver-gray ground in floral marquetry was reminiscent of iridescent moiré silks, and, when used in pictorial marquetry, the stained wood was suggestive of whirls of air in a three-dimensional space.

After marquetry declined in popularity in the 1780s, mahogany, paired with interesting grain patterns of burl wood from species such as amboyna, thuja, and maple, was the predominant wood used to decorate Roentgen furniture. Here, too, the gray-stained maple burl in these pieces is now greatly darkened and browned, so that in the literature it is frequently mistaken for walnut.³⁶ Contemporary descriptions mention its original gray, marble-like appearance.³⁷ A design drawing for a longcase clock in Berlin's Kunstbibliothek provides an impression of the intended marbleizing effect of the gray-stained burl wood, in contrast to the current brown appearance of the burl veneer (app. 2.10).³⁸

SURFACE TREATMENTS ON ROENTGEN MARQUETRY

The application of a transparent coating saturated the marquetry's natural and artificial colors and provided protection from environmental influences. In this area as well, the Roentgen workshop distinguished itself from conventional surface treatments in use at the time by developing especially clear and resistant varnishes. We learn from contemporary reports that it was Christian Krause who focused on the development of special polishes, lacquers, and varnishes,³⁹ and the perfect, marble-like polish of the workshop's furniture surfaces was praised again and again.⁴⁰ In fact, one still finds on original surfaces in the interiors of Roentgen furniture a thin, especially clear and hard finish with a satin sheen that is scarcely yellowed and does nothing to detract from the brilliance of the marquetry colors.⁴¹

It is relatively certain that the bright colors and especially the gray-stained ground veneer were first sealed with an isinglass or parchment glue to preserve their cool coloring and at the same time to provide a base for subsequent applications of varnish.

THE LASTING CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE NEUWIED WORKSHOP

The Roentgen workshop not only set new aesthetic standards with the innovative marquetry techniques of its later years, it also developed efficient and flexible methods by which such decorations could be produced in a relatively short period. In addition to saving time and making the work easier, the methods described above had the advantage of being variable. Successful compositions could be modified by creating different background scenery, internal drawing, and coloring or by changing the way individual motifs were fitted together, even by adding new sections to create an entirely new design.

What made the Roentgen workshop so efficient was the division of labor, as each step of the production process was assigned to an artisan with a particular skill. Ultimately, it was this rationalization of the workshop's methods, its well-planned coordination of different tasks, that allowed the operation to produce such a large number of marquetrys. Yet for all the standardization, the talented artisans of the workshop were able to create marquetrys of the highest artistic and technical quality.



APP. 2.10. *Left:* Roentgen longcase clock, ca. 1785, Schlossmuseum Weimar, with considerable browning of the originally gray-stained maple-burl veneer. *Right:* Watercolor design drawing, ca. 1785, Kunstbibliothek, Berlin, showing burl veneer stained blue-gray for a marbleizing effect.

HIDDEN TECHNOLOGY IN ROENTGEN FURNITURE

DANIELA MEYER AND HANS-WERNER PAPE



APP. 3.1. Attributed to Johann Christian Härder. Fall-front secretary, in the open position. ca. 1800. Kunstgewerbemuseum, Berlin (1955,5)

The furniture from the Roentgen workshop is among the most thoroughly studied and researched subjects of decorative arts from the eighteenth century. Art historians have catalogued the objects, discussed their types and designs, identified their purchasers, and examined David Roentgen's marketing strategies. Conservators have given great attention to the study of the extremely fine craftsmanship of these masterpieces: their construction and the various woods employed, their marquetry and its coloring, as well as their bronze mounts. Yet the mechanisms hidden inside many of these works, some of them highly complex, are rarely described, even though they add considerably to their exclusivity and material value. They are in

fact what set Roentgen furniture apart from all other showpieces created for eighteenth-century absolutist princes.

Under Abraham Roentgen, numerous products from his workshop incorporated simple mechanical devices, usually operated manually (see cat. 9). The innovations achieved during the directorship of David Roentgen built on what his father had begun and far surpassed anything that had come before. These later Roentgen works reflect a direct response to contemporary industrial advances, adding a touch of magic to an increasingly rational time in which human effort was progressively replaced by machines. Beyond their external splendor and artistry, these masterpieces were meant to impress and entertain with

their surprising and delightful transformations. In some cases, the ingenious mechanical features incorporated tripping devices known only to the owner, further adding to their prestige.

The mechanisms built into these objects fall into two categories: intricate clock and musical works, and larger devices capable of moving various elements of a piece of furniture. The former were manufactured as self-contained products by the Peter Kinzing workshop and incorporated as such into Roentgen furniture (see for example cats. 26, 38, 63), whereas the larger mechanisms were the work of the manufactory's own metalworkers (such as cats. 12, 16, 23).

The functions of the latter varied widely. Some only effected single movements, such as the automated opening of a drawer or the swinging out of a compartment. Others worked in tandem, as in rolltop desks in which a scissor mechanism caused the writing surface to slide forward as the rolltop was raised. One of the most complex of Roentgen's devices was the automatic opening of a combined writing desk and lectern. In it, within a very small space, various mechanical assemblies were interconnected to initiate a staged series of movements. At the pressing of a single release, a rapid chain reaction of fascinating actions was set into motion as described by a contemporary (possibly David Roentgen himself):

. . . suddenly a writing desk, at which one can write quite comfortably while standing up, appears by itself, automatically opens and tilts downward to form a writing surface, and just above it a lectern appears on which to place something to be copied or to read, and at the same time two compartments open on either side holding inks, sandboxes, and writing utensils; all this can easily be folded back together at will and slid back into its proper place.¹

The mechanical writing desk and lectern have been found in seven pieces from the Roentgen workshop. The best examples are in the three large secretary cabinets produced for Duke Charles Alexander of Lorraine (1776; see fig. 21, p. 24);² for the future King Frederick William II of Prussia (1779; cat. 34);³ and for Louis XVI of France (1779), now surviving only in fragments (see cats. 35–37).⁴ All three incorporate various musical automata and clock movements. The other four such mechanisms are contained in the Apollo desk of Catherine the Great of Russia (ca. 1783–84; cat. 42);⁵ two neoclassical rolltop desks (ca. 1785), one in Buckingham Palace, London,⁶ and the other in the Getty Museum, Los Angeles (cat. 64);⁷ and a rolltop desk (ca. 1787–88) in the Badisches Landesmuseum, Karlsruhe.⁸

An eighth writing-desk and lectern mechanism was incorporated into a tall three-part secretary that, based on the recent technical examination, is attributed to Johann Christian Härder, one of Roentgen's former cabinetmakers, presumably made about 1800, when he founded the Braunschweigische Privilegierte Kunst-Meuble-Fabrik von Neuwied in Brunswick with Roentgen's support (app. 3.1).⁹ The custom-made mechanism in this secretary, now in the Kunstgewerbemuseum, Berlin, was constructed in the same way—with only minor deviations—as that of the Roentgen rolltop desk in the Badisches Landesmuseum. Both exhibit the most advanced features of the mechanism developed in the Roentgen workshop. The recent dismantling of this secretary for complete conservation treatment provided the opportunity to examine thoroughly the complex design of Roentgen's writing-desk and lectern mechanism.¹⁰

The desk mechanism functions through the interaction of levers and catches to create a series of sequential movements from one part of the device to the next. Although a number of these very intricate hidden writing desks and lecterns were made by the Roentgen workshop, they were by no means produced in assembly-line fashion. Each was made separately and adapted to the particular function and configuration of the object into which it was to be incorporated. Still, their construction and sequence of movements are essentially the same, even if improvements were made over the thirty years in which they were produced.

The wood case containing the mechanical desk and lectern fits into a designated cavity in the center of the cabinet, directly above its arched writing compartments. The dovetailed case was made without a back panel, but with a small ornamental fall front attached by three hinges (apps. 3.2–3.5). The primary mechanism is driven by two lead weights suspended from cords to keep the system under tension (see apps. 3.12, 3.13). Directed by guide pulleys, gravity provides the forces necessary to operate the various levers, latches, push rods, pivots, and hinges that facilitate the movement of specific elements (apps. 3.14–3.15). Smaller, secondary operations are propelled mainly by loaded springs. Once the mechanism is triggered, the falling weights cause the case to glide forward. The remaining movements, activated by springs, continue in a chain reaction (see apps. 3.6–3.11). When the case is fully extended, the front panel is unlatched by a lever and hinges downward into a horizontal position. Next, the inkwell compartments are swung outward by springs, as are their lids, after latch mechanisms on each



APP. 3.2. Front



APP. 3.3. Back



APP. 3.4. Underside



APP. 3.5. Side

APPS. 3.2–3.5. Case containing writing desk and lectern from the fall-front secretary in app. 3.1

side of the case are released (see cat. 34, p. 138). In a combined mechanism, the lectern is automatically raised as the desk is thrust forward onto the horizontal front panel, which then drops downward, together with the desk, into a slanted position. Triggered by this last movement, the folding desk's spring-driven side panels open outward (apps. 3.14, 3.15). As illustrated in appendix 3.15, as it extends the folding desk pulls two angled rods (blue) forward. These twist two posts (red) to which the levers (green and yellow) are attached that simultaneously lift the lectern into position.

Each of the sliding movements is facilitated by inset brass or horn rollers that run in special tracks. Because the devices were required to overcome great resistance in order to shift, raise, or lower entire components, as exemplified by

Catherine the Great's Apollo desk (cat. 42), they were fashioned out of iron as well as steel. The majority of the brass and iron elements were cast, whereas the steel pieces were forged and joined together. All the visible metal parts were highly polished—which in the eighteenth century was still done by hand, a time-consuming and labor-intensive process—lending them a distinct aesthetic appeal. Their edges retain a crispness impossible to achieve when using machines.¹¹ In the same way, the design and manufacture of such a complex mechanism, housed in a minimum amount of space, would have been impossible without considerable technical experience and intellectual ability as well as the closely coordinated efforts of the Roentgen workshop's highly specialized craftsmen, most notably its metal- and woodworkers.



APP. 3.6



APP. 3.7



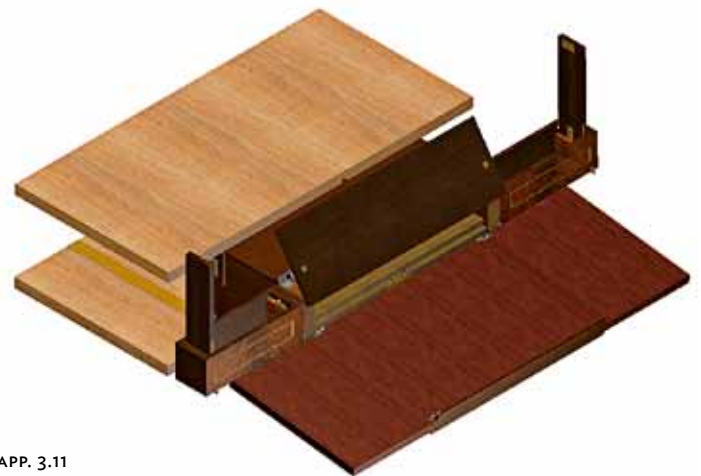
APP. 3.8



APP. 3.9



APP. 3.10



APP. 3.11

THE OPENING SEQUENCE OF THE WRITING DESK AND LECTERN CAN BE DIVIDED INTO FIVE STEPS, WHICH ARE SCHEMATICALLY ILLUSTRATED IN THE FOLLOWING:

APP. 3.6. In its closed position the case containing the writing desk and lectern is stored in a cavity of the cabinet's center section.

APP. 3.7. The entire case glides out of the cabinet, propelled by weighted cords.

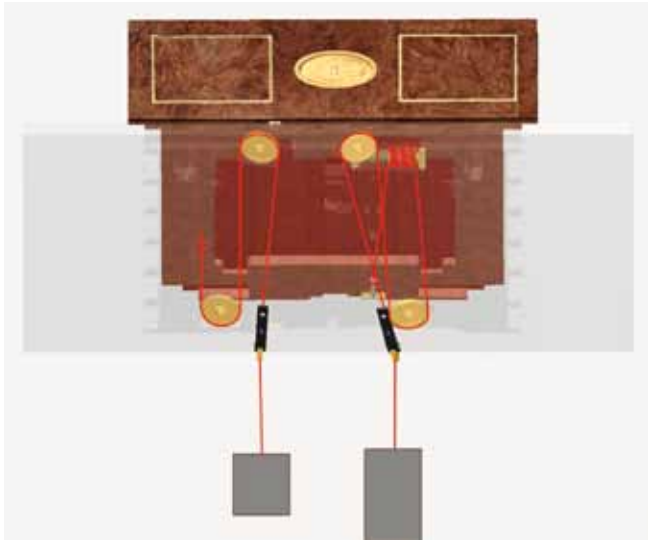
APP. 3.8. Once the case is fully extended, the heavy front

panel drops into a horizontal position.

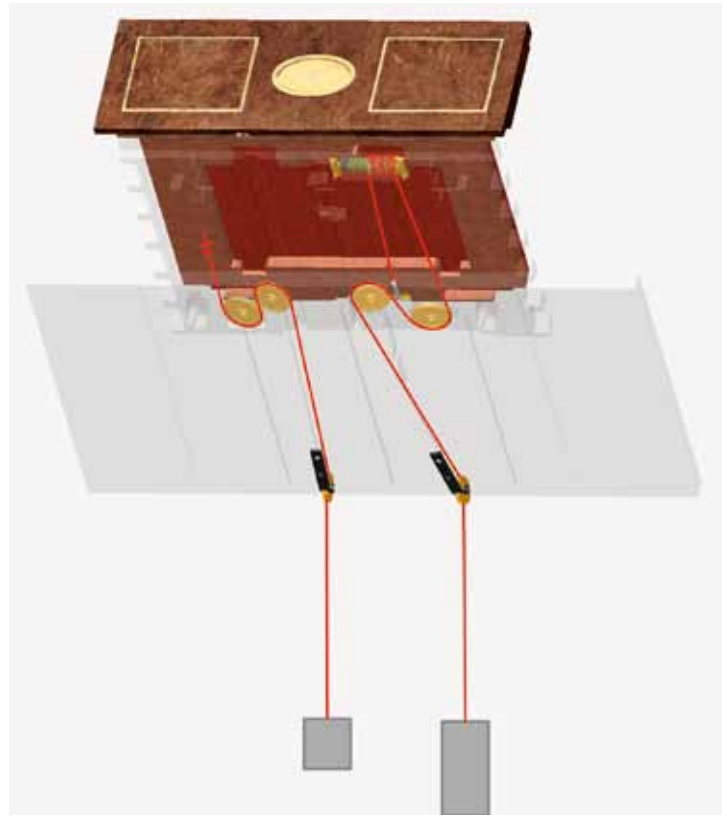
APP. 3.9. The inkwell compartments are swung outward by springs triggered by a latching mechanism on the side of the case.

APP. 3.10. As the folding desk slides forward onto the horizontal front panel, the lectern is raised.

APP. 3.11. Once fully extended, both the front panel and the folding desk are slanted downward and the folding desk's spring-driven side panels open outward.



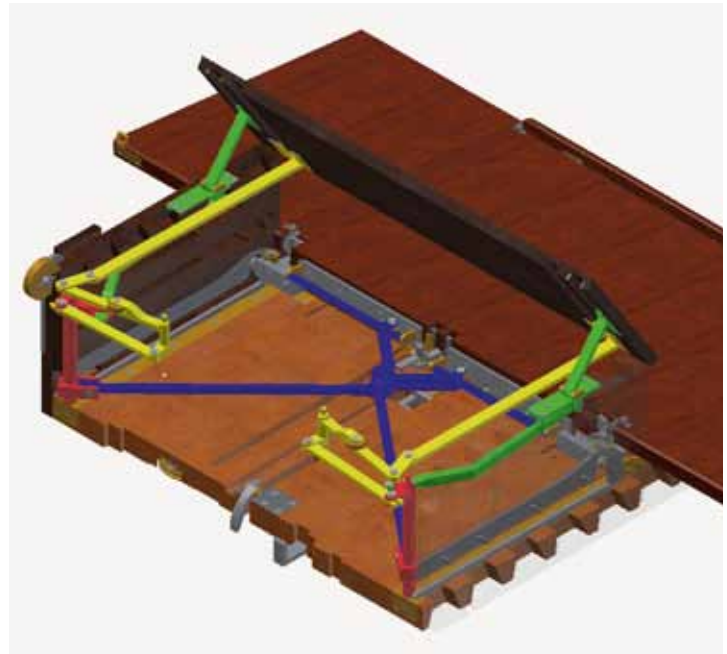
APP. 3.12. Reconstructed view of the writing-desk and lectern case in the fall-front secretary in app. 3.1, from below, with the mechanism in its closed state, illustrating the pulley system powered by suspended lead weights



APP. 3.13. Reconstructed angled view of the writing-desk and lectern case of app. 3.1, from below: The desk case has been thrust forward, propelled by the falling lead weights.



APP. 3.14. View of the underside of the folding desk showing the position of the springs and levers when one side panel is closed and the other open



APP. 3.15. Reconstructed angled view of the unfolded desk and lectern from the back. The movements of the lectern and desk are coupled. As the desk slides forward onto the horizontal front panel, the lectern lifts upward.

NOTES TO THE ESSAYS

From Rococo Playfulness to Neoclassical Elegance: Abraham and David Roentgen as Europe's Principal Cabinetmakers

Wolfram Koeppé

1. Stürmer 1993, p. 15. On John Channon, see Gilbert and Murdoch 1993.
2. Stürmer 1978. For the Meissen annual financial turnover, see Walcha 1981, pp. 158–59.
3. There are only a few cabinetmakers whose likenesses survived through a painted portrait. Among the earliest may be a portrait of Ulrich Baumgartner of 1614–15 by Anton Mozart in the Pommersche Kunstschränk. Baumgartner was an Augsburg cabinetmaker specializing in the use of precious and exotic materials (Mundt 2009, p. 145, fig. 5); Georg Haupt, a Swedish master (Uppsala Auktionskammare, sale cat., December 8–9, 2011, lot 1251); Jean-Henri Riesener, portrayed by Antoine Vestier (Château de Versailles, inv. no. MV 8136; Pradère 1989, ill. p. 9); and the Swedish cabinetmaker Gottlieb Iwersson, whose portrait was engraved by J. Snack (Bukowskis Klassiska, Stockholm, sale cat., June 12–15, 2012, ill. p. 244).
4. Röntgen 1845; Fabian 1996, pp. 320–75; Willscheid 2011. A rarely cited obituary and posthumous curriculum vitae of Abraham Roentgen were recorded by the Brethren-Unity at Herrnhut in March 1793 (Fabian 1996, p. 375, doc. no. 2.272).
5. Already Hans Huth (1974, p. 6), the great scholar researching Roentgen's oeuvre, recognized in the master's adaptation of these foreign woodworking techniques the main characteristics of the workshop's later success.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
7. It was not "two years" and he was also not "dramatically shipwrecked," as has often been written. See Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 32; see also Sulzbacher 2009, p. 200.
Some scholars attribute objects by Abraham to this period. See Huth 1974, pp. 6, 8; Michael Stürmer in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 132, no. 1; Stürmer 2007, p. 19; Himmelheber 2008. Greber also states that Abraham did some "work," which in light of his new profession as a missionary, probably referred not to work in wood but to the spoken word. See Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 33; see also Sulzbacher 2009, p. 201.
8. To what degree they worked together and how their hands can be distinguished among recognized pieces remain uncertain. See Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 34; Gilbert and Murdoch 1993, pp. 136–37; Koeppé 1997; Gilbert 1998, pp. 557–58, no. 679 (desk and bookcase, ca. 1738, by Hintz).
9. Boynton 1993, p. 43. For sales catalogues, see Goodison 1975. An English trade catalogue dating from the late eighteenth century in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum (acc. no. 35.41.1) is reproduced in facsimile in Crom 1994.
10. Stürmer 1979b.
11. Stürmer 1982; Pradère 1989; Knothe 2009.
12. Stürmer 1978; Stürmer 1979a, p. 515; Michaelsen and Buchholz 2006.
13. See Ketelsen 1996. *Margrave* and *margravine* and also *landgrave* and *landgravine* are specifically German titles for important provincial rulers in the Holy Roman Empire. See Fabian 1996, pp. 341–42,

- doc. nos. 2.141, 2.142, on arguments with Karoline Luise. See also Stratmann-Döhler 2009, pp. 34–37.
14. Fabian 1996, p. 321, doc. no. 2.33.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 321–22, doc. nos. 2.34, 2.35 (ill. in facsimile). The fair and its impact on all aspects of artistic and luxury goods have not yet been thoroughly researched. Jewelry, goldsmith work, and objects of precious stone were commissioned or exchanged in Frankfurt and later delivered elsewhere to avoid high sales taxes. Some local masters may have found a niche presenting extraordinary items in a possibly dangerous infraction of guild regulations. See Wolfram Koeppé in Koeppé 2008, pp. 258–61, nos. 88, 89; the Frankfurt cabinetmaker Johann Christian Klang is one of the few known to have produced luxurious small boxes with intricate marquetry and exotic materials on such a basis. See also Kreisel and Himmelheber 1968–73, vol. 2, fig. 1045; Moehring 1996; Auktionshaus Metz, Heidelberg, sale cat., November 26, 2011, lot 389.
16. The term is sometimes spelled *Neuwieder Arbeith*.
17. See Stramberg 1854, pp. 102–21 (quotation on p. 121). Georg Himmelheber discusses the archbishop's desire to surround himself with only the best. See Himmelheber 1998, p. 335.
18. Walderdorff did not live long enough to see the completion of a new dynastic family residence in Molsberg, which would have been considered his family's private property, as was the case with the Weissenstein Palace. The latter allegedly was "privately" financed and was eventually passed on to the Schönborn family (also good clients of Abraham Roentgen), which still owns it, including much of the furnishings.
19. Koeppé 2011.
20. Stürmer 1979a, p. 512, n. 24; Trenschele 1982; Trenschele 1984. This Catholic patronage of the Roentgens was extremely rare and has a parallel only in the Catholic bishop of Münster's ordering substantial silver altar busts from the Protestant Hamburg goldsmith Jürgen Riechels in about 1681. On Riechels, see Scheffler 1965; Heitmann et al. 1985, p. 208, no. 245, figs. 770, 771.
21. Fabian 1996, p. 323, doc. no. 2.37.
22. *Ibid.*
23. Only three sons survived their parents. See Fabian 1996, p. 375, doc. no. 2.272; Willscheid 2011.
24. See Fabian 1996, p. 323, doc. no. 2.45. In his essay for this volume (p. 20), Bernd Willscheid gives a later date.
25. Fabian 1996, p. 323, doc. no. 2.45; see also Stürmer 1993, p. 30.
26. This is not to diminish Abraham's role or elevate David to "cabinetmaker supreme," as the furniture scholar Simon Jervis called him. See Jervis 1990.
27. Report on Roentgen's handwriting prepared by Renata Propper in December 2011 (curatorial files, Department of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).
28. Koeppé 2007a.
29. They also brought back with them a fourteen-year-old English boy named John Oakely, who remained as an apprentice until 1772 before eventually returning to London. According to Huth, the German *Journal des Luxus und der Moden* published in 1801 in Weimar noted "that everybody of taste and discrimination [was] now making their purchases at Oakelys, the most tasteful of London's Furniture Upholsters"; see Huth 1933, p. 91.
30. Fabian 1996, p. 328, doc. no. 2.62.
31. *Ibid.*, doc. no. 2.63.

32. Baarsen 1992, p. 11.
33. *Ibid.*, pp. 11, 79. See also Fuhse 1909; Fuhse 1925, pp. 51ff.; Kreisel and Himmelheber 1983, vol. 2, pp. 274–75.
34. Fabian 1996, p. 331, doc. no. 2.71 (ill. in facsimile). Because of the many changes in currencies and inflation rates since the eighteenth century, it is virtually impossible to correlate prices between then and now. A Russian example mentioned on p. 14 of this essay gives one an idea of the cost of these luxurious objects. See also Krüger 2003, who discusses the relative costs of living and of various materials in Neuwied; and Koeppé 2010, p. 90.
35. Koeppé 2007a.
36. At one point it was documented in Russia. In 1921 the Soviet government sold it to the Designmuseum Danmark in Copenhagen.
37. For example, where Karoline Luise ordered a table for her husband in 1775; see Fabian 1996, pp. 341–42, doc. no. 2.141. The comparison to modern luxury cars was initially suggested in Koeppé 1997, p. 110. See also Koeppé in Kisluk-Grosheide, Koeppé, and Rieder 2006, pp. 172–76, no. 72, pp. 180–83, no. 75.
38. See Stürmer 2007, p. 16. For the lottery, see Fabian 1996, p. 331, doc. no. 2.71 (ill. in facsimile).
39. A terminus post quem of 1773 is provided by a dated rolltop in the Residenz, Munich, inv. no. M 156 (Christoph Graf von Pfeil in Langer and Württemberg 1996, pp. 219–27, no. 65; see also Fabian 1996, pp. 100–101, no. 214).
40. For examples with four legs, see Fabian 1996, pp. 104–7.
41. Cornet 1995–96, p. 52 (translated from the German); see also Fabian 1986b, p. 341, doc. no. 2.57.
42. "Music in Roentgen Furniture," lecture given by Professor Gerhard Croll, Institut für Musikwissenschaft, Universität Salzburg, at the Kreismuseum, Neuwied, on October 3, 1998, for members of the Furniture History Society. In addition, see G. Croll 1998; G. Croll and R. Croll 2010. I am grateful to Gerhard Croll and Renate Croll, Salzburg, for sharing their expertise on Gluck.
43. Fabian 1996, p. 353, doc. no. 2.186. The clock is today in a private collection.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 350, doc. nos. 2.180, 2.181 (translated from the French).
45. For three-dimensional marquetry, see in particular the writing surface on the desk in Amsterdam (see cat. 12, p. 78, in this volume; see also Stiegel 2007, pp. 22–39, no. 3); a box in a private collection (fig. 4 in this volume); and a jewelry box in the Landesmuseum, Karlsruhe (Stratmann-Döhler 1998, pp. 82–83, no. 6).
46. Stiegel 2007, p. 9.
47. They are still there to be admired. See Kurdiovsky 2008, pp. 90–91, ill. no. 67; see also Annamaria Giusti in Koeppé 2008, pp. 291–99, nos. 110–15. For the *pietre dure* room at Schloss Favorite, near Rastatt, see Koeppé and Knothe 2008, pp. 91–92 and p. 84, fig. 91.
48. For a letter of January 5, 1766, from a Moravian brother regarding the outcome of this trip, see Fabian 1996, p. 325, doc. no. 2.57. It is often stated that David learned about neoclassicism during his visit to France in late summer 1774 (see Bertrand Rondot's essay in this volume). He certainly would have encountered there the new lighter version drifting away from the heavy *goût grec*, but he and Abraham were familiar with the new style before the 1774 trip.
49. Baron Friedrich Melchior von Grimm, letter of May 1, 1763, in Tourneux 1877–82, vol. 5 (1878), p. 282; see also Fabian 1996, p. 324, doc. no. 2.51 (translated from the French).

50. See Fabian 1986b, p. 340, doc. no. 2.53. The entrance door survived the demolition of Abraham's house in the nineteenth century and is today preserved in the Roentgen-Museum, Neuwied. See Fabian 1996, p. 258, no. 596.

51. Plans to move the workshop to London (1765), Berlin (1770), Kassel (1777), and even Poland or Dessau did not go forward.

52. The drawing with neoclassical designs for furniture mounts seen in the Abraham Roentgen portrait is discussed extensively and illustrated in Willscheid 2011, pp. 30–31, fig. 3.

53. Examples of the bow-tie mounts, round pulls, and swags depicted in the drawing mentioned in the previous note can be seen on cats. 41, 42, 44, 46, and 49.

54. In 1807 he became Duke Leopold III Friedrich Franz von Anhalt-Dessau.

55. The attribution of the invention of this ornamentation to Michel-Paul-Joseph Dewez, who worked in Brussels, should be further researched. On Dewez, see Duquenne 2002. See also cat. 26.

56. Fabian 1996, pp. 348–49, doc. no. 2.174.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 332, doc. no. 2.79; Krutisch 2007, p. 20.

58. See Rondot essay in this volume, in which he discusses David Roentgen's marketing efforts in France.

59. For an early account of Roentgen's career, especially in relation to French taste in the late eighteenth century, see Riegl 1887. On the Enlightenment, see Eitner 1970.

60. Mercier 1782–83, vol. 4, p. 121; see also Stürmer 1979a, p. 497. Trips to Spain and Austria, to see if similarly grand customized furniture would sell there, were planned in detail about 1779 but never realized. See Stiegel 2007, pp. 42–44; Himmelheber 2009, p. 45. See also the entry for cat. 51.

61. The desk's structure mirrors the facades and volumes of contemporary Rhein-Main and Franconian palaces and churches of about 1740–60. See Hager 1983.

62. For the Stroganov Palace, see Hunter-Stiebel 2000; see p. 191 for a full view of the central section of the palace facade.

63. Roentgen began preparing for his Russian venture in 1782. See Stiegel 2007, p. 66, n. 22.

64. Wiese 1998a.

65. Grimm probably received a generous recompense for his help, possibly the table today at Versailles (Arizzoli-Clémentel 2002, pp. 110–12, no. 33). See also Fabian 1986b, p. 23.

66. An etching of the empress's favorite Italian greyhound was made by C. M. Roth; sculpted versions exist in Meissen and Saint Petersburg porcelain. See Albiker 1959, pp. 21–22, no. 179; Christie's, London, sale cat., November 30–December 1, 2005, lot 24; Ducamp and Walter 2007, ill. p. 42.

67. Meusel 1785, p. 241 (Fabian 1996, p. 361, doc. no. 2.219). A few decades later Countess Alexandra Branichi, the *Oberhofmeisterin*, sold her palace and the estate surrounding it at the Moyka River to Prince B. N. Yusupov for 25,000 rubles—quite a large sum at the time. See Kukuruzova and Utochkina 2010, p. 11. It was at this palace that Rasputin was finally killed.

68. See Le Corbeiller 1969, p. 289.

69. See Tamara Rappe's essay in this volume.

70. Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 260.

71. David Roentgen to Prince Franz von Anhalt-Dessau, Neuwied, August 13, 1792, Landeshauptarchiv Sachsen-Anhalt, Germany, Abt. Dessau, A 13a, no. 16, vol. 1 (diverse Schriftstücke zu Schlossausstattungen), fols. 140r–140v. I am grateful to Bernd Willscheid for providing a full transcription of this letter.

72. Büttner 2009, p. 80.

73. On December 22, 1802, Roentgen is mentioned for the last time in the account books of François Rémond, for the payment of a gilt-bronze relief; see Prieur 2011, pp. 135–36, fig. 5a. As Roentgen was already closing his business in 1801, he may have placed this order on behalf of one of his successors or for a patron who wished to further embellish a piece of furniture acquired from Roentgen years earlier. See Fabian 1996, pp. 395–96, doc. no. 2.343; see also Büttner 2009, pp. 78–79.

74. Dr. M. G. Thilenius, autopsy report on David Roentgen, February 13, 1807, David Roentgen: Papers, 1773–1820, Thomas J. Watson Library, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, MS 44, folder 17, letter 4 (a facsimile of the report is available online at www.library.metmuseum.org). I am grateful to Dr. Richard Emslander of the Mayo Clinic, who reviewed the report and believes that Roentgen died of lung cancer. A translation of the report in full appears below:

The breast of Privy Councillor Roentgen, who died yesterday afternoon between 4 and 5 o'clock, on the 8th day of his illness, was opened this afternoon at the same hour by the brigade surgeon Leke and surgical assistant Feilenschmid in my presence and with his faithful servant Ernst in attendance.

The body of the deceased, extremely pale and emaciated, already showed numerous signs of livor mortis on the chest, belly, flanks, etc.

The right pectoral rose noticeably higher than the left one. In the incisions one could see that the fat layer had been almost completely absorbed.

On the right lung, the main location of his last illness, we discovered a great many black spots composed of clotted blood; on its lower outer surface 2 closed abscesses, the most significant one the size of a dove's egg. The upper part of the lobe was very withered and firmly attached to the pleura. The lower section, containing the closed abscesses, had a normal consistency and color.

The left lung lay completely withdrawn behind the heart; had only a third of its normal size, in its upper portion numerous hard nodules from the size of a pea to that of a hazelnut; was so ingrown with the pleura that it could only be separated with difficulty; was briefly disorganized.

Purulence streamed out of the severed windpipe. The abscesses of the right lung were filled with it. Both lungs cut open were abnormally small, and pus flowed out of each incision.

Before the inflammation that befell him, the deceased's lungs, already clearly in such a degree of suppuration, were so profoundly affected that even without this misfortune he could not have lived much longer. And this condition explains why the apparent abatement of his illness on the fourth and fifth days was of only short duration, why no turn for the better could be effected by expelling the purulence, why his normal purulent expectoration was wholly suppressed. The most vital organ was too incapable of contributing to his recovery.

75. Goethe 1821/1989, p. 355.

Abraham and David Roentgen: Moravian Artisan and Merchant-Diplomat

Bernd Willscheid

For their advice and support, I give hearty thanks to Dr. Wolfram Koeppe, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Dr. Hans-Jürgen Krüger, Fürstlich

Wiedisches Archiv, Neuwied; Rainer Raillard, Archives of the Evangelische Brüdergemeine Neuwied; and Wolfgang Thillmann.

1. Krüger 2002, p. 169.
2. See Hickel 1967, p. 33. I am grateful to Rainer Raillard for bringing this book to my attention.
3. Stürmer 1993, p. 23.
4. On the Herrnhut brethren, see Ströhm 1988; Boynton 1993; *Graf ohne Grenzen* 2000; Lahr, Richter, and Willscheid 2001. See also www.moravian.org.
5. Röntgen 1845, pp. 11–14.
6. Willscheid 2011, p. 31.
7. The Neuwied boy's school was established in 1756. See Ströhm 1988, pp. 314–25.
8. See Fumaroli 2010.
9. I thank Dr. Wolfram Koeppe for this observation.
10. See Stürmer 1993, p. 30.
11. See *ibid.*, p. 20.
12. See Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007.
13. Fabian 1996, p. 325, doc. no. 2.57.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 328, doc. no. 2.62.
15. *Ibid.*, doc. no. 2.63.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 330, doc. no. 2.69.
17. See Krüger 2011, pp. 70–72. Lawsuits brought by David's brothers prevented the transfer of ownership from becoming finalized until 1775.
18. Stürmer 1993, p. 12.
19. See *ibid.*, pp. 12–22.
20. Krüger 2011, p. 73.
21. See *ibid.*, pp. 73–74.
22. Fabian 1996, p. 372, doc. no. 2.262.
23. See Krüger 2011, pp. 73–74.
24. Stürmer 1993, p. 77.
25. See Willscheid 2011, p. 35.
26. Kolodziej 2007, p. 8.
27. See Stürmer 1993, p. 25.

A Unique Relationship: Charles Alexander of Lorraine and David Roentgen

Reinier Baarsen

1. "Einige Kostbare Cabinets-Stücke nebst einem eingelegten Zimmer." See Huth 1928, pp. 8–9, 50–51, doc. nos. 11, 12, and pl. 55 (left); Huth 1974, pp. 13, 83–84, doc. nos. 11, 12, and ill. no. 153; Fabian 1996, p. 34, no. 28, pp. 333–34, doc. no. 2.86.
2. See Baulez 1996.
3. On Charles Alexander of Lorraine and his patronage, see *Karel Alexander van Lotharingen* 1987a; *Karel Alexander van Lotharingen* 1987b; Baarsen and De Ren 2005; Baarsen 2007; Baarsen 2008.
4. Fabian 1996, p. 341, doc. no. 2.138 (translated from the French); see also Lemoine-Isabeau 1972, p. 20. The article by Lemoine-Isabeau, fundamental for the study of Charles Alexander of Lorraine's patronage of Roentgen, also contains information about a number of others in the Austrian Netherlands who bought furniture from Roentgen, doubtless inspired by the duke's example, and who were often helped by Charles Alexander in practical ways.
5. "Acheté 1 pendule en musique, 116 doubles souverains, 2 table de jeu, 30 doubles souverains, et un bureau à cylindre, 40 doubles souverains"; "Païé [...] at Provot pour 2 secrétaire et une table à écrire de l'home de Neuviite." Charles Alexander of Lorraine 1766–79/2000, pp. 345–46.
6. Büttner 2006; Andreas Büttner in Büttner and Willscheid 2006, pp. 122–30, nos. 99–103; Büttner 2007, pp. 51–55, and pp. 185–89, 250–59, 328–32, nos. 35, 65, 66, 108.

7. Baulez 1996, p. 102, figs. 8, 9.

8. "Travaillie aussi en marquetterie de louvrage de neuvitte avec des figures en bois colore et du bronze dore et une petite gallerie au dessus." *Algemeen Rijksarchief/Archives Générales du Royaume, Brussels, Secretarie van State en Oorlog/Secrétaire d'État et de Guerre*, 2604, fols. 62–64 (Fabian 1996, p. 342, doc. no. 2.145 [translated from the French]). During the nineteenth century, the secretary entered the collection of the Lords Hillingdon, from which it was sold, at Christie's, London, on June 29, 1972, lot 91. It was sold again, at Christie's, New York, on October 18, 2002, lot 330. See Stürmer 1993, pp. 44–48, ill. p. 46; Fabian 1996, p. 151, no. 345.

9. The second secretary was sold, at Sotheby's, London, on June 11, 2003, lot 119 (Stürmer 1993, pp. 44–48, ill. p. 47; Fabian 1996, p. 150, no. 344). The payment of 50 doubles souverains probably did not cover the full cost of the three pieces mentioned in Charles Alexander of Lorraine's entry in his diary.

10. On occasion, craftsmen in Brussels worked on mounts for Roentgen; for example, in 1778 four crates of bronze mounts that had been gilded in Brussels were sent to the cabinetmaker in Neuwied. See Lemoine-Isabeau 1972, p. 25; Fabian 1996, p. 346, doc. no. 2.164.

11. Fabian 1996, pp. 160–63, no. 364.

12. On November 18, 1775, Charles Alexander paid him 8 louis for a casket; see Charles Alexander of Lorraine 1766–79/2000, p. 360.

13. A similar document, formerly in the library of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, has since been lost. Although Fabian (1996, pp. 353–54, doc. no. 2.191 [ill. in facsimile, pp. 354–56]) has dated it to 1799, there are ambiguities in the description that lead me to think it was written before any of the three cabinets was finished. See also Stiegel 2007, pp. 44–52.

14. Baulez 1996, pp. 98–99, figs. 1–4; Baulez 2001, pp. 283–84, fig. 5.

15. "L'home de Neuvitte at apporté icy un bureau, sur laquelle il y at une pendule comme la mienne et quantité de secrets. En luy rendant la mienne, je luy ai promis 333½ doubles souverains de plus, ce qui fait que cette machine me coûte quatre cent cinquante huit doubles souverains." Charles Alexander of Lorraine 1766–79/2000, p. 388.

16. Baarsen 2005.

17. Fabian 1996, p. 241, nos. 537, 538; Baarsen 2005, pp. 466–67, figs. 19, 20 (fig. 19 is reversed).

18. Fabian 1996, pp. 344–46, doc. no. 2.163 (ill. in facsimile). This document, like the one referred to in note 13 above, has disappeared from the Victoria and Albert Museum.

19. "Vue la 1^r pièces de mat tapisserie de bois pozé"; "Vue ma chambre d'odience finis"; "païé 1000 louis at l'homme de Neuvit pour son ouvrage de la chambre d'odience." Charles Alexander of Lorraine 1766–79/2000, pp. 487–88.

David Roentgen and the Court of Versailles

Bertrand Rondot

1. Wille 1857 (ed.), vol. 1, p. 577 (entry for August 30, 1774). On David Roentgen's activities in France, see Christian Baulez's fundamental study, Baulez 1996.

2. Himmelheber 1976, p. 17.

3. Baulez 1996, p. 99.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 109ff.; Prieur 2011.

5. Baulez 1996, p. 111.

6. "David Roentgen, Englischer Cabinet-Macher in Neuwied am Rhein, Fabriziert und verkauft alle

möglichen Sorten von C[abi]nets-Ameublements sowohl nach de englischen [wie] Frantzösischen Gout, nach der neuesten Art und Er[fin-]dung . . . mit Engl[schen] Schössern und im Feuer verguldeten Zierathen [und] Beschlägen versehen." Advertising card on a piece of furniture formerly at Schloss Moritzburg, Saxony; cited in Greber 1980, vol. 1, pp. 116–17.

7. Claude Pahin de la Blancherie, *Prospectus, for Nouvelles de la République des Lettres et des Arts*, November 7, 1777.

8. *Ibid.*, foreword.

9. Pahin mentioned Wille in the foreword to the *Prospectus*, and he undoubtedly wrote the foreword with Wille's cooperation.

10. Claude Pahin de la Blancherie in *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres et des Arts*, no. 8, March 16, 1779, p. 51, col. 1.

11. *Ibid.*

12. *Ibid.* In 1791 plans were made to dismantle the desk, probably due to its style, which was alien to the French taste. Proposals for reworking elements of the desk, made by Guillaume Benemann and Jean-Georges Robiersky, were not followed. The musical mechanism was removed during the Revolution, and the desk was finally sold in 1826 by the administration of the Garde-Meuble. It was dismantled soon afterward.

13. Claude Pahin de la Blancherie in *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres et des Arts*, no. 3, February 9, 1779, p. 11.

14. Claude Pahin de la Blancherie in *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres et des Arts*, no. 8, March 16, 1779, p. 51, col. 1. On the secretary, see Verlet 1961; Himmelheber 1994.

15. Claude Pahin de la Blancherie in *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres et des Arts*, no. 9, March 23, 1779, p. 57, col. 2 (Fabian 1996, p. 347, doc. no. 2.170 [translated from the French; ill. in facsimile, p. 348]).

16. Although this author gives the height as about 11 feet (358 cm), Fabian (1996, p. 164, no. 365) says that it was 378 cm, or more than 12 feet, high. The discrepancy may relate to different interpretations of the eighteenth-century French measuring system, but we can't know for certain because the piece as a whole no longer exists.

17. Claude Pahin de la Blancherie in *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres et des Arts*, no. 9, March 23, 1779, p. 57, col. 2, p. 58, col. 1 (Fabian 1996, p. 347, doc. no. 2.170 [translated from the French; ill. in facsimile, p. 348]).

18. ". . . solche grosse Stücke und Bronze nicht so fein und schön arbeiten"; quoted from an article in the *Königl. Privilegirte Berlinische Staats- und gelehrte Zeitung* (also known as the *Vossische Zeitung*), July 1, 1779. See Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 124 (ill. in facsimile, p. 125); Fabian 1996, p. 351, doc. no. 2.184 (ill. in facsimile, p. 352).

19. Baarsen and De Ren 2005; Sotheby's, New York, sale cat., April 25, 1998, lot 254. On the clock, see Antweiler 1979.

20. See Johann Heinrich Merck, letter of February 21, 1779, to Anna Amalia von Sachsen-Weimar-Eisenach (Merck 2007 [ed.], vol. 2, pp. 202–3, letter no. 323; see also Himmelheber 2009).

21. For Roentgen's letter, see Archives Nationales, Paris, document dated "March 1779"; transcribed in Baulez 1996, p. 100. See also Archives Nationales, Paris, o¹ 1915, dossier 2, reply dated April 19, 1779. On Oeben's testimonial, see Stratmann-Döhler 2002.

22. On July 1, 1779, the *Königl. Privilegirte Berlinische Staats- und gelehrte Zeitung* published an article on

Roentgen, in which the cabinetmaker is described as *ébéniste-mécanicien du Roi et de la Reine*. See note 18 above.

23. Archives Nationales, Paris, Y 9333. See also Baulez 1996, pp. 100–101. Émile Molinier gave the date as May 24; see Molinier 1898, vol. 3, p. 261. Then, the pieces of furniture could have the *estampille*. See a rolltop desk with the mark "D. ROENTGEN" in the Kunstgewerbemuseum, Berlin, inv. no. W-1989,40 (Stiegel 2007, pp. 72–77, no. 6).

24. On the luxury trade in eighteenth-century Paris, see Sargentson 1996.

25. See Baulez 1996, p. 101.

26. Archives Nationales, Paris, O¹ 3426, Versailles, Recépissés des Meubles envoyés à Paris, Le 5. Jer. [janvier] 1792; also quoted in Baulez 1996, p. 101. The payment of 2,400 livres for the piece mentioned in Beauchamp 1909, p. 71, and quoted in Baulez 1996, p. 101, must have been a partial payment, since another commode of the same type was appraised during the Revolution at the much higher figure of 4,000 livres, which included a deep discount.

27. Archives Départementales des Yvelines, ADY Q 11. On the furniture seized in 1793 from the storehouse of the comtesse d'Artois at Versailles, see Baulez 1996, p. 106; Kisluk-Grosheide 2005; Wolfram Koeppe in Kisluk-Grosheide, Koeppe, and Rieder 2006, pp. 180–83, no. 75.

28. Beauchamp 1909, p. 91; Baulez 1996, p. 102. Sold during the Revolution, it was purchased by Louis XVIII in 1816. It is now in the Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (inv. no. Vmb 13942). For the comte de Provence secretary mentioned later in this sentence, see Archives Départementales des Yvelines, ADY IV Q 3.

29. Baulez 1996, p. 104. A lump sum of 50 louis was given to Campan, the queen's cabinet secretary, "to cover payment for the copper and glass jar for the doll . . . and for packing costs, transport of the doll to Versailles, and transport of the doll and its jar from Versailles to the Académie des Sciences on two litters." Quoted in Baulez 1996, p. 104.

30. Archives de Paris, D5 B6 2576, Journal de Collignon, fol. 13. See also Baulez 1996, p. 104.

31. Archives Départementales des Yvelines, ADY IV Q 3; quoted in Baulez 1996, p. 106.

32. Archives Nationales, Paris, R¹ 322. See also Baulez 1996, p. 106.

33. For the advertisement, see Fabian 1996, p. 358, doc. no. 2.198 (translated from the French; ill. in facsimile). Roentgen's colleague Ferdinand Schwerdfeger would win recognition for his finishes in the second half of the 1780s.

34. Tourneux 1877–82, vol. 1 (1877), p. 43, quoted in Vial, Marcel, and Girodie 1922, p. 127. For the furniture ensemble owned by Grimm, see Fabian 1986, p. 23; Sauer-Kaulbach 2003, p. 20.

35. Archives Nationales, Paris, O² 675, "Inventaire général du Mobilier du Palais des Tuileries et Louvre 1807." Baulez 1996, p. 104, fig. 10.

36. Archives Nationales, Paris, archives privées, 300 AP (1) 780*, Inventaire après décès de Philippe, duc d'Orléans, November 29, 1785–March 21, 1786, Étienne-Thimoléon Yasabeau de Montval, notaire, no. 1090: "Deux bureaux mécaniques se reployant en plusieurs parties, se montant à volonté en bois d'acajou ornés de bronzes dorés d'or moulu, prisés 1500 livres."

37. The *princes du sang* are the cousins of the king. A first scion of the princes de Bourbon Condé goes back to Louis I de Bourbon Condé (1530–1569), uncle of Henry IV, and a second scion is the Orléans family, descendant of Philippe, brother of Louis XIV.

The *princes du sang* included eventually the legitimated children of the king, such as the duc de Penthièvre, grandson of Louis XIV.

38. Hôtel de La Béraudière, Paris, sale cat., comte de La Béraudière, May 18–30, 1885, lot 862; Galerie Charpentier, Paris, sale cat., June 14, 1955, lot 56, pl. xxii.

39. Archives Nationales, Paris, Minutier Central, Étude XXXV 962, maître Tion. Inventaire après décès du Citoyen Bourbon Penthièvre, April 27, 1793, p. 462, Château de Sceaux, appartement no. 8, cabinet.

Additional examples of the table include one at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (inv. no. 381–1874), and another at the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (Greber 1980, vol. 2, pp. 310–11, ill. nos. 613–15).

40. Himmelheber 1976, p. 21.

41. *Journal de Paris*, 3 Thermidor, year VIII (July 22, 1800), suppl. to fol. 1474: “voluntary sale, rue du Bacq, no. 470, near rue de Varennes, rich and beautiful furniture.” The description continues: “adorned with well-made bronze, gilded with matte gold, 4 feet 4 inches high, 3 feet 10 inches wide, 2 feet 9 inches deep.”

42. Salverte 1923, pp. 122–23.

43. On January 8, 1785, Roentgen signed a receipt for 800 livres, the final payment for works and supplies provided to the marquis de Marigny, who had died nearly four years earlier (information kindly provided by Christian Baulez). Regarding the Hôtel de Marigny, see Gordon 2003.

44. The table was included in a sale by Rieunier & Associés, Drouot-Richelieu, Paris, March 26, 2003, lot 179 (ill. in cat.).

45. Tsentral’nyi Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv, Saint Petersburg, invoice dated March 23, 1786, archive 468, inventory 1, part 2, file 3901, sheet 163, no. 26 (Fabian 1996, pp. 364–65, doc. no. 2.230 [translated from the French; ill. in facsimile, pp. 366–67]).

46. I identified that example in the storerooms of the Mobilier National in Paris, inv. no. GME 17092; it was later moved to the Château de Versailles (inv. no. GME 17092) and has since been on long-term loan to the Château de Versailles. See Bertrand Rondot in Gautier and Rondot 2011, pp. 163–65, ill. Also, the mention of “a superb drawer forte-piano with no name[plate]” among the furniture seized from Louis Hercule Timoléon de Cossé-Brissac, loyal friend to Madame Du Barry, compellingly suggests a Roentgen work. Although other known pianos by Roentgen bear his nameplate clearly inscribed and the one mentioned above does not, Roentgen seems to have been the only designer making this type of piano at that time. Unfortunately, the piano from the Mobilier National was deprived of its instrumental workings and turned into a writing desk in the early nineteenth century. See Bruni 1890 (ed.), pp. 15–16, no. 40.

47. *Annonces, affiches et avis divers*, December 27, 1785, p. 3453 (reprinted in Salverte 1923, p. 122).

48. Wille 1857 (ed.), vol. 2, p. 146 (entry for June 1, 1787).

49. See Stürmer 1985, pp. 83–84.

David Roentgen under the “Special Protection” of the King of Prussia

Achim Stiegel

1. David Roentgen’s relationship with his immediate sovereigns, the counts—and after 1784, the princes—on Wied-Neuwied, naturally lasted even

longer, from 1750 to 1791. He maintained contact with Prince Franz von Anhalt-Dessau for a comparable length of time, from 1771 to 1799.

2. For an overview of Prussia’s political situation in the second half of the eighteenth century, see Stürmer 1982.

3. For details relating to such transports of heavy freight from Berlin to Saint Petersburg, see Dracklé 2003.

4. “. . . and that is what a carpenter is called: Mr. Privy Council!—This is certainly the only example in the history of the world that a carpenter serves as privy council.” Baron August Joseph Ludwig von Wackerbarth in his report of autumn 1791 on his Rhine journey; see Fabian 1996, pp. 316–17, doc. no. 1.14.

5. Entry for November 9, 1792, in the journal of the Neuwied brotherhood’s bachelors’ quarters (archives of the Evangelische Brüdergemeine Neuwied); see Fabian 1996, p. 374, no. 2.271.

6. The following description of Roentgen’s business dealings is abbreviated from Stiegel 2009.

7. Roentgen to Mercy-Argenteau in Paris, June 30, 1785, Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Vienna (Fabian 1996, p. 362, doc. no. 2.224).

8. Report of the Brussels authorities to the Conseil des Finances from March 25, 1775 (Fabian 1996, p. 341, doc. no. 2.138 [translated from the French]).

9. Charles Alexander of Lorraine, *Journal Secret*, entry for August 23, 1779, Algemeen Rijksarchief/Archives Générales du Royaume, Brussels, Secrétaire van State en Oorlog/Secrétaire d’État et de Guerre (Charles Alexander of Lorraine 1766–79/2000, p. 388; see also Fabian 1996, p. 342, doc. no. 2.143 [translated from the French]).

10. Johann Heinrich Merck, letter of February 21, 1779, to Anna Amalia von Sachsen-Weimar-Eisenach (Merck 2007 [ed.], vol. 2, pp. 202–3, letter no. 323; see also Himmelheber 2009; Stiegel 2009).

11. Claude Pahin de la Blancherie in *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres et des Arts*, no. 9, March 23, 1779, p. 57, col. 2, p. 58, col. 1 (Fabian 1996, p. 347, doc. no. 2.170 [translated from the French; ill. in facsimile, p. 348]).

12. See Mercy-Argenteau to Roentgen, May 17, 1779, Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Vienna (Fabian 1996, p. 349, doc. no. 2.176; see also Stiegel 2009, p. 59).

13. *Königl. Privilegirte Berlinische Staats- und gelehrte Zeitung*, July 1, 1779 (Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 124 [ill. in facsimile, p. 125]; Fabian 1996, p. 351, doc. no. 2.184 [ill. in facsimile, p. 352]).

14. Roentgen to Mercy-Argenteau in Paris, June 27, 1779, Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Vienna (Fabian 1996, pp. 350–51, doc. no. 2.182).

15. Both the original and replacement doors were preserved with the cabinet until 1919 but have now been lost; see Stiegel 2007, pp. 150–51, no. 26.

16. Nearly all of the marquetry panels can be identified as having belonged to the Paris secretary cabinet, evidenced by the presence of the top corner gussets still visible in the repaired back surfaces; see Himmelheber 1994.

17. Johann Heinrich Merck, letter of February 21, 1779, to Anna Amalia von Sachsen-Weimar-Eisenach (Merck 2007 [ed.], vol. 2, pp. 202–3, letter no. 323; see also Himmelheber 2009; Stiegel 2009). The portrait was removed during the French Revolution, sold separately in 1798 (see Verlet 1961, p. 135), and replaced by an ornamental medallion that adorns the marquetry panel to this day.

18. To be sure, the marquetry on the Versailles secretary cabinet is lacking the “carved” monogram

on the column pedestal. On this point the contemporary description of the Versailles secretary cabinet by Claude Pahin de la Blancherie is in error; see Pahin de la Blancherie in *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres et des Arts*, no. 9, March 23, 1779, p. 57, col. 2, p. 58, col. 1 (Fabian 1996, p. 347, doc. no. 2.170 [translated from the French; ill. in facsimile, p. 348]). This incised detail, surely added while the door was still in the workshop, first appears in the Prussian desk.

19. This possibility was not broached in the case of the secretary cabinet sold to Charles Alexander of Lorraine three years earlier; its center panel pictures Geometry and Mathematics personified.

20. Until World War II, Frederick’s oval table, known in several variations and purchased for 15 louis d’or (invoice dated July 15, 1770; Huth 1928, p. 50, doc. no. 11), was still in the collection of the Potsdam Palaces, but it has since been lost. See Huth 1928, pl. 55 (left); Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 139, vol. 2, p. 139, ill. no. 320; Fabian 1996, p. 34, no. 28.

21. For Leopold’s table, see Andreas Büttner in Büttner and Willscheid 2006, pp. 122–23, no. 99. For the princess’s furniture, see most recently Büttner and Willscheid 2006.

22. Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg, inv. no. IV 696 (Schmitz 1923, p. 40; Göres 1976, no. 11; Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 239, vol. 2, pp. 330–31, ill. nos. 668, 669; Fabian 1996, p. 111, no. 243; Burkhardt Göres in *Friedrich Wilhelm II.* 1997, p. 244, no. III.33). A copy of the invoice dated December 30, 1786, is in the Roentgen-Museum, Neuwied (Fabian 1996, p. 366, doc. no. 2.231).

23. Invoice of January 24–25, 1787 (Huth 1928, p. 57, doc. no. 57; Fabian 1996, pp. 366–67, doc. no. 2.232).

24. The rolltop desk (formerly in the Hohenzollern Museum, Berlin, inv. no. HM 4351) has been lost. It is illustrated in Stiegel 2007, p. 163; see also Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 243, vol. 2, pp. 332–33, ill. no. 675; Fabian 1996, p. 114, no. 252; Kemper 2005, p. 191, fig. 182). The longcase clock is preserved in the Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg (Stiegel 2007, pp. 154–55, no. 28).

25. Stiegel 2007, pp. 156–57, no. 29.

26. Formerly in the Hohenzollern Museum, Berlin, inv. no. HM 4450 (Huth 1928, pl. 27; Göres 1974, p. 55 [“The ‘large table with cabinet’ delivered in 1794 is described in a supplement to the 1793 inventory dated February 10, 1794, as a ‘conference table in mahogany resting on eight feet, decorated with bronze, with a cabinet on top with sliding doors, three spring-activated drawers on either side’”]; Huth 1974, p. 94, doc. no. 78; Greber 1980, vol. 1, pp. 259–60; Fabian 1996, p. 92, no. 198; Kemper 2005, figs. 70, 177).

27. Invoice dated March 24, 1794 (Huth 1928, p. 59, doc. no. 78).

28. A similar but considerably smaller model with a lectern that could be placed on top was published in the January 1801 issue of the Weimar *Journal des Luxus und der Moden*, p. 96, pl. ix (Fabian 1996, p. 395, doc. no. 2.342; ill. in Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 261 [left]).

29. A variant of a model with columns on a high base known in a number of examples, the second longcase clock stood in the green French Chamber of the Berlin Palace beginning in 1793. Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg, inv. no. V 16 (Schmitz 1923, p. 39 [left]; Huth 1928, pl. 58 [right]; Göres 1974, p. 55, ill. no. 10; Huth 1974, ill. no. 201; Göres 1976, no. 15; Greber 1980, vol. 1, pp. 250–51, vol. 2, p. 355, ill. no. 720; Fabian 1984, p. 323, no. 46; Fabian 1996, p. 195, no. 401; Burkhardt Göres in *Friedrich Wilhelm II.* 1997, p. 239, no. III.23).

30. The names of a few other Berlin clients of Roentgen's are documented: Wilhelmine Gräfin von Lichtenau purchased a table, and a rolltop desk was acquired from the estate of Prince Louis Ferdinand and Count Redern. See most recently Willscheid 2007b, p. 37.
31. Aside from a brief mobilization for the War of the Bavarian Succession (1778–79), Prussia remained at peace for nearly thirty years, from 1763 until 1792, when it joined with Austria in the War of the First Coalition, and then for another ten years, following the Basel Accords of 1795.
32. One such pass through Prussian territory, dated September 29, 1788, survives; David Roentgen: Papers, 1773–1820, Thomas J. Watson Library, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, MS 44, folder 9, letter 1; copy in the Mittelrhein-Museum, Koblenz (Fabian 1996, p. 369, doc. no. 2.242).
33. Safe-conduct letter and pass dated December 26, 1800, David Roentgen: Papers, 1773–1820, Thomas J. Watson Library, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, MS 44, folder 10, letter 1; copy in the Mittelrhein-Museum, Koblenz (Fabian 1996, p. 395, doc. no. 2.341).
34. Safe-conduct letter dated December 21, 1795, David Roentgen: Papers, 1773–1820, Thomas J. Watson Library, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, MS 44, folder 10, letter 6; copy in the Mittelrhein-Museum, Koblenz (Fabian 1996, p. 379, doc. no. 2.295).

Neuwied Furniture and the Russian Luxury Market

Tamara Rappe

1. Catherine II 2005 (ed.), p. 104.
2. Although the desk Roentgen would present to the empress in 1784 was not mentioned until Baron Grimm's letter of July 1783 (see note 3, below), the *ébéniste* may have spent some time on research as early as 1782.
3. *Sbornik* 1885, p. 341; English translation from Huth 1974, p. 3.
4. There are now twenty-two Roentgen pieces preserved in the Hermitage. For the most part, they are works in the neoclassical style, but a few of them were executed in the earlier rococo manner, including a box adorned with a portrait medallion of Louis XV of France as well as a desk with chinoiserie decorations after drawings by François Boucher that belonged to members of the Russian nobility. Many other objects once in private Russian collections were lost or destroyed during and after the revolution. Still others were sold by the Soviet regime at auctions in Berlin between 1927 and 1932. On the auctions, see *Muzeinye rasprodazhi* 2006, p. 85.
5. Göres 1980, nos. 7, 8, 11, 21, 22, 24, 25. The author, Burkhardt Göres, also wrote his dissertation on this subject (Göres 1979).
6. Göres 1980, nos. 3–5, 9, 10, 12, 13, 27, 28.
7. Number 50, “un grand Pupitre mecanique pour écrire assis et de bout, Sur monté d'un groupe représentant la Science[,] l'étude et la Vigilance.” Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv, Saint Petersburg, invoice dated March 23, 1786, archive 468, inventory 1, part 2, file 3901, sheet 164 (Fabian 1996, pp. 365–66, doc. no. 2.230 [translated from the French; ill. in facsimile, pp. 366–67]). See also Göres 1980, no. 9.
8. “Teutonica Musa Obtulit et vovit anno MDCCLXXVI INVENTORE Roentgen Neo-Wiedensi.”

9. Roche 1913, vol. 2, pl. LXXI.
10. Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv, Saint Petersburg, invoice dated March 23, 1786, archive 468, inventory 1, part 2, file 3901, sheet 163, no. 1 (Fabian 1996, pp. 365–66, doc. no. 2.230 [translated from the French; ill. in facsimile, pp. 366–67]). See also Göres 1980, no. 3.
11. Baulez 1996, p. 115.
12. Shelkovnikov 1961, p. 312; Göres 1980, no. 4.
13. Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv, Saint Petersburg, invoice dated December 1787, archive 468, inventory 1, file 3903, sheet 17 (Fabian 1996, p. 368, doc. no. 2.238 [translated from the French; ill. in facsimile]); see also Göres 1980, no. 20; Baulez 1996, p. 115.
14. Benisovich 1952, p. 166 (ill. in facsimile); see also Göres 1980, nos. 15–19.
15. Georgi 1794, p. 337.
16. Castéra 1800, vol. 1, p. 34.
17. See Baulez 1996, p. 115.
18. The original drawing for the Plato medallion is published in Baulez 1996, p. 102, fig. 9. On it is an inscription by Rémond indicating that the medallion was made in an edition of four. This model was copied numerous times with insignificant changes. Rémond's Plato medallion also adorns one of the rolltop desks in the Hermitage, which Roentgen delivered to the Russian court in 1786.
19. Baulez 1996, p. 112.
20. Catherine II 2005 (ed.), preface, p. xxx.

The Princely Furniture of the Roentgens

1 Tilt-top table

1. Two similar tables, both privately owned, are documented for 1742; see Bernd Willscheid in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 133, no. 2. See also Van Drie 2007.
2. Röntgen 1845, p. 8; cited in Fabian 1996, p. 404, doc. no. 2.396. Unlike his father and his brother, Ludwig used the traditional German spelling of his last name.
3. Koepe 2011.
4. See Hayward and Medlam 1993, p. 25.
5. His name is also given as Hinz, Hints, and Hinds. Quoted from the *Daily Post* in Beard and Gilbert 1986, p. 434; Gilbert and Murdoch 1993, p. 21. For further examples of English brass-inlaid furniture by the cabinetmakers William and Richard Gomm, see Boynton 1980.
6. Hayward and Medlam 1993, p. 26.
7. Koepe 1997.

2 Tea chest

1. Proud of the skills he had mastered in England, Abraham called himself an “English Cabinet-Maker”; see the essay by Wolfram Koepe in this volume. Much of the information in this entry was first presented in Koepe 1997. See also the study of a tea chest in the English royal collections published in Koepe 2007b.
2. See, for example, Fabian 1986b, p. 75, ill. no. 124.
3. Wolfram Koepe in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 134, no. 3.
4. Goodison 1975, pls. 42 (handle) and 44 (bracket feet); for additional sales catalogues, see Crom 1994.
5. Christie's, New York, sale cat., September 17, 1990; another comparable English example was offered by Christie's, London, July 9, 1998, lot 19; see also Hayward and Medlam 1993, pp. 122–25, pls. 161–69.
6. Koepe 2011, p. 94, fig. 5.

3 Casket

1. Fabian 1996, pp. 250–51, nos. 575–79; Himmelheber 1998, p. 347, fig. 18. For other Roentgen boxes with comparable floral decoration, see Greber 1980, vol. 2, p. 159, ill. no. 306; Christie's, London, sale cat., December 9, 1982, lot 21; Gary 2008, p. 274, for an example in the Musée Nissim de Camondo, Paris, said to have belonged to Marie Antoinette.
2. Susanne König-Lein in *Weltenharmonie* 2000, p. 325, no. 388, ill. p. 316.
3. For an example made for the court at Baden, see Sotheby's, Baden-Baden, sale cat., October 5–21, 1995, lot 2106; Neidhardt Antiquitäten, Munich, Lagerkatalog, no. 22, 1996, back cover. For a second example, in a private collection in the United States, see Fabian 1996, p. 246, no. 557.

4 Rotating tabernacle

1. Braun 1924, vol. 2, p. 122.
2. According to that reading, CV would stand for *veteris cellae* and MFPA for *Maria Fides Peetz, Abbatisa*; see Ecker and Engelmann 2008, p. 190.
3. Hager 1983.
4. See Ecker and Engelmann 2008; Ecker and Engelmann 2009. I am grateful to Diana Ecker and Paul Engelmann for discussing this object so extensively with me.
5. Ecker and Engelmann 2008; Ecker and Engelmann 2009. Ecker and Engelmann have also established the tabernacle's close connection to Johann Philipp von Walderdorff's desk now in Amsterdam and his chair now in Cologne (cats. 12, 13).
6. Fabian 1996, p. 323, doc. no. 2.37; see also Ecker and Engelmann 2008; Ecker and Engelmann 2009.
7. Ferraris 1992, pp. 102–7; Ecker and Engelmann 2008, p. 190.
8. Some pieces of Mainz furniture of earlier periods such as the creative shapes that Heinrich Ludwig Rohde (1683–1755) applied to his pieces were mistakenly attributed to Piffetti's workshop.

5 Harlequin table

1. The text of this entry is a shortened version of an entry by Achim Stiegel in Stiegel 2007, pp. 16–21, no. 2.
2. The Roentgens' lottery announcement of June 29, 1768, lists, as number 7, “A commode inlaid with flowers and musical trophies, at 70 ducats”; Fabian 1996, p. 331, doc. no. 2.71 (ill. in facsimile). Many of the workshop's designs were borrowed from Jean-Baptiste Pillement and other French printmakers; for example, the shepherd with his dog looking out from behind the rocaille ornament on the first top of this table appears to have been patterned after an engraving by Jean Mondon, which was also popularized about 1745 by the Augsburg engraver Johann Georg Merz (see Dreier 1979, fig. 69; Dreier 1980, fig. 3).
3. According to the classification introduced by Josef Maria Greber, this is a lattice “of the third type”; see Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 63.
4. In 1771 Gervais billed Roentgen three gulden for “the creation and delivery of three stamps that [Gervais had] engraved for his rosettes”; account books of Elie Gervais for February 27, 1771, archives of the Evangelische Brüdergemeine Neuwied (Fabian 1996, p. 334, doc. no. 2.88; see also Stürmer 1982, pp. 254f.).
5. The term was first used in print in *The Cabinet-Makers London Book of Prices, and Designs of Cabinet-Work* (1788 and 1791–94).

6 Reading and writing stand

1. For the advertisement illustrating the two prototypes, see Hayward and Medlam 1993, p. 26 and p. 27, pl. 19. See also an engraving of about 1760 in Ince and Mayhew 1762, pl. xxvi (reprinted in Ward-Jackson 1984, p. 51, no. 156). Related to the present stand are two examples in Pommersfelden Palace, one that includes candleholders, and a less elaborate version in a private collection in Germany; see Greber 1980, vol. 2, p. 31, ill. nos. 53–56, p. 34, ill. nos. 59, 60.
2. The concave areas between the tops of the legs are marked by three channels inlaid with ebony. Achim Stiegel has noted this elegant abstract feature on several other parade pieces by Abraham Roentgen (Stiegel 2007, p. 34); see also cats. 4, 12, and 18. Another fine detail on this stand is the rounded upper drawers; see Raymond 2000, vol 3, p. 83 (ill. lower right). For another example with this feature, see Wolfram Koeppel in Willscheid and Thillmann 2011, p. 237, no. 6. For the complex marquetry pattern, see the appendix by Hans Michaelsen in this volume.
3. Landrus 2009, p. 44. The three nails are also represented on the rotating tabernacle (cat. 4); they are inlaid in mother-of-pearl below the letters *IHS* on the front base.
4. I thank Bernd Willscheid for discussing the Walderdorff coat of arms with me.
5. Illustrated in *Furniture: From Rococo to Art Deco* 2000 (p. 241, upper left) is a “lady’s table” attributed to Abraham Roentgen (but more likely made in Genoa). The traylike top has short legs that fit into a stand. Other examples of such *tables de lit* are known; see Plas 1975, p. 86, figs. 103, 104 (both in the Château de Malmaison).

7 Sofa

1. Fabian 1986b, p. 336, doc. no. 2.20, n. 1.
2. Koeppel 1992, p. 214, no. M118.
3. Documented by a receipt of partial payment for the pair signed by David Roentgen on October 13, 1765 (Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 76 [ill. in facsimile]); this is one of the earliest occasions on which David acted in business matters.
4. Greber 1980, vol. 2, pp. 26–30, ill. nos. 35–41, 43, 46, 48–50.
5. The color selected for the current fabric was based on a fragment of the original silk upholstery that was found during conservation of the sofa in the early 1980s. I am grateful to the late Count Alexander zu Münster and the late Princess Margarete von Isenburg-Birstein for this information. The upholstery fabric now on the piece was purchased by Count zu Münster and the grandmother of the current owner from a silk manufactory in Lyon.
6. Fabian 1996, p. 135, no. 316 (the secretary now at the J. Paul Getty Museum, acc. no. 2003.109), p. 190, ill. no. 443. See also fig. 58 in this volume and a commode with cabinet (Fabian 1986b, pp. 140–41, ill. nos. 314–20).
7. For the marquetry cartouche on the pendant sofa, which is still in the same private collection, see Fabian 1986b, p. 262, ill. no. 624. The two sofas are shown together in Greber 1980, vol. 2, p. 87, ill. no. 163.
8. One wonders whether the birch veneer pieces were not decorated instead by using a printing technique and then glued to the bulging surface and retouched.
9. In this process, designs printed on paper were cut out, glued onto furniture, painted, and lacquered. See Huth 1971, p. 31. See, for comparison, the figures painted

on horn within Boule marquetry on a commode by Nicholas Sageot (Christie’s, London, July 5, 2012, lot 8).

10. Stiegel 2007, pp. 20–21; Koeppel 2011, ill. pp. 92, 93, 97, 98–99. Stylized herons, like those in the marquetry on the sofa here, appear often in Roentgen marquetry. See, for examples, Fabian 1986b, p. 34, ill. no. 15, p. 140, ill. nos. 314, 315.

8 Multifunctional commode

1. See Fabian 1996, p. 70, no. 122, for an illustration of the interior of the upper drawer and a drawing of the construction; this unique type is discussed in Greber 1980, vol. 1, pp. 82–84. The commode handles were cast by Birmingham foundries; for the model, see Crom 1994, pl. 44. For a restored example of a comparable commode from the royal Prussian collection with partly replaced mounts and possibly stripped floral decoration, see Christine Kitzlinger in Willscheid and Thillmann 2011, pp. 246–47, no. 11. This commode is now in the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg (inv. no. 2005.199).
2. I am grateful to Christopher Rowell, Furniture Curator at the National Trust, United Kingdom, for providing information on this commode.

9 Harlequin table

1. The name “Harlequin” derives from the eponymous role of the *commedia dell’arte*’s master of disguises; see Gilbert 1998, vol. 3, p. 659.
2. Huth 1974, ill. nos. 2–4; Greber 1980, vol. 2, p. 10, ill. nos. 5–7.
3. Mariette 1727/1929, pl. 474. The London advertisement is published in Gilbert and Murdoch 1993, p. 19, pl. 11, and p. 27, pl. 19 (detail).
4. Compare a *table à transformations* of about 1760, attributed to Pierre Migeon (Christie’s, Paris, sale cat., May 4–5, 2011, lot 350), and a rococo table probably made in Rome in the eighteenth century (see González-Palacios 1970, p. xxx, pl. LVII).
5. Greber 1980, vol. 2, p. 42, ill. no. 70 (Victoria and Albert Museum example); Huth 1974, ill. no. 122 (formerly private collection, Berlin; top inlaid with ivory cartouche); Van Drie 2007, p. 95, fig. 1, and Koeppel 2011, p. 92, fig. 1 (same composition in brass on a table of 1742 in a private collection).
6. A related bird motif occurs on other pieces; see Fabian 1986b, p. 140, ill. nos. 314, 315. For a bronze cartouche version, see Greber 1980, vol. 2, p. 50, ill. no. 86.
7. See Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 63.

10 Writing desk

1. Chippendale 1762, no. LXXXIV; Ward-Jackson 1984, p. 46, no. 108. See also Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 67.
2. For a contemporary illustration of some late 1730s English furniture with similar parts, see Gilbert and Murdoch 1993, p. 19, pl. 11. Fig. 51 in this volume shows a detail of the advertisement.
3. For additional views of this writing desk, see Fabian 1982, p. 61, figs. 88, 89. The same mechanism can be found on two dressing tables (both in private collections) of a slightly later date; see Fabian 1996, p. 35, no. 30, p. 37, no. 33.
4. The small blind escutcheons are only decorative. See Hummel 1964, p. 191, fig. 3. The desk’s English brass handles were a popular model sold by mail

order not only in Europe but in the American colonies and were copied there (see Nutting 1928–33, vol. 2, no. 3477).

5. Wolfram Koeppel in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 185, no. 27.3.
6. A ledger kept by Friedrich II notes deliveries from Neuwied to Kassel (ibid.; see also Willscheid 2007b).
7. He wears a Hessian-Kassel decoration awarded for military merit, which was established in 1769 by his father; Koeppel in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 185, no. 27.2.
8. The neoclassical desk is illustrated in Stürmer 1993, p. 65. This author examined it with Gerd Herrmann on December 2, 1995, at Wilhelmshöhe Palace in Kassel; for luxury goods acquired by Wilhelm’s court, see Stieglitz 2000.

11 Corner commode

1. Roentgen signed the receipt for a payment on April 16, 1757; see Himmelheber 1998, p. 350, no. 37.
2. Identical heraldic mounts appear on other Walderdorff furniture; for two commodes, both now in private collections, see Fabian 1996, p. 118, nos. 258, 259; Himmelheber 1998, p. 346, figs. 2, 3.
3. See the apron mounts on a *poudreuse* (dressing table) by Roentgen in a private collection (Greber 1980, vol. 2, pp. 108–11, ill. nos. 198–201). See also a writing commode in the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles (acc. no. 2003.109), although its front apron mounts are lost (Fabian 1996, p. 135, no. 316).
4. Himmelheber 1998, p. 348, no. 6, p. 361, no. 171.
5. Documents indicate that another Augsburg master’s widow was permitted to run her late husband’s shop for twenty-one years; see Werkstetter 2001, pp. 154–55.
6. According to Walderdorff records, between 1757 and 1767 two stonemasons delivered and were paid for fifty-two marble tops for commodes and console tables; see Himmelheber 1998, p. 339.
7. “vier Eckkonsoltische für den Dikasterialsaal” [reception room]; ibid., p. 359, no. 143; see also p. 358, no. 142.

12 Writing desk

1. This entry is a shortened version of Baarsen 1998b, pp. 56–73, no. 13, with additional references to some later findings. See also Stiegel 2007, pp. 22–39, no. 3; Koeppel 2011.
2. The cartouche is in the style of designs by the Augsburg artist Franz Xaver Habermann.
3. See Illustrated Bartsch 1978, nos. 8, 9, 11.
4. Originally such features had spiritual meaning, but by the eighteenth century that was no longer the case; see Baarsen 1998b, pp. 6–19, nos. 1, 2; Himmelheber 2010.
5. Koeppel 2011.

13 Chair

1. For the Dutch influence, see Lunsingh Scheurleer 1965, p. 166, ill. no. 623 (chair in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, with bold floral inlay); Clemmensen 1985, p. 175, figs. 1, 2 (chair made in 1734, with gilt ornament on black lacquer and a red leather seat cover whose tooled gilding echoes the decoration on the chair’s woodwork). For Roentgen’s second chair, in the Städtisches Museum Simeonstift Trier (inv. no. VI/13 [754]),

see Fabian 1986b, p. 256, ill. nos. 604–6; Himmelheber 1998, p. 347, fig. 12. For a rare example of a walnut chair made by Abraham Roentgen in about 1755, see Dampierre 2006, pp. 192, 193.

2. See Himmelheber 1985a, p. 259, n. 12. This is consistent with court protocol in the eighteenth century. For the hierarchy of seating furniture, see Koeppe 1992, p. 214, no. M118. The lavish ornamentation of this chair may allude to the look of silver furniture, which by the mid-eighteenth century was totally out of fashion (see Arminjon 2007).

3. See Ursula Weber-Woelk in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, pp. 158–59, nos. 15.2, 15.3, for two such portraits in Schloss Engers, Neuwied.

14 Fall-front secretary

1. Havard 1887–90, vol. 1, col. 6. The word “secrétaire,” or secretary, was already in common use by 1745. An inventory of Cardinal de Belzunce’s possessions in Marseilles made that year records that there were two of them in the front bedroom; see Havard 1887–90, vol. 4, col. 989.

2. A note sent in 1766 to the governing board of the Moravian settlement at Herrnhut may explain how this particular secretary made its way to the Russian capital: “A writing desk costs 500 to 600 guilders. [Abraham Roentgen] has recently sold one to Petersburg and claims that he received 100 Danish thalers more than the asking price.” Quoted in Fabian 1996, p. 325, doc. no. 2.57. After the Durnovo collection was dispersed, the secretary was sent from the Russian State Museum Depot to the State Hermitage Museum.

3. Stratmann-Döhler 2002; Ramond 2000, vol. 3, pp. 14–24 (for the flower inlay).

4. It is not known who the designer of the patterns was. If not the Roentgens themselves, it is possible that Heinrich Foelix (see cat. 7) or his well-known teacher Januarius Zick was responsible. For Bertault’s prints after Ranson, see Fabian 1981b, p. 6, fig. 15; Ramond 2000, vol. 3, pp. 14–24; Stratmann-Döhler 2002, pp. 50, 53, 58.

5. Petra Krutisch has identified the species that appear in the marquetry of a signed Roentgen desk of about this period; see Krutisch 2007, pp. 20, 21.

6. The dimensions vary by only one to three centimeters. The reason for the discrepancies is probably that the measurements were obtained by different methods.

7. In 1984 a similar secretary appeared at auction still bearing all the original bronze ornaments on its front apron, including the two mounts that remain in fragmentary condition on the present example; see Phillips, London, sale cat., June 19, 1984, lot 100 (also in Fabian 1996, pp. 148–49, no. 341). The auction catalogue illustration of the apron mount seems to be the only complete record we have of that mount type.

8. A number of such secretaries with varied veneers have survived in Pommersfelden Palace, Wiesentheid Palace, the Würzburg Residenz, and Eltz Castle; see Fabian 1996, pp. 144–50, nos. 334–43. See also Christie’s, London, sale cat., December 10, 1981, lot 203, for another example.

9. For examples of the commode, see Greber 1980, vol. 2, pp. 72–73, ill. nos. 130, 131; Fabian 1996, p. 123, nos. 275, 276 (a pair of commodes); Bernd Willscheid in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 168, no. 20.4; Stratmann-Döhler 2009, p. 35, fig. 4.

15 Corner cabinet

1. Greber 1980, vol. 1, pp. 120–21. Michael Stürmer has written extensively about this type of corner cabinet: see Stürmer 1987; see also Stürmer and Werwein 1979.

2. Krutisch 2007, pp. 20, 21, figs. 13, 14.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

4. Bolland & Marotz, Bremen, sale cat., December 11–12, 1992; Fabian 1996, p. 227, no. 459. I thank Volker Wurster, Bremen, for his advice.

5. Fabian 1996, p. 331, doc. no. 2.71 (ill. in facsimile).

16 Dressing table

1. Zinnkann 2005 offers the most comprehensive discussion of the piece to date and includes dozens of illustrations; see also Ramond 2000, vol. 3, pp. 90–91.

2. For their effort to salvage the business and for the Hamburg lottery of 1769, see the essay by Wolfram Koeppe in this volume, and Koeppe 2007a.

3. See Krüger 2011, p. 59. Seventeen sixty-nine was also the crucial moment when the workshop was experimenting with a new marquetry technique called *à la mosaïque*.

4. Havard 1887–90, vol. 4, cols. 1431–50; Markowitz 1989.

5. Reyniès 2003, vol. 1, p. 345, ill. no. 1231; Gerken 2007, fig. 55.

6. The date is inlaid in mother-of-pearl; see Zinnkann 2005, p. 35. The channels inlaid with various woods at the base of the backdrop are a motif that appears on the rotating tabernacle in Mainz, on the Walderdorff desk, and on the Hillwood desk (cats. 4, 12, and 18).

7. H.-J. Becker 1997. This could mean that the object was a present from a member of the bride’s family, perhaps her father, Friedrich Michael, Count Palatine of Zweibrücken-Birkenfeld.

8. Parrots as symbols of faraway lands appear in the marquetry on many Roentgen pieces; see Ramond 2000, vol. 3, p. 80.

9. On the collaboration, see Fabian 1984. For illustrations of the mechanism in the keyhole frieze, see Zinnkann 2005, pp. 36–39.

10. A combined dressing table and desk with a three-panel surface for writing based on the *toilette à dessus brisé* was already in existence during the reign of Louis XIV. See Reyniès 2003, vol. 1, p. 345, ill. no. 1233.

17 Architect’s table

1. The ratcheting mechanism was illustrated in *The Universal System of Household Furniture*, a series of popular pattern books published by the London cabinetmakers William Ince and John Mayhew between 1759 and 1762.

2. Fabian 1996, p. 331, doc. no. 2.71, no. 8 (ill. in facsimile). A receipt David Roentgen signed on April 23, 1766, for furniture received by Prince-Bishop Adam Friedrich von Seinsheim at Veitchochstein Palace lists “a writing [table] of the wood mentioned [mahogany], can be used standing or while seated”; see Fabian 1996, pp. 327–28, doc. no. 2.60 (ill. in facsimile). This is one of the earliest mentions of this type of table before the 1769 lottery. 3. “Seine Waren oder neuen Inventionen, Blumen auszulegen, ist was Schönes.” Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 325, doc. no. 2.57.

4. See Krutisch 2007, pp. 23–32.

5. See the bookstand of the Amsterdam desk (cat. 12; Stiegel 2007, ill. p. 39; Michaelsen 2009, ill. p. 131), a

secretary cabinet in the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich (Fabian 1996, p. 140, no. 326); and cat. 14 in this volume. For French versions, see Ramond 2000, vol. 2, pp. 141 (secretary cabinet in the Musée Lamine, Versailles), 148 (writing table in the Musée du Louvre, Paris), 153 (writing table in the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles).

18 Rolltop desk

I am grateful to Liana Paredes, Director of Collections and Chief Curator, Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens, Washington, D.C., for granting me access to this desk.

1. I thank Bruce Alan Brown, Professor of Musicology at the Thornton School of Music, University of Southern California, for communicating this to me in his email of February 24, 2011.

2. See *Plusieurs trophées: Dessinées et gravées par Demarteau l’aîné à Paris . . .* (n.d. [ca. 1750?]), *Diverses Suites de Chasse pour les Tabatières* (example in MAK—Austrian Museum of Applied Arts/Contemporary Art, Vienna, inv. no. D832 F-21 S-41 Z-2). The trophies were plagiarized in England by F. Vivares in 1769; see Bellaigue 1974, pp. 466–68, 470–71.

3. Christoph Graf von Pfeil in Langer and Württemberg 1996, pp. 219–32, nos. 65, 66.

4. This classicizing decor appears also on the base of the rotating tabernacle reproduced in this volume (cat. 4).

5. A table in a French private collection at Galerie Kugel, Paris, has a similar inlaid mother-of-pearl cross with arms of equal length (the table is attributed to Giovanni Battista Galletti). I am grateful to Alexis Kugel for this information and photographs of the object.

6. The crown is not clearly identifiable. A similar calligraphic style is found in monograms on medals and coins made for south German collectors during the eighteenth century. See, for comparison, Flämig 2003, p. 344, no. 3606 (Wied), p. 370, no. 4435, p. 410, no. 5690, p. 411, nos. 5735, 5736.

There are brand marks showing MA under a closed crown on furniture belonging to the Hessen and Wettin families. See, for example, a Wettin family commode, of about 1745–50, at Schloss Moritzburg (Haase 1983, p. 269, no. 44, ill. no. 120). Several chairs bearing the Hessen family mark are documented in Reepen and Handke 1996, p. 119, but the time frame proposed for them is early eighteenth century.

7. Weber 1857, vol. 1, p. 49.

8. Ursula Weber-Woelk in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 199, no. 33.2.

19 Oval table

1. The French name refers to a presumed early owner and popularizer of the type, Prince Wenzel Anton von Kaunitz-Rietberg, who served as Austrian ambassador to France from 1750 to 1752; see Koeppe 2010, p. 19. Four examples of the *table à la Caunitz* are mentioned in a stock inventory of 1767 (Fabian 1996, p. 329, doc. no. 2.67).

2. The Moravians were famous for their knife production. Even today, the South African mission is active in the craft.

3. Stürmer 1979–80, pt. 2, p. 37, fig. 7.

4. Fabian 1996, p. 335, doc. nos. 2.101, 2.102.

5. Greber 1980, vol. 2, p. 160, ill. nos. 307, 308; Fabian 1989, pp. 16–17, figs. 30–33.

6. Greber 1980, vol. 2, p. 165, ill. no. 320; Andreas Büttner in Büttner and Willscheid 2006, pp. 122–23, no. 99.

20 Oval table

1. The pattern was probably inspired by Pierre-Gabriel Berthault, who was famous for his decorative vignettes and marquetry motifs featuring musical trophies and floral bouquets; see Packer 1956, p. 90. Two panels with the suspended knife motif were incorporated into a cabinet made by Gervais Durand in Paris in 1880 (Sotheby's, London, sale cat., October 28, 2009, lot 44). They may have originated on the sides of a Roentgen fall-front desk (*secrétaire à abattant*).
2. Observed during an examination by Daniel Hausdorf, Assistant Conservator, and Mechthild Baumeister, Conservator, Department of Objects Conservation, at the Metropolitan Museum.
3. The Ricketts table was auctioned at Christie's, London, on July 13, 1867, lot 105; see also Brackett 1922, pp. 24–25, no. 76, pl. 42. Other Roentgen oval tables were purchased by C. L. David, Copenhagen (*Davids Samling* 1953, pp. 206–7), and Francis Guérault, Paris (sold, Paris, March 21–22, 1935, lot 135). Another was sold from the collection of Lady Sackville, at Christie's, London, June 9, 1936, lot 67.
4. James Parker in Metropolitan Museum of Art 1964, p. 102, fig. 89.
5. Kleebblatt 1999, p. 57, pl. 2. I thank Daniëlle O. Kisluk-Grosheide for this information.
6. The objects auctioned at the following sales were nineteenth-century and modern copies of this type of Roentgen oval table: Christie's, London, September 25, 1986, lot 302; Ader Tajan, Geneva, April 28, 1992, lot 126; and Sotheby's, Amsterdam, December 19, 1994, lot 1047.

21, 22 Oval tables

1. These two tables and most of the others known have nearly identical mechanical devices and decorative details as well as a leather-covered writing panel. The bows above the laurel-leaf-and-berry mounts on the legs of cat. 22 have been replaced.
2. *Aeneid* 2:671–729.
3. The subject is found in seventeenth-century relief marquetry designed for the courts of Europe; see Voigt 2001, p. 193, figs. 131, 132 (marquetry attributed to Adam Eck, ca. 1650).
4. At least one of the collectors was royal. In 1974 the German scholar Hans Huth mentioned an example that had belonged to the princesse de Lamballe: "In 1874, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London was the first art collection to acquire a piece by 'David'. This was a small oval table . . . with a marquetry scene showing Aeneas and Anchises." Huth 1974, p. 63, ill. no. 213. See also the discussion in Bertrand Rondot's essay in this volume, p. 35, of an oval table depicting this subject in the collection of the princesse de Lamballe.
5. For additional paintings on the theme by Zick, see Strasser 1994, p. 416, nos. G348, G349, and fig. 139.
6. The vanitas symbol of ruins in a desolate, swampy landscape has a history in German marquetry that goes back to the sixteenth century. Such depictions show the influence of prints by Lorenz Stöer of Augsburg, especially those in his widely circulated pattern book and treatise *Geometria et perspectiva*, first published in 1567. A Renaissance cabinet elaborately decorated in this style of marquetry work

is in the princely collections of Liechtenstein; see Himmelheber 2010. A collector's cabinet in the Metropolitan Museum (acc. no. 25.135.112) is also embellished with this type of marquetry work.

7. By eliminating the two trees behind Aeneas in Zick's painting, Roentgen's artist freed up space to show the two columns, the rectangular tower behind Anchises, and the skyline of Troy in flames.
8. Fabian 1996, p. 341, doc. no. 2.135.
9. Sotheby's, Zurich, sale cat., June 4, 1992, lot 545; Röbbig 1993, pp. 61–66.
10. There are two examples in a private collection in Istanbul. Flight from Troy tables at the Château d'Époisses in Burgundy ("Château d'Époisses" 1996, ill. p. 129) and in an Australian private collection (Rogan 1975, pp. 104–5) are of the same high quality as the two shown here. One of the finest, convincingly dated to about 1780–85 by Reinier Baarsen, is in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (Baarsen 1998b, pp. 80–85, no. 15). The form's popularity has attracted reputable cabinetmakers who work in Roentgen's style as well as counterfeiters; see Theodore Dell in *Dodge Collection* 1996, pp. 64–68, no. 11.

23 Rolltop desk

1. Laran 1925, pl. 65. Roentgen began developing this form in slant-front secretaries in the late 1750s; see Fabian 1996, p. 95, no. 204, p. 98, nos. 210, 211. The same print by Cuvilliers influenced the furniture designs of Charles Cressent in the 1740s and 1750s; see Pradère 2003, pp. 154–60.
2. *Rococo* 1984, pp. 183–84, no. L68.
3. Havard 1887–90, vol. 1, col. 471; Wood 1994, p. 96, fig. 92.
4. Residenz, Munich, M 156 (Christoph Graf von Pfeil in Langer and Württemberg 1996, pp. 219–27, no. 65; see also Fabian 1996, pp. 100–101, no. 214).
5. The richly gilded mounts suggest that the desk was produced for the French market; the masks show the influence of a pattern in Robert Sayer's *The Ladies Amusement; or Whole Art of Japanning Made Easy*; see Sayer 1762/1966, pl. 139. That publication was much relied upon by the Roentgen workshop; see Stiegel 2007, p. 66, and cat. 25, fig. 7. For a dressing table with related brass cockbead moldings, see Fabian 1989, pp. 19–20 and cover ill.
6. Reepen and Handke 1996, pp. 54–56.

24 Multifunctional table

1. Fabian 1996, p. 32, nos. 23–25.
2. Andreas Büttner in Büttner and Willscheid 2006, pp. 126–27, no. 101.
3. Fabian 1996, pp. 332–33, doc. no. 2.84 (ill. in facsimile).
4. Claude Pahin de le Blancherie in *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres et des Arts*, no. 8, March 16, 1779, p. 51, col. 1 (Fabian 1996, p. 347, doc. no. 2.169).
5. Fabian 1996, p. 335, doc. no. 2.99.
6. Fabian 1992, p. 58, figs. 128, 129; Fabian 1996, p. 41, no. 40. For the type, see Huth 1974, ill. no. 131. Examples of oval tables and multifunctional tables with the scene of shepherds on top are published in Fabian 1981c, pp. 23–24, figs. 23–28. For the Wörlitz Palace example of an oval table, see Büttner and Willscheid 2006, pp. 122–23, no. 99.

25 Secretary cabinet

1. I am grateful to Ghenete Zelleke, Curator of European Decorative Arts, The Art Institute of Chicago, for information about the secretary. Hans Huth was a

curator of decorative arts at the Art Institute when this Roentgen cabinet was acquired by the museum.

2. See Daniëlle O. Kisluk-Grosheide in Kisluk-Grosheide, Koeppel, and Rieder 2006, p. 126, no. 49, and p. 128, n. 1.
3. For the clock, see Reepen and Handke 1996, p. 54, fig. 77, p. 55, fig. 78.
4. See Kisluk-Grosheide in Kisluk-Grosheide, Koeppel, and Rieder 2006, p. 126, fig. 77.
5. Information about a nearly identical object in France was provided by Joachim Temme, formerly owner of Kunsthandlung Ritter, Munich. The Mannheim piece is discussed by Wolfgang Wiese in Stratmann-Döhler 1998, pp. 98–101, no. 14.

26 Longcase clock

1. The clockmakers were Hermann Achenbach and Johann II Schmidt, both brothers-in-law of Christian I; see Fabian 1984, pp. 60–61, 67–68.
2. For Dewez, see Duquenne 2002.
3. Information supplied by Clare Vincent, who is preparing a book on the Metropolitan Museum's collection of watches and clocks. I am very grateful for her support and encouragement.
4. Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 137. The clock cases in fig. 68 are pl. cxxxvi in the first edition (1754) of *The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director*; in the third edition (1762), they are pl. clxiii.
5. On September 3, 1776, Roentgen was given permission to export from Brussels a grand pendulum clock that he planned to take "to a foreign country"; see Fabian 1996, p. 343, doc. no. 2.154.
6. The automaton was shown by Pelham Galleries, London, at The European Fine Art Fair (TEFAF) in Maastricht in 2011.
7. Fabian 1996, p. 341, doc. no. 2.132.
8. See Gervais's account-book records for March 3 and April 8, 1774, for payments from Roentgen and descriptions of work completed on brass medallions that may relate to the longcase clock in the Metropolitan Museum (*ibid.*, p. 340, doc. nos. 2.126, 2.127).
9. For the similar figures, see Fabian 1981b, p. 8, figs. 11, 12.
10. Fabian 1996, p. 291, for a biography of Reusch.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 343, doc. no. 2.150.
12. See Sotheby's, London, sale cat., July 6, 2011, lot 82, for a pair of tables by Reusch.

27 Game table

1. The two tables, both now in the MAK—Austrian Museum of Applied Arts/Contemporary Art, Vienna, were part of a substantial ensemble amassed by Duke Charles Alexander (see Reinier Baarsen's essay and cat. 26 in this volume). The popularity of the type continued into the mid-nineteenth century. A pair of game tables bearing the signature of Henry Ahrens and made in Paris about 1850 resembles the present pair; see Christie's, London, sale cat., March 26, 1981, lot 83.
2. Fabian 1996, p. 32, nos. 24, 25.
3. The small classical ornaments (called guttae) inlaid at the top of the tapering legs usually appear as a relief application of five or more cone-shaped projections. The way they are inlaid here seems to be unique in the workshop's oeuvre.
4. This possibility deserves further investigation. For the social and architectural context of the duke's interior decoration, see Baarsen 2005.
Compare the gilt mounts attributed to Dewez on a writing table designed for Charles Alexander;

see Baarsen 2005, p. 471, fig. 26. See also the medallions and ribbon-tie mounts by Dewez on Sèvres porcelain vases illustrated in Duquenne 2002, pp. 25, 28. Several publications (for example, Fabian 1996, p. 51, no. 68) assert that one of the game tables from Charles Alexander's collection has silvered mounts (the duke preferred the cool tone of silver to the warmer one of gold); however, Dr. Sebastian Hackenschmidt, Curator of the MAK, confirmed in an email of January 16, 2012, that the mount ensembles on both of the game tables are gilded.

5. Formerly in the Schlossmuseum, Berlin; see Stiegel 2007, pp. 138–39, no. 21.

6. For one of them, see Fabian 1996, p. 52, no. 70, and ill. no. 70a. The other, which bears the monogram DR, was formerly in the collection of the Lords Hillingdon; Christie's, London, sale cat., June 29, 1972, lot 90. The tables have the same leg mounts; however, we do not know if they were acquired by the same patron.

28 Rolltop desk

I am grateful to Wolfram Koeppé for his help and advice.

1. James Parker in Metropolitan Museum of Art 1964, p. 85.
2. The chinoiserie decoration on the front of a desk made for Marie Antoinette in 1779, later in the collection of Pope Pius VI and now in the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, is identically framed (Fabian 1996, p. 106, no. 231; see also Huth 1928, p. 63, pl. 19; Stiegel 2007, pp. 64–71, no. 5).
3. The existence of more elaborate versions of this desk in a number of prestigious collections suggests that the model was considered very luxurious, perhaps even royal. This theory is supported by the presence of lion-mask drawer pulls in the interior of this example, which also suggests a royal presence. See cat. 64. Another example is in the Kunstgewerbemuseum, Berlin, inv. no. 1.989.40 (formerly Thyssen-Bornemisza collection, Lugano; Fabian 1996, p. 105, no. 228; see also Mundt 1989 and Stiegel 2007, pp. 72–77, no. 6). For two others, see Fabian 1996, p. 103, no. 223 (as in a private collection, Munich), p. 105, no. 229 (as with Daxer & Marschall, Munich). For a version in the Guerlain collection, Paris, see Droguet 2004, p. 132, fig. 114. For another, now in the princely collections of Liechtenstein (formerly Galerie Neuse, Bremen), see Ursula Weber-Woelk in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 211, no. 37.6; Weber-Woelk 2009, pp. 105, 106, figs. 6a, b. Yet another example was offered for sale at Sotheby's, London, December 3, 1997, lot 104.
4. X-radiographs of the desk taken by Mechthild Baumeister, Conservator, Department of Objects Conservation, at the Metropolitan Museum, on July 26, 2012, revealed that the rear legs are original, having the threaded hairs secured in place, whereas the front legs are a later replacement, showing the drilled holes in the front legs but without any evidence of the nuts. The veneer decoration on the front legs is also different from the rear legs, which suggests it was applied at a later date. It also appears that the legs have been slightly shortened.

29 Rolltop desk

1. The text of this entry is a reworked version of an entry by Wolfram Koeppé in Kisluk-Grosheide, Koeppé, and Rieder 2006, pp. 172–76, no. 72.
2. On the more typical example illustrated here (fig. 69), see also Fabian 1996, pp. 104–7, nos. 227–33.

3. With an eye to cutting costs, Roentgen used stained local woods to simulate *bois des Indes* in many areas of the desk.
4. See, for example, Morley 1999, p. 288, pl. 593. See also Baulez 1996; Gruber 1996, p. 297; Christie's, London, sale cat., July 7, 2005, pp. 174–79, lot 400 (the Metropolitan's piece is illustrated on p. 176).
5. The gilded mounts are neoclassical, with the exception of these pulls, which were part of sizable purchases that the Roentgens made from metal merchants in Birmingham, England. A letter of 1775 from David Roentgen to Karoline Luise von Baden-Durlach describes the differences in price between mercury-gilded mounts and the gold-lacquered (or polished brass) English mounts; see Fabian 1986b, pp. 357–58, doc. no. 2.141. On English mounts of different qualities, see Goodison 1975; Koeppé 1989.
6. The gallery feature also appears on royal furniture: see Fabian 1996, p. 105, no. 230, pp. 112–14, nos. 245, 246, 251; Arizzoli-Clémentel 2002, pp. 139–42, no. 47; Stiegel 2007, p. 101, fig. 12b. See also fig. 34 in this volume (Fabian 1996, p. 114, no. 250). For the acanthus cones, see fig. 49 and cat. 53 in this volume.
7. For the gold lacquer, see Prieur 2011, pp. 141, 151, n. 55.
8. I am grateful to Yannick Chastang for bringing this detail to my attention on March 21–23, 2004, when he, Mechthild Baumeister, Conservator, Department of Objects Conservation, Metropolitan Museum, and I examined the present desk. For the gray stain, see Hans Michaelsen's appendix in this volume and Baumeister et al. 1997, p. 263, fig. 1, p. 266, fig. 2a.
9. In turn, Zick's drawings for the Neuwied workshop are based on prints by French artists François Boucher, Jean Pillement, and Gabriel Huquier. See Gruber 1996, pp. 256, 275–323; Reepen and Handke 1996, pp. 54–56. See also Stein 2007 for prints by these artists depicting chinoiserie subjects.
10. Gruber 1996, p. 297.

30 Portraits of an Elderly Woman and an Elderly Man

The text of this entry is a reworked version of an entry by Achim Stiegel in Stiegel 2007, pp. 78–81, no. 7.

1. The purchase price for the pair was 100 marks. They were on display in the Schlossmuseum, Berlin, until 1939; shipped to Egelon for safekeeping on September 20, 1943; and returned to West Berlin in 1957.
2. The pair of paintings dated 1773 is in the Mittelrhein-Museum, Koblenz (inv. nos. M62, M63); see Strasser 1994, p. 430, nos. G419, G422. In the 1801 inventory of Zick's estate, the two paintings are identified as “a malicious old man holding spectacles” and “an old woman with her knitting.” Zick's related drawings are in the Städtisches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt (inv. nos. 1858, 1859). The pendant to the drawing of a male head depicts a woman seen from the front.
3. On Moravian silhouette portraits, see Willscheid 2011. Wolfram Koeppé (in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 212, no. 38) argues that the present pair of medallions are portraits of David Roentgen's parents-in-law, the Alsatian pastor Scheurer and his wife.
4. David Roentgen to the duke's chamberlain and private secretary, Monsieur de Giron, Brussels, May 15, 1779, Archives Générales du Royaume, Brussels, Manuscrits divers 3110 (Fabian 1996, pp. 348–49, doc. no. 2.174 [translated from the French]). On the identification of the subjects, see Lemoine-Isabeau 1972, pp. 25–26, doc. no. 5.

5. See Wolfram Koeppé in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 212, no. 38; Himmelheber 2009, p. 48.

6. For the medallions in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg (inv. nos. HG 8824, HG 8825), see Fabian 1996, p. 244, nos. 549, 550, and most recently Krutisch 2007, pp. 56–63. For those in the Kunstsammlungen zu Weimar, see Fabian 1996, p. 244, nos. 553, 554, and most recently Büttner 2009, p. 77. Those pairs are the same size as this one: diam. without frame 5 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (15 cm) and 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (14.7 cm), respectively.
7. The Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg, once owned a medallion with the same bronze frame. One of three examples of the motif of a resting hunter and his dog, it was signed by Johann Michael Rummer in 1780; see Fabian 1996, p. 243, nos. 546, 547.
8. A description almost certainly by David Roentgen of his secretary cabinet probably written in 1779 details the technique: “All of the shadings, even the *Lineamenta* and facial features are actually inlaid in especially hard and durable woods.” The Roentgen manuscript was formerly in the library of the Victoria and Albert Museum; see Fabian 1996, pp. 353–54, doc. no. 2.191 (ill. in facsimile, pp. 354–56). On the term *Lineamenta*, see the entry in Hübner's *Lexikon* (1741), cited in Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 169, n. 231.
9. Another great master of the craft was Heinrich Streuli, from Zurich, “who later lived as a Herrnhuter in Ebersdorf in the principality of Reuss and created small pictures in marquetry” (Schmitz 1923, p. xxiv, quoting Ernst Zais). Baron Joseph Anton Siegmund von Beroldingen, canon of Speyer and Hildesheim, used the phrase “woodworkers' painting” (*Schreiner-Gemäld*) in a letter of January 14, 1780, to Johann Heinrich Merck, a German literary critic (Merck 2007 [ed.], vol. 2, pp. 354–58, letter no. 377 [quotation on p. 355]; see also Himmelheber 2009, p. 50). For Rummer's contemporary who wrote about him, see Mieg 1780 (Fabian 1996, p. 357, doc. no. 2.194).

31 Portrait of an Elderly Woman

1. Livy, *Ab urbe condita* 26:50. The story is also told by Polybius and Plutarch.
2. Earlier examples may be seen at Oranienbaum (Lomonosov), near Saint Petersburg; at Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart; in the Mirror Room by Ferdinand Plitzner in Pommersfelden Palace; at Sanssouci, Potsdam (in the Neue Kammern); and in the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich (the Spindler-Kabinett). See Ducamp and Walter 2007, pp. 98–99; Kreisel and Himmelheber 1968–73, vol. 2, pp. 85, 86, figs. 190–95, and p. 248, fig. 788; Sangl 2000. For a marquetry room David Roentgen planned for Frederick the Great, see the essay by Reinier Baarsen in this volume, p. 25.
3. For the *pietre dure* room at Schloss Favorite, near Rastatt, Germany, see Koeppé 2008, p. 335; Koeppé and Knothe 2008, pp. 91–92, and p. 84, fig. 91.
4. Fabian 1996, p. 348, doc. no. 2.173 (translated from the French).
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 348–49, doc. no. 2.174 (translated from the French).
6. “Le portrait d'une vieille femme, en marqueterie.” *Catalogue des effets précieux de feu son altesse royale Le Duc Charles de Lorraine et de Bar*, Brussels, sale cat., May 21, 1781, p. 117, lot 22 (a copy is in the library of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, 75/302 Bibl.). I am most grateful to Manfred Leithe-Jasper, Vienna, who let me examine the auction catalogue.

32 Commode

33 Commode

1. On the Rothschilds, see Heuberger 1994. On the commode while it was at Mentmore, see *Mentmore* 1884, vol. 2, p. 187, no. 10, where it is described as in an upstairs gallery and as by David de Luneville (David Roentgen) and the Parisian mount maker Pierre Gouthière. Jack and Belle Linsky purchased the commode in 1964 for 63,000 pounds sterling (\$176,000).
2. According to Hans Huth, the commode now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, and the very similar example now in the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich, were owned as a pair by the Grand Duke of Sachsen-Weimar; Huth 1974, p. 46. See also Huth 1928, p. 66, commentary on plate 40. One of the two was offered in the Sachsen-Weimar sale (Sotheby's, London, June 10, 1932, lot 136), and the photographs reproduced in the accompanying catalogue are undoubtedly of the commode now at the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum. An annotated copy of the sale's catalogue (archives of Sotheby's, London), however, clearly states that Lady Eckstein purchased the piece, which since 1948 has been in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum. Both museums believe that their commode is the one bought at that sale. A label preserved on the underside of the marble top of the London commode, "Weimar R Schloss 21," and a pencil inscription also on the underside of the marble, "Weimar 20," clearly refer to its Weimar provenance. Recent research by Dr. Gert-Dieter Ulferts and Christian Pönitz of the Klassik Stiftung Weimar did not reveal any further information about the history of the London and Munich commodes before the 1920s. In an email of June 21, 2012, to Wolfram Koepppe, Gert-Dieter Ulferts mentioned that the label text and pencil inscription on the underside of the marble top of the London commode most likely refer to an inventory of the furniture in the Weimar residence (Residenzschloss Weimar) possibly made by the *Hofmarschallamt* in the 1920s and that the numbers 20 and 21 do not relate to a specific room in the castle. On the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum commode's provenance, see Himmelheber 1991.
3. Havard 1887–90, vol. 1, pl. 54, col. 937; Fleming and Honour 1989, p. 210.
4. In an email of May 7, 2012, to Wolfram Koepppe, Ferdinand Heinz said that in David Roentgen's time, the blue-gray marble called *bleu turquin* was also known as *bardiglio di Carrara*. He added that the quarries of true bardiglio marble are located in the Apuan Alps, at a few locations north and east of the town of Carrara, in Tuscany. Koepppe has suggested elsewhere that the *bleu turquin* slabs on the London and Munich commodes came from a quarry near Leun on the Lahn River, not far from Neuwied, which belonged to the counts of Wied or their relatives; see Koepppe in Kisluk-Grosheide, Koepppe, and Rieder 2006, p. 181. Only a mineralogical analysis of the slabs will tell us exactly where the marble originated. The slab of red brocatelle marble on the New York commode comes from a Catalonian quarry near Tortosa; see Mielsch 1985, p. 42, pl. 5, nos. 165, 167.
5. For a summary of the subject as treated in eighteenth-century decorative arts, see Chilton 2001, and see p. 150 for a discussion of Anselmo with a cocked hat and cane. For Zick, see Metzger 1981; Strasser 1994; Kisluk-Grosheide 2005, p. 88.
6. "aux allemands pour une grande commode L 2400"; Beauchamp 1909, p. 71 (cited in Baulez 1996,

p. 101); Fabian 1996, p. 347, doc. no. 2.171 [translated from the French]).

7. Following is the full text of the 1792 Versailles inventory and the English translation.

Une Commode mécanique en bois de Placage dites des allemands la dite Commode ouvrante a trois Vanteaux par Différent Mouvement le dedans Composé D'un Mechanisme particulier dont le Roi a la clef [...] l'extérieur [sic] de la commode plaqué a tableaux de bois fond Satiné et ombré Sur les trois faces deux Medaillons et Un tableau Sur le devant 1 tableau de chaque côté Représentant, l'astronomie et arts en figures de bois de Rapports ombrés au feu, les champs des panneaux en bois Satiné Vert Ceux des pieds et pilastres en bois Rose, les pieds a guaisnes Carré le tout orné de bronze Savoir les frises pilastres et les corp des pieds a tables Saillantes dans les frises Renforcé et ciselés dans les pilastres avec de petits ornements Saillants Ciselés les Medaillons du devant Entouré d'un cadre a perles les portants de tiroirs en paquets de lauriers le tout De bronze doré ou Moulüe et Moulures Idem Canelures etc, le Marbre du dessus en bleu turquin; 4 pieds 2 pouces de large 25 pouces de profondeur et 2 pieds 9 pouces de haut, Marbre Compris. (A mechanical commode veneered said from the Germans the said commode opening with three doors by different movements the interior composed of a special mechanism for which the king has the key[.] The exterior of the commode veneered with [marquetry] panels of *bois satiné* ground and shaded on the three sides two medallions and one [marquetry] panel on the front 1 [marquetry] panel on each side representing, Astronomy and the Arts, figures in various pieces of wood shaded by burning, the fields of the panels in green *bois satiné*. Those of the feet and pilasters in tulipwood, the square tapering feet the whole decorated with bronze to wit the friezes pilasters and the body of the feet with plates projecting in the friezes recessed and chased in the pilasters with small chased ornaments in relief the medallions on the front surrounded with a beaded frame the handles of the drawers in sprays of laurel the whole of gilt-bronze ormolu and moldings *idem* fluting etc, the marble top *bleu turquin*; 4 pieds 2 pouces wide 25 pouces deep and 2 pieds 9 pouces high, marble included).

Archives Nationales, Paris, O¹ 3426, Versailles, Recépissés des Meubles envoyés à Paris, Le 5. Jer. [janvier] 1792. The passage is also cited, in updated French, in Baulez 1996, pp. 101–2, and Kisluk-Grosheide 2005, p. 87. We thank Ulrich Leben and Bertrand Rondot for photographing and assisting us in interpreting the original text.

8. Following is the English translation of the 1793 Versailles inventory quoted in Baulez 1996, p. 108, and Kisluk-Grosheide 2005, p. 88: "a veneered commode with three doors with human figures enacting comedy scenes as well as on the sides, with three drawers in the pareclose, covered with *millesraies* plates, garlands forming handles and laurel leaves, the whole in matte gilt-bronze and with beaded frame, with *bleu turquin* marble top, 2 pieds 8 pouces high, 4 pieds wide, and 2 pieds deep (estimated) 4,000 livres."
9. Before the introduction of the metric system in 1799, French units of measurement were organized in much the same way as the British Imperial System. The pied (foot), or pied du roi (king's foot), equaled 32.48 centimeters, and the pouce (thumb, equivalent to the inch) measured 2.71 centimeters. Accordingly, the dimensions of Louis XVI's commode given in the 1792 inventory would translate to 89.35 centimeters high (including the marble top), 135.34 centimeters

wide, and 67.75 centimeters deep. The dimensions of the comtesse d'Artois' commode given in the 1793 inventory would translate to 86.64 centimeters high, 129.92 centimeters wide, and 64.9 centimeters deep. The Metropolitan Museum's commode is 89.5 centimeters high, 135.9 centimeters wide, and 69.2 centimeters deep (including the later red brocatelle marble top), and 86.5 centimeters high, 135.6 centimeters wide, and 66.8 centimeters deep without the marble top. It should be borne in mind, however, that until 1799 no single consistent system of measures was used in France, so these calculations must be viewed with caution.

34 Berlin secretary cabinet

1. The text of this entry is a considerably shortened version of an entry by Achim Stiegel in Stiegel 2007, pp. 40–63, no. 4.
2. The document was once in the library of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, but has been lost; see Fabian 1996, pp. 353–54, doc. no. 2.191 (ill. in facsimile, pp. 354–56). There must have been similar descriptions of the other two versions of the cabinet, with slight variations reflecting their different features.
3. From David Roentgen's description (see note 2).
4. Many specialists contributed their skills to the project. Notable among the German artisans who worked on the Berlin cabinet were Johann Christian Krause, Johann Michael Rummer, Januarius Zick, Elie Gervais, and members of the Kinzing family (a recent study of the clockmaker Peter Kinzing is Fowler 2007). Some of the gilt-bronze mounts were made in Paris by the *bronzier* François Rémond and his sculptor Louis-Simon Boizot. The identity of the miniaturist who designed the portrait of Frederick William II is not known.
5. For the marquetry technique, see Michaelsen 2009 and his appendix in this volume.
6. See the description of lot number one in the 1768 prospectus for the Hamburg furniture lottery of 1769 (Fabian 1996, p. 321, doc. no. 2.71 [ill. in facsimile]).
7. Extensive restoration of the cabinet was carried out at the Kunstgewerbemuseum workshops in Schlöss Kopenich between 1967 and 1969. The miniature room's back wall was replaced in 1969.
8. From David Roentgen's description (see note 2 above). At least eight such mechanisms were produced by the Roentgen workshop (see cats. 37, 42, and 64).
9. Chippendale 1762.
10. Krause was mentioned by name at the time the Paris version was purchased. See Claude Pahin de la Blancherie in *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres et des Arts*, no. 9, March 23, 1779, p. 58, col. 1 (Fabian 1996, p. 347, doc. no. 2.170 [translated from the French; ill. in facsimile, p. 348]). On Krause, see Archenholtz 1785, pp. 686–96 (Fabian 1996, pp. 362–64, doc. no. 2.227); Nemnich 1809, pp. 226–32 (Fabian 1996, pp. 318–19, doc. no. 1.18).
11. Göres 1997b, p. 213.
12. For the exchange and for the adjustments it entailed, see the essay by Achim Stiegel in this volume.
13. The cabinet was displayed in the Hohenzollern Museum, Berlin, beginning in 1877, and in the Schlossmuseum, Berlin, beginning in 1935; stored in the crypt of Berlin Cathedral probably in 1944.
14. See Göres and Schendel 1997, p. 221. Jörg Meiner (2001, p. 8) describes the portraits in the anteroom: "Among those represented were such contemporaries as the Russian czarina Catherine II, Prince Heinrich of Prussia (brother of Frederick the Great),

and a number of great Prussian generals such as Hans Joachim von Zieten and Count von Möllendorff. . . . But above all it was long-dead princes and commanders who adorned the walls, among them Prince Eugen of Savoy, the Prince of Condé (probably Louis II), King William III of England, Empress Maria Theresa, the imperial commander Raimondo Count of Montecuccoli, and the Marshal de Turenne.”

Reconstructing the Versailles secretary cabinet

35 Marquetry panel from the former Versailles secretary cabinet

36 Marquetry panels from the former Versailles secretary cabinet

37 Mechanical table, including parts of the former Versailles secretary cabinet

1. Verlet 1961, p. 130.
2. Himmelheber 2009, p. 44; see also Fabian 1996, pp. 348–53, for various documents.
3. Subsequently named royal cabinetmaker to both the king and the queen, Roentgen won over the discerning French aristocracy and opened a new market for his furniture (see Bertrand Rondot’s essay in this volume).
4. See Johann Heinrich Merck, letter of February 21, 1779, to Anna Amalia von Sachsen-Weimar-Eisenach (Merck 2007 [ed.], vol. 2, pp. 202–3, letter no. 323; see also Himmelheber 2009, p. 45). Georg Himmelheber uncovered surprising details about the complicated acquisition of the cabinet. I am grateful to him for sharing his immense knowledge about the Roentgens over the decades. The queen had likely been impressed by the secretary cabinet that her uncle Charles Alexander of Lorraine had acquired from Roentgen (see fig. 21, p. 24, in this volume).
5. Salvete 1923; Verlet 1961; Baulez 1996.
6. Himmelheber 1994, p. 466.
7. Sotheby’s, New York, sale cat., October 25, 2002, lot 1255; the size of the superstructure (48 $\frac{5}{8}$ × 22 $\frac{7}{8}$ in.; 123.5 × 58 cm) is small. Was it the cut-down framework of the three Munich panels?
8. Sotheby’s, New York, sale cat., October 23, 2004, lot 73.
9. Christie’s, Monaco, sale cat., April 28–29, 2000, lot 31.
10. I am grateful to Achim Stiegel for this information. For the comet, see Yeomans 1991.
11. Stiegel 2007, p. 150.
12. See Raggio and Wilmering 1996 on the liberal arts as represented in designs by Francesco di Giorgio Martini in the Gubbio studiolo at the Metropolitan Museum (acc. no. 39.153).
13. Metzger 1981; Strasser 1994, for paintings and drawings by Zick of the theme.
14. See Christian Baulez in Bresc-Bautier, Scherf, and Draper 2009, pp. 462–63, no. 131.
15. During the Revolution, the famous French cabinetmaker Jean-Henri Riesener, who had delivered hundreds of pieces to the court, was called on to remove royal emblems in order to prepare furniture for sale. See Honour 1969, p. 158.
16. Now in Munich, the three panels have been removed from the *bureau plat* and are displayed on a wall.
17. G. Croll 1998, p. 185.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 187.
19. Barth and Jamet 2006, pp. 9, 10, figs. 14, 16.

38 Automaton of Queen Marie Antoinette, called *La Joueuse de Tympanon* (The Dulcimer Player)

1. On automatons, see Kang 2011. On the clock as metaphor for the universe, see Koeppel 2002; Koeppel 2004, pp. 80–81. For Callistratus on the statue of Memnon, see Callistratus, *Descriptions* 9 (English trans., Callistratus 1931 [ed.], pp. 407, 409).
2. The dolls are still on view there, in the Musée d’Art et d’Histoire.
3. Chapuis and Droz 1971; *Androids* 1979; Beyer 1983.
4. Quoted in Willscheid 2007b, p. 22. *La Joueuse de Tympanon* was restored in 1864 by the magician and creator of automatons Jean-Eugène Robert-Houdin. In 1995 Jean Marie Broussard, Jean Hauray, and Denis Mercier made an acoustical and mechanical study of the piece, and digitally restored the music (www.cerimes.fr/le-catalogue/la-joueuse-de-tympanon.html). I express my deepest gratitude to Serge Chambaud, Director of the Musée des arts et métiers, Paris, for allowing this piece to be part of the exhibition.
5. Fabian 1996, pp. 360–61, doc. no. 2.211.
6. Gray 2012, p. 29.
7. Hall 1979, p. 238.
8. Chapuis and Gélis 1928, vol. 2, p. 282; Fabian 1996, pp. 362–63, doc. no. 2.221 (translated from the French).
9. “Une petite figure de femme automate joue et exécute très bien différents airs de musique sur un espèce de tympanon en forme de petit clavecin. Cette figure, dont les traits, les proportions et les ajustements sont fort élégants, frappe en mesure les différents cordes de l’instrument avec deux petits marteaux de métal qu’elle tient dans ses mains, qui se meuvent avec beaucoup de justesse et de précision.” The quotation is taken from the entry by Jan Jaap Haspels in Haspels 1996, pp. 182–86, no. 33.
10. Haspels in *ibid.*, p. 185.

39 Inkstand

1. A Louis XIV *escritoire* is published in Hughes 1996, vol. 2, pp. 706–11, no. 149.
2. Sotheby’s, London, sale cat., July 8, 2008, lot 53.
3. Hughes 1996, vol. 2, pp. 1044–46, no. 205; Bremer-David 1993, p. 109, no. 182.
4. Stiegel 2007, p. 163.
5. For the architect’s table, see Otto 1960, p. 105, ill. no. 11; Christie’s, New York, sale cat., May 20–21, 1987, lot 101.

40 Letter box

1. Christie’s, Monaco, sale cat., April 28–29, 2000, lots 31 (medal cabinet), 359 (table clock), 360 (rolltop desk). For an earlier mahogany tea chest in a private collection, see Wolfram Koeppel in Stratmann-Döhler 1998, pp. 86–87, no. 8.
2. Christie’s, London, sale cat., July 7, 2005, lot 400 (Baselitz [rolltop desk; fig. 69 in this volume]); Peppiatt 1999, ill. p. 87 (rolltop desk in the Guerlain collection).

41 Coffer

1. See Droguet 2004, p. 139, fig. 127; Stiegel 2007, p. 112, fig. 15a; Bernd Willscheid in Willscheid and Thillmann 2011, p. 266, no. 24.
2. The delivery to the Roentgen workshop of laurel-swag mounts and handles styled as swags of drapery,

such as the ones on this coffer’s sides, are mentioned in Baulez 1996; see also cat. 61.

3. Baulez 1996, p. 106, citing Archives Nationales, Paris, O² 464, dossier 2, pièce 30.
4. Christie’s, Monaco, sale cat., June 17, 2000, lot 310 (with citation of the inventories). A box with floral inlay said to have belonged to Queen Marie Antoinette is in the Musée Nissim de Camondo, Paris; see Gary 2008, p. 274.
5. Fabian 1996, p. 254, no. 589; Natal’ja Guseva in *St. Petersburg um 1800* 1990, p. 434, no. 393.
6. See Parke-Bernet Galleries, New York, sale cat., March 25–26, 1949, lot 286 (mounted on a later stand; I am grateful to William Stafford for this information).
7. See, respectively, Fabian 1996, p. 254, no. 588; Plas 1975, p. 61, fig. 70.
8. Rifat Gafifullin in *Krieg und Frieden* 2001, p. 421, no. 277.

42 The Apollo desk

1. The bronze figure of Apollo was modeled by Louis-Simon Boizot. It and the two sphinxes at the sides of the fall-front lid were made in the Paris workshop of François Rémond in April 1783; see Baulez 1996, pp. 98–99. Probably all the other bronze decorations on the desk were made there as well. See also Christian Baulez in Bresc-Bautier, Scherf, and Draper 2009, pp. 462–63, no. 131.
2. See, for comparison, the Versailles secretary cabinet (cats. 35–37) and the coin cabinet formerly in the collection of Karl Lagerfeld (Christie’s, Monaco, sale cat., April 28–29, 2000, lot 31).
3. In Lukin’s inventory, compiled by 1811, it is included in the list of items in the Hermitage (“Opisanie ukrashenii po Ermitazhu, sostoiashchikh iz bronz, kamennykh porod, farforu, khrustalei, stekla i dereva, kak-to: zherandolei, liustr, fonarei, kandeljabrov, lamp, vaz, statuev, biustov, mebelei i prochago” [A description of the decorations in the Hermitage, consisting of bronze, types of stone, porcelain, crystal, glass, and wood, such as: girandoles, chandeliers, lanterns, candelabra, lamps, vases, statues, busts, furniture, etc.]; archives, State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg, archive 1, inventory VI “K,” file 1 (quoted in *Sbornik* 1879, p. 297).

43 Children’s architect’s table

1. In 1922 this table was transferred from the Anichkov Palace to the Hermitage in Saint Petersburg.
2. Burkhardt Göres dates the appearance of this furniture form to the early 1780s; see Göres 1980, p. 40.
3. Fabian 1996, p. 59, nos. 89 and 89a.

44 Architect’s table

1. Tsentral’nyi Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv, Saint Petersburg, archive 468, inventory 1, part 2, file 3901, sheet 163, no. 17 (Fabian 1996, pp. 365–66, doc. no. 2.230 [translated from the French; ill. in facsimile, pp. 366–67]).
2. Fabian (1996, p. 59, nos. 89, 89a) mentions the existence of a second example.
3. See Greber 1980, vol. 2, p. 321, ill. nos. 643–45; Alexandra Alexejewa and Rifat Gafifullin in *Krieg und Frieden* 2001, pp. 346–47, no. 220 (illustrated in situ).
4. See Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 261; Stiegel 2007, pp. 138, 139, fig. 21a.

5. Quoted by Bernd Willscheid in *Roentgen in Gotha* 2008, p. 40, no. 4.
6. Reyniès 1987, vol. 2, p. 1133, ill. nos. 4290, 4291.
7. It can be seen with its top raised in a watercolor after Friedrich Wilhelm Klose of King Frederick William III's study (see fig. 42 in this volume).
8. Rieunier & Associés, Drouot-Richelieu, Paris, sale cat., March 26, 2003, lot 179. For some similar examples, see Rudolph Lepke's Kunst-Auctions-Haus, Berlin, sale cat., May 12–13, 1931, lot 208 (example with round legs); Otto 1960, p. 105, ill. no. 11 (also in Christie's, New York, sale cat., May 20–21, 1987, lot 101).

45 Game table

1. Princely residences sometimes had a large gambling room, such as Marie Antoinette's *salons de jeux* at the Château de Compiègne and at Versailles. They were furnished with game tables in a variety of shapes that had several different playing surfaces. See Whitehead 1993, pp. 212–13.
2. For the watercolor illustrated in this volume (fig. 77), see Ducamp 1992, pp. 82–83, pl. 35.
3. In the watercolor shown here (fig. 77, p. 162), the three tops of the tables are clearly visible.
4. Quoted in Büttner 2009, p. 74.

The Chatsworth Ensemble

46 Rolltop desk

47 Swivel armchair

48 Oval table

49 Dressing table

1. Quoted in Krüger 2002, p. 169.
2. There is a long tradition of collecting Roentgen furniture in England. Dozens of highly important pieces have English provenances that in many cases go back to the early nineteenth century. For example, the prince regent, later George IV, purchased an elaborately decorated rolltop and placed it in Carlton House in 1820; it is now in the collection of Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace, London. See Linley 1993, p. 10, ill.; Fabian 1996, p. 114, no. 251. See also the *New York Times*, July 25, 2012, p. A14, for a photograph of the desk in situ at Buckingham Palace.
3. Devonshire House, designed by William Kent and finished about 1740, was demolished in 1924. The ensemble now resides at Chatsworth House, Derbyshire.
4. Edward Swift, Inventory of Devonshire House, 1811. See also Lees-Milne 1968, p. 1043; Morris 1993, p. 56; Duchess of Devonshire 2002, p. 72. Information on literature and provenance of the Chatsworth pieces was provided by Matthew Hirst, Head of Arts and Historic Collections, and Diane Naylor, The Devonshire Collection, Chatsworth (email exchanges of 2011–12).
5. Transitional pieces include the chinoiserie rolltop in the Metropolitan Museum (cat. 29) and a dressing table of neoclassical form but embellished with chinoiserie and parquetry decoration at Dalmeny House in Scotland (Montgomery–Massingberd and Sykes 1997, pp. 98–99) and at Schloss Braunfels (Bernd Willscheid in Willscheid and Thillmann 2011, pp. 262–63, nos. 21a, b).
6. It is also possible they were shipped from the Paris shop; see Bertrand Rondot's essay in this volume, p. 34.
7. For the harvesting of substantial logs of crotch mahogany, see Kenny et al. 2011, p. 50, fig. 48. The

print illustrated is from 1850, but the techniques depicted had not changed much over the previous decades.

8. Fabian 1996, p. 358, doc. no. 2.198 (translated from the French; ill. in facsimile).
9. The marketing of a desk with matching chair recurs in twentieth-century design (see Fleming and Honour 1989, pp. 223, 264, 391). The Roentgen workshop was decades ahead of its time.
10. Stiegel 2007, pp. 162–63 and pp. 98–99, no. 12.
11. Pape 1986, p. 15, fig. 16.
12. The term “piastre” is mentioned on November 11, 1780, in the account book of François Rémond, referring to eight relief bands of 21 *pouces* (thumbs) in length (see Prieur 2011, p. 139; there the word is interpreted as “pilaster”). The piastre bands on the Chatsworth desk measure 16½ inches (42 cm) and the cylinder's groove is about 22 inches (55.9 cm) long. Despite the differences in eighteenth-century measuring standards, it is probably safe to say that the “huit pièces en piastres” were intended to embellish four rolltops. I am grateful to Diane Naylor, The Devonshire Collection, Chatsworth, for answering my various questions, email of May 18, 2012.
13. A related example is in the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh (acc. no. 57.40.2). The Nuremberg variant offers a surprise inside: opening the plum-pudding mahogany cylinder reveals a facade of light golden-brown birch burl; see Krutisch 2007, pp. 81–83. Another elaborately decorated rolltop from the collection of Viscount D'Abernon was sold in 1929; see Christie's, London, sale cat., June 26–27, 1929, lot 110.
14. Burkhardt Göres mentions the sale to Potemkin in *Roentgen in Gotha* 2008, p. 48. The invoice for the sale to Catherine the Great, dated March 23, 1786, is in the Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv, Saint Petersburg, archive 468, inventory 1, part 2, file 3901, sheet 163, nos. 25, 32 (Fabian 1996, pp. 364–65, doc. no. 2.230 [translated from the French; ill. in facsimile, pp. 366–67]). The Russian objects are believed to be lost; however, one is recognizable in historical photographs of Gatchina Palace; see *Gatchina Palace* 2007, p. 82, no. 70 (a chair is depicted behind a covered Roentgen table).
15. Achim Stiegel places such chairs in the Berlin Palace (see his essay in this volume, p. 42). One is depicted in front of a Roentgen table in a watercolor by Eduard Gaertner of the writing room of Prince Wilhelm and Princess Marianne in the Berlin Palace in 1852 (fig. 89 in this volume). A few years ago a rotating armchair was acquired for the Berlin Palace; see Burkhardt Göres in *Roentgen in Gotha* 2008, p. 48. For the type, see Bernd Willscheid in Willscheid and Thillmann 2011, pp. 268–69, nos. 26a, b.
16. A version from 1790–91, during the reign of King Gustav III, came up at auction in 2011 (Uppsala Auktionskammare, sale cat., June 16–17, 2011, lot 1638). See also Groth 1990, p. 26, ill. no. 9, p. 216, no. 76, and p. 94, ill. no. 73, for a chair possibly by Roentgen in King Gustav III's library.
17. Fumaroli 2010, p. 422.
18. Kimball 1927, pp. 483–84, 485, fig. 15.
19. The chair is illustrated and described in Granquist 1976, p. 1057, fig. 3. I am most grateful to Peter Kenny for this reference (email of December 20, 2011).
20. A table of this refined design and execution but additionally veneered with stained maple survives in a private collection; see *European Art Fair* 2009, pp. 302–3 (Otto von Mitzlaff, Wächtersbach). For a table of similar construction and quality, see Fabian 1996, p. 54, no. 76 (disregard photograph 76a, as it

shows a detail of a different, earlier table). See also the oval table with a three-quarter wood gallery in the Château de Versailles (Arizzoli-Clémental 2002, p. 113, no. 34).

21. In the 1811 inventory of Devonshire House (see note 4 above), listed in the duke's bedroom, beneath “a mahogany cylinder writing table (Rutgen?),” is “a mahogany quadrille [square-shaped] table,” labeled on the underside CHATSWORTH, which may well refer to this table.

For an eighteenth-century print by Jean-Michel Moreau le Jeune of a man at his toilette, see Gerken 2007, p. 257, fig. 55.

22. Alexandra Alexejewa and Rifat Gafifullin in *Krieg und Frieden* 2001, p. 346.
23. Alexejewa and Gafifullin in *ibid.*, p. 346, no. 219; see also Bernd Willscheid in Willscheid and Thillmann 2011, p. 264, no. 22; Sotheby's, London, sale cat., July 4, 2012, lot 27.
24. Droguet 2004, p. 137, fig. 125.
25. Arizzoli-Clémental 2002, pp. 154–57, nos. 54, 55.
26. A list of all recorded pieces would be far too long to include here. Some outstanding versions: an example stamped with a French royal inventory mark is illustrated in Fabian 1989, pp. 28, 29, figs. 59–61; Fabian 1996, p. 68, nos. 117–20. A version stamped ROENTGEN was sold in 1983 at Versailles (Reyniès 1987, vol. 2, p. 1129, ill. no. 4273).

50 Clock

1. Fabian 1984, p. 343, no. 87; Stiegel 2007, pp. 152–53, no. 27.
2. Information about the clock in the Pushkin House, Russian Academy of Sciences, was provided by Mikhail Guryev. For the example illustrated in this entry (fig. 82), see Fabian 1984, p. 359, no. A9. A small version said to have been in a collection in the vicinity of Neuwied was sold in 2011 at a German auction house (Carola van Ham, Cologne, sale cat., September 19, 2011, lot 880). For other related clocks, see Fabian 1984, p. 342, nos. 85, 86; Fabian 1996, p. 175, no. 373. An additional example was in the collection of Karl Lagerfeld (Christie's, Monaco, sale cat., April 28–29, 2000, lot 359).
3. Wolfram Koeppel in “Recent Acquisitions” 2003, p. 26. Preudhomme is first mentioned in connection with the Roentgen workshop in 1776. A small Roentgen clock in the David Collection, Copenhagen (fig. 82), is also signed by Preudhomme.
4. I am grateful to Ian D. Fowler, Anna Geyko, Mikhail Guryev, and Tamara Rappe for sharing information with me about Jean Thomas.

51 Casket

The text of this entry is a reworked version of an entry by Achim Steigel in Stiegel 2007, pp. 110–13, no. 15.

1. The box was transferred on October 25, 1935, from the administration of Bückeburg to the Schlossmuseum, Berlin, where it was displayed until 1939; sent for safekeeping to the Kaiserroda mine, near Merkers, on March 21, 1945; returned to West Berlin in 1957.
2. For the original blue-gray coloring, see a drawing of two longcase clocks in this publication (app. 2.10, p. 233).
3. The account books of the Paris *bronzier* François Rémond show that a large relief with similar allegorical putti, fine chasing, and matte gilding cost Roentgen 750 livres; see Baulez 1996, p. 116. That relief, 19¾ inches

(50 cm) long, adorns the front of a folding stand concealed in the top of a large rolltop desk of about 1787–88 in the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; cat. 64 in this volume.

4. The clock by Nicolas Sotiau, whose present whereabouts are unknown, follows a well-known design. Additional examples, also decorated with a square relief by Rémond, are discussed and illustrated in Ottomeyer and Pröschel 1986, vol. 1, nos. 4.17.5, 4.17.6. For the clock by Sotiau, see Tardy 1974–75, vol. 2, p. 240, ill. no. 2.

5. The floor of the Berlin drawer is marked “No. 2,” numerous moldings and the relief plaque are marked on the back “II,” and one of the two handles bears the number 3 (see Rust 1989, p. 81). The recently discovered box was sold on October 18, 2011, at Sotheby’s, New York, lot 979.

6. The group includes nos. 583–89 in Fabian 1996, pp. 252–54, as well as the jewel box from a private collection published in this volume (cat. 41). One of the examples in a private collection has proportions similar to those of a jewel box pictured in a signed drawing by Roentgen’s pupil Johannes Klinkerfuss. For the jewel box, see Fabian 1996, p. 253, no. 586. The Klinkerfuss drawing is in the collection of the Württembergisches Landesmuseum, Stuttgart; see Wiese 1988a, p. 215, no. 1, and more recently Wiese 2009, p. 162, fig. 5.

52 Clavichord

1. Fabian 1996, p. 86, no. 172; *European Fine Art Fair* 2008, p. 288 (Otto von Mitzlaff, Wächtersbach); see also the historical photograph illustrated in this volume (fig. 41, p. 43; also reproduced in Stiegel 2007, p. 163).

2. The Cleveland Museum accession number is 1964.297 (Greber 1980, vol. 2, pp. 340–41, ill. nos. 688–90; Fabian 1996, p. 86, no. 172).

3. See Fabian 1984, p. 346, no. 96.

4. The clavichords are listed in an invoice dated March 3, 1786 (Tsentrāl’nyi Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv, Saint Petersburg, archive 468, inventory 1, part 2, file 3901, sheet 163), no. 26: “deux grandes Tables en bois de Mahoni moucheté avec des forte Piano” (two large tables of mahogany wood [acajou moucheté] with pianofortes); Fabian 1996, pp. 365–66, doc. no. 2.230 (translated from the French; ill. in facsimile, pp. 366–67). The price of each instrument was 380 rubles, plus 70 rubles for transportation, etc.

5. See Gafifullin 2001, pp. 71, 84, n. 23. For the sale, see Rudolph Lepke’s Kunst–Auctions–Haus, Berlin, sale cat., April 2, 1930, lot 304, pl. 1.

6. For the clavichord at Coburg Palace, see Greber 1980, vol. 2, p. 317, ill. nos. 632–34.

7. Bertrand Rondot in Gautier and Rondot 2011, p. 163.

8. The accession number of that clavichord is 1986.239. For the workshop of the princes zu Wied-Neuwied, see Krüger 2011, pp. 82–83.

53 Armchair

1. Fabian 1996, pp. 321–22, doc. nos. 2.33, 2.34 (ill. in facsimile).

2. See Fabian 1996, p. 236, nos. 512, 513 (one bears the Wörlitz Palace mark; they are now in the Schloss Georgium Anhaltische Gemäldegalerie, Dessau).

3. Fabian 1996, pp. 349–50, doc. no. 2.178, under “No. 6.”

4. See Christie’s, London, sale cat., December 12, 1996, lot 212, where the discussion of the iconography includes the hypothesis that Egyptian elements are incorporated in the decoration; this will need further investigation.

5. Fabian 1996, p. 236, no. 514.

6. Sotheby’s, New York, sale cat., April 28, 2010, lot 313 (possibly identical with Baulez 1996, p. 111, fig. 17, there attributed to Jean-Gottlieb Frost).

7. For an associated pair of chairs formerly in the Ball collection, see Greber 1980, vol. 1, ill. p. 255; Fabian 1996, p. 235, no. 507. Another example was included in the sale by Blanchet & Joron–Derem at Drouot-Richelieu, Paris, April 7, 1999, lot 261 (ill. in cat.). The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg, has in its reserve collection a nineteenth-century copy of the serpent-back chair.

54 Pair of oval writing tables

1. For other examples having this feature, see Huth 1928, pl. 56 (left); Huth 1974, ill. no. 154; Voigt and Götze 2003, pp. 86–89, no. 16 (table in Schloss Hinterglau, inv. no. VE/43).

2. Greber 1980, vol. 2, p. 87, ill. no. 161; Cornet 2011, p. 109, figs. 13–18.

3. Invoice dated March 23, 1786, in the Tsentrāl’nyi Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv, Saint Petersburg, archive 468, inventory 1, part 2, file 3901, sheets 163, 164, nos. 22, 46–48 (Fabian 1996, pp. 365–66, doc. no. 2.230 [translated from the French; ill. in facsimile, pp. 366–67]). The most luxurious variant is a table from the Reuss collection veneered with yellow thuja wood (Christie’s, Gera, Thüringen, sale cat., May 26–27, 1998, lot 225; Voigt and Götze 2003, p. 88, fig. 92).

55 Rolltop desk

1. The desk is likely identical in its design to four “comodes à Cilinder” that the workshop made in two different sizes. They are mentioned in an invoice of March 23, 1786 (Tsentrāl’nyi Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv, Saint Petersburg, archive 468, inventory 1, part 2, file 3901, sheets 163, 164), for 130 pieces of furniture delivered to Empress Catherine II in Saint Petersburg. See Fabian 1996, pp. 365–66, doc. no. 2.230 (translated from the French; ill. in facsimile, pp. 366–67), no. 16 (one commode) and no. 34 (three small versions); see also Stiegel 2007, pp. 152–53, no. 27. The disk-shaped rosettes flanking the long milleraies panel on the stepped platform and on either side of the rolltop are close in style to ornaments decorating a desk in the J. Paul Getty Museum (see cat. 64) and another in the Badisches Landesmuseum, Karlsruhe (Stratmann–Döhler 1998, pp. 112–13, no. 20).

2. Stiegel 2007, pp. 152–53, no. 27.

3. A very similar clock was sold from the Karl Lagerfeld collection at Christie’s, Monaco, April 28–29, 2000, lot 359. Lot 360 in that sale was a mahogany rolltop desk with mechanical fittings based on the same model as the Metropolitan Museum’s chinoiserie rolltop (cat. 29).

4. The round table on which the landgravine is shown pensively leaning in fig. 85 has a top that may be covered with baize or felt for playing cards. We do know that she owned a round table; see Wintzingerode 2008, p. 26. For similar examples, see Wiewelthove 1999, ill. p. 76 (with blue-gray marble top); Christie’s, London, sale cat., December 14–15, 2005, lot 337.

5. Wintzingerode 2008, pp. 26–27.

6. See Alexandra Alexejewa and Rifat Gafifullin in *Krieg und Frieden* 2001, pp. 344–47, nos. 217, 219, 220.

56 The Stroganov desk

1. Fabian 1996, p. 89, no. 186, p. 88, no. 184.

2. The ducal family was strongly connected to the imperial Russian family. There are other examples of the larger desk (cat. 68) in Pavlovsk.

3. For the sale to Prince Potemkin, see Burkhardt Göres in *Roentgen in Gotha* 2008, p. 48.

4. See Koeppel 2009.

5. Hunter-Stiebel 2000.

6. Greber 1980, vol. 2, p. 318, ill. no. 637; Fabian 1996, p. 62, no. 100, p. 87, no. 175 (both now David Collection, Copenhagen).

57 Clock

1. The white enamel dial of the present clock was made in Neuenburg.

2. The beading and the manner in which the front of the base protrudes in the center and recedes on the sides are reminiscent of the Philadelphia Museum’s inkstand of the same date (cat. 39).

3. Similar clock cases were made in the 1780s by Ferdinand Schwerdfeger, one of Marie Antoinette’s preferred cabinetmakers; see *Egyptomania* 1994, p. 137, no. 61.

4. Fabian 1984; Fabian 1996, pp. 173–216; *Kinzing & Co.* 2003. Deliveries from the Roentgen workshop to the court at Neuwied are documented from the 1750s.

5. Achenbach’s deliveries to the court at Neuwied are documented between 1772 and 1787. Johann I Kinzing was his father-in-law. See Fabian 1996, p. 286.

58 Obelisk clock with a Franklin movement

I thank Gerd Hermann for identifying the wood.

1. I am very grateful to Ian D. Fowler for sharing with me his vast knowledge of Franklin clocks in general, and of the versions made in Neuwied in particular, in an email of December 11, 2011. A thorough and fascinating study of the history of the Franklin clock is Fowler and Denkel 2003.

2. Fowler and Denkel 2003, pp. 40–41, for information about Franklin and Ferguson originally published in 1773.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

4. See Alexandra Alexejewa and Rifat Gafifullin in *Krieg und Frieden* 2001, pp. 344–35, no. 217 (illustrated in situ).

5. In the landgravine’s portrait (fig. 85), the round table with a marble top (possibly covered in baize or felt in the picture) is probably listed in her estate inventory, together with about a dozen other Roentgen objects; see Wintzingerode 2008, pp. 26–27.

6. Huth 1928, pl. 59, and Huth 1974, ill. no. 204 (with the original ornaments on the top); Fabian 1984, p. 331, no. 70. Its appearance is recorded in a watercolor by Carl Werner of 1858 (Stadtgeschichtliches Museum, Leipzig); see Andreas Büttner in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 235, no. 46.3.

7. Wilkie 1987, p. 180, fig. 180; *Architectural Digest*, November 1991, p. A23 (the veneer on the case of the illustrated clock is of light birch burl wood and dark ebonized pearwood).

59 Rolltop desk

1. Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv, Saint Petersburg, archive 468, inventory 1, part 2, file 3901, sheet 163, no. 14 (Fabian 1996, pp. 365–66, doc. no. 2.230 [translated from the French; ill. in facsimile, pp. 366–67]).
2. This information was provided by Daxer & Marschall, Munich.
3. For additional examples made with yellow wood, see figs. 13, 17, and cat. 51 in this volume and an oval table in the Rijksmuseum (Baarsen 1998b, pp. 80–85, no. 15; Stiegel 2007, pp. 88–91, no. 9).
4. See, for example, a small rolltop in Pavlovsk Palace (Greber 1980, vol. 2, p. 336, ill. no. 680; Fabian 1996, p. 111, no. 241).
5. Fabian 2001, p. 27.

60 Fall-front secretary on stand

1. About twenty-two models are known.
2. Benois 1903, p. 374.
3. One, dating about 1776 and attributed to the French cabinetmaker Martin Carlin, is in the Wrightsman Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art; see Daniëlle O. Kisluk-Grosheide in Kisluk-Grosheide, Koeppe, and Rieder 2006, pp. 170–72, no. 71.
4. “Pour furniture de fonte, Ciselure et dorure mat d'un bas relief en médaillon avec entourage de fleurs”; quoted in Prieur 2011, p. 146. For other pieces with the same medallion, see Huth 1974, ill. no. 84; Fabian 1996, p. 155, no. 354, pp. 157–58, nos. 360–62.
5. Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv, Saint Petersburg, invoice dated March 23, 1786, archive 468, inventory 1, part 2, file 3901, sheet 163, no. 24 (Fabian 1996, pp. 365–66, doc. no. 2.230 [translated from the French; ill. in facsimile, pp. 366–67]).
6. Koeppe 2009, p. 224, fig. 9.5.

61 Commode

1. The text of this entry is a revised version of an entry by Achim Stiegel in Stiegel 2007, pp. 94–97, no. 11.
2. Fabian 1996, pp. 132–33, nos. 301–7, 309; also a pendant to no. 305 (private collection) and a very rich example of imperial dimensions (57 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 35 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 27 $\frac{3}{8}$ in.; 147 × 90 × 69.5 cm) formerly in the collection of the art dealer Otto von Mitzlaff in Wächtersbach (see Andreas Büttner in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 226, no. 41.3).
3. The version in Schloss Hinterglauchau (Fabian 1996, p. 132, no. 303) imitates the expensive quality of the mahogany used in this example by placing four pieces of veneer on the front in such a way that they mirror each other to produce a similar pattern.
4. Numbers 6, 7, 20, 21, and 38 in Roentgen's invoice dated March 23, 1786 (Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv, archive 468, inventory 1, part 2, file 3901, sheets 163, 164), covering the delivery of 130 pieces of furniture (Fabian 1996, pp. 365–66, doc. no. 2.230 [translated from the French; ill. in facsimile, pp. 366–67]).
5. Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 225.
6. The elaborate pulls on this commode are composed of seven visible parts and were affixed with four lock nuts passing through the front of the drawers. The upper pair have the numbers 6 through 9 stamped on the front of the swag, and the lower pair have the same numbers on the back of it.
7. Baulez 1996, p. 112.

8. Baulez 1995, pp. 81–82.

9. The stamped V brand is also found on a table of the same period that was formerly in the Robert von Hirsch collection, Basel (Sotheby's, London, sale cat., June 23, 1978, lot 595; Fabian 1996, p. 91, no. 192).

10. Excerpt from the journal of the Neuwied brotherhood's bachelors' house in the archives of the Evangelische Brüdergemeine Neuwied (Fabian 1996, pp. 374–75, doc. no. 2.271).

62 Tilt-top table

1. Antoine Ader, Drouot-Richelieu, Paris, July 4, 1997. The other gueridon, with three feet formed as steps, has a very similar wooden gallery and stem and identical mounts. It was auctioned as lot 88, by Poulain Le Fur, at the Hôtel des Ventes du Palais, Palais des Congrès, Paris, on June 22, 2000.
2. *Orangerie '88* 1988, pp. 174–75 (Galerie Pels-Leusden, Berlin).
3. Stiegel (2007, p. 12) discusses round tables capable of being adjusted and moved in three ways.
4. Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv, Saint Petersburg, archive 468, inventory 1, part 2, file 3901, sheet 163, nos. 11 and 27 (Fabian 1996, pp. 365–66, doc. no. 2.230 [translated from the French; ill. in facsimile, pp. 366–67]).
5. Christie's, Gera, Thüringen, sale cat., May 26–27, 1998, lot 227.

63 Apollo clock

1. Only one of the cylinders has survived, and some of the other musical parts and the small mounts have been replaced.
2. Fabian 1996, p. 372, doc. no. 2.256; Willscheid 2003, p. 32.
3. Catherine II to Grimm, February 12, 1790; quoted in Fabian 1996, p. 370, doc. no. 2.252 (translated from the French).
4. In the photograph the gilt-bronze figure of Apollo is not on the top. About 11 inches (29 cm) high, that sculpture is extremely heavy and could be removed and displayed separately; see “Collection du comte Paul Chouvaloff” 1902, p. 279; Willscheid 2003, ill. p. 34 and p. 29 (figure of Apollo). Rifat Gafullin notes that 3,796 items from the Shuvalov Palace were dispersed in the twentieth century; Gafullin 2001, p. 84, n. 12.
5. On the Winter Palace, see Larsons 1929, p. 13; for the Shuvalov and Stroganov palaces, see Maksimenko 1998.
6. This clock is probably the one that was on display from 1919 until 1925 in the Nicholas Room of the Yusupov Palace in Saint Petersburg as part of an “Exhibition of the Museum of the Lifestyle of the Nobility.” See Kukuruzova and Utochkina 2010, ill. p. 23.
7. On October 23, 1928, the *Dresdner Neueste Nachrichten* described the upcoming Russian auction under the riveting headline “Sensation at Lepke. The Treasure of the Tsar's Family.”
8. Note in the archives of the Roentgen-Museum, Neuwied.
9. The clock published in *Weltkunst*, May 15, 1991, p. 1534 (advertisement for a sale at Drouot-Richelieu, Paris, June 14, 1991), seems to be identical to the example now at Bruchsal Palace; see Cornet 1995–96, figs. 1–3, 5–7.
10. Cornet 1995–96; Jan Jaap Haspels in Haspels 1996, pp. 187–91, no. 34; Wilson et al. 1996, pp. 132–39, no. xviii; Bernd Willscheid 2003.

11. Prieur 2011. Weyl created the musical mechanisms for most of the other clocks in the group, including one without the Apollo figure in the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles. We know that he was assisted in making the movement for this clock by Johann Christian Weyl.

12. See Cornet 1995–96, p. 61, fig. 4, for a drawing made by Georg Ludwig Friedrich Laves in 1806–7 of the Barrière des Bons-Hommes.

13. Formerly in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, the manuscript has been lost; see the entry for cat. 34. See also Prieur 2011, p. 131; Christian Baulez in Bresc-Bautier, Scherf, and Draper 2009, pp. 462–63, no. 101.

14. I am most grateful to Alexis Kugel for this information.

15. Wilson et al. 1996, p. 138; Willscheid 2003, p. 30.

16. See Sotheby's, New York, sale cat., May 5, 1984, lot 154A; Christie's, New York, sale cat., April 30, 1999, lot 1.

17. Meusel 1797, ill. facing p. 920. F. C. Stark from Marburg is mentioned in Abeler 1977, p. 595. I thank Ian D. Fowler for discussing this subject with me.

64 Rolltop desk

I am grateful to Jeffrey Weaver, Associate Curator of Decorative Arts, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, for providing information about this desk.

1. Michael Stürmer, quoted in Stratmann-Döhler 1998, p. 118.
2. Alois Riegl, one of the great connoisseurs of European decorative arts, published this desk in the catalogue of an exhibition in 1898 as one of the most sophisticated examples of furniture of its time; see Riegl 1898. See also Sauerländer 1977.
3. Rappe et al. 2007, p. 11.
4. Conger and Pool 1970, pp. 224, 226, no. 23.
5. See, for comparison, the relief on an elaborately decorated rolltop desk formerly in the collection of Viscount D'Abernon (Christie's, London, June 26–27, 1929, lot 110). For a comprehensive discussion of the seven liberal arts, see Raggio and Wilmering 1996. See also Stratmann-Döhler, p. 118. I am grateful to James David Draper, Henry R. Kravis Curator, Department of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, Metropolitan Museum, for discussing the mounts with me.
6. See Baulez 1996, p. 115; Prieur 2011, pp. 146–48.
7. The carcass construction of the Karlsruhe desk was examined in 1998. A laminated wooden core was built to prevent movement and cracking in the extremely expensive large mahogany veneer sheets; see Cornet 1998, pp. 60–64.
8. I thank Dorothea Arnold, Curator Emeritus, Department of Egyptian Art, Metropolitan Museum, for her observations on lion symbolism.
9. For the associated pair of side tables now in a private collection, see William Doyle Galleries, New York, sale cat., January 25, 1984, and an advertisement by Matthew Schutz, New York (*Apollo* 127 [April 1988], p. 15). For the oval table formerly in the Rothschild collection, see Frégnac and Andrews 1979, p. 74 (illustration of the table in the Hôtel Lambert, the Paris residence of Baron Guy de Rothschild). The latter was made to serve as a pedestal for an allegorical group sculpted by Louis-Simon Boizot and cast by Rémond showing Minerva, History, and Immortality. The Neuwied master used the same group to decorate an important Roentgen secretary now in the State Hermitage Museum; see Stiegel 2007, pp. 114–17, no. 16; Christian Baulez in

Bresc-Bautier, Scherf, and Draper 2009, pp. 462–63, no. 131; and fig. 47, p. 47, in this volume.

65 Cabinet for gems

1. Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv, Saint Petersburg, archive 468, inventory 1, file 3903, sheet 17 (Fabian 1996, p. 368, doc. no. 2.238 [translated from the French; ill. in facsimile]).
2. See Baulez 1996.

66 Clock

1. The clock passed into the Nemours Foundation, Wilmington, Delaware, via Alfred I. duPont. The sale to Alfred duPont is recorded in a letter from the antique dealer Ferdinand Keller, Philadelphia, May 12, 1919, in the Nemours Foundation archives.
2. Adams 2003; Miller 2005.
3. An oval tureen by Jacques-Nicolas Roettiers, now in the Metropolitan's collection (acc. no. 1976.357.1a-e), was originally owned by Gouverneur Morris, who sold it to his fellow collector Robert R. Livingston, an example of how these objects were often passed from hand to hand within this group of educated Americans. On the silver service by Roettiers for Count Gregory Orlov now in the Metropolitan Museum, see Le Corbeiller 1969. On the taste of late eighteenth-century American collectors for French furniture, see Kimball 1929; Watson 1966, pp. xx–xxii; Watson 1983.
4. A Mr. Sherman repaired the clock at the time of the Auction House sale to W. McMurtrie in the early nineteenth century.
5. Huth 1973; G. Croll and R. Croll 2010, pp. 236–38.
6. In 1997 Professor Gerhard Croll and Renate Croll of Salzburg identified and prepared sheet music for the Gluck compositions on cylinder 5. I am very grateful to the Crolls for their patience and willingness to answer many technical questions.
7. A clock on a double-column base (but not necessarily this clock) belonging either to the queen or to the comtesse d'Artois was among the objects removed from Versailles in 1793. See Pradère 1989, p. 416; see also Bertrand Rondot's essay in this volume. Wolfram Koeppé was told more than two decades ago at Nemours that the clock came from the estate of John Marshall (1755–1835), the first chief justice of the United States, who spent time in France.
8. Fabian 1984, p. 318, no. 35; Jan Jaap Haspels in Haspels 1996, pp. 193–95, no. 35. Another model is in the Topkapi Palace Museum, Istanbul; see Özdemir 1993, p. 80.
9. Letter from Gerhard Croll and Renate Croll, May 11, 2003, now in the Nemours Foundation archives.
10. Jan Jaap Haspels in Haspels 1996, p. 194.

67 Rolltop desk

I am grateful to Wolfram Koeppé for his help and advice.

1. See Andreas Büttner in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 221, no. 40.4.
2. The example probably most like this desk is in the collection of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg. It was created for Prince Heinrich of Prussia, brother of Frederick the Great (Fabian 1996, p. 114, no. 253). See the rolltop desk in the Sachsen-Coburg collection in Schloss Callenberg, Coburg (Fabian 1996, p. 115, no. 255). See also a rolltop desk

formerly in the Hohenzollern Museum, Berlin, made for King Frederick William II of Prussia (Fabian 1996, p. 114, no. 252; see also the historical photograph of the desk reproduced in this volume [fig. 41, p. 43; also illustrated in Stiegel 2007, p. 163]).

3. That piece is the first one mentioned in note 2 above; the price is quoted in Stürmer 1979a, pp. 508–9, and the desk is illustrated there, as fig. 4.
4. See Büttner 2009, p. 78. See also Bothe 2000, p. 153.
5. Ulferts 2008, p. 310.
6. Susanne Schroeder in “*Ihre Kaiserliche Hoheit*” 2004, p. 163 and p. 162, fig. 179. A Roentgen cabinet belonging to the margraves of Baden-Baden, formerly in Karlsruhe Palace, has official seals affixed to the oak paneling on the back. It is gratifying to learn that in the case of that cabinet and this desk, care was taken not to damage the precious veneer by gluing an official seal to the front. For the Baden-Baden cabinet (now in a private collection, New York), see Stratmann-Döhler 1998, p. 25; Dömling and Schlörér 2007, p. 127.

68 Writing desk

I am grateful to Wolfram Koeppé for his help and advice.

1. See Andreas Büttner in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 220, no. 40.3.
2. See Fabian 1996 for additional examples: p. 86, no. 174 (Schloss Wilhelmshöhe, Kassel, inv. no. 201/40); p. 87, no. 175, an additional Stroganov piece (David Collection, Copenhagen); p. 87, no. 177 (Palast-Museum, Pavlovsk); p. 89, no. 183 (Badisches Landesmuseum, Karlsruhe; Stratmann-Döhler 1998, pp. 112–13, no. 20).
3. In about 1779 Goethe designed a rolltop desk, mimicking Roentgen's style, for Charlotte von Stein (1742–1827), lady in waiting to Duchess Anna-Amalia (1739–1807), mother of Duke Carl August; see Fabian 1999, pp. 19–22, figs. 32–34.
4. The furniture Roentgen brought with him came from the stock of his manufactory, which he had rescued from Neuwied in the earlier years of the Revolution and now hoped to sell in other cities, including Weimar, Kassel, and Ebersdorf. See also the essay by Wolfram Koeppé in this volume.
5. Büttner 2009, p. 76.

69 Coin cabinet

1. Göres 1980, p. 37.
2. See Baulez 1996.
3. My thanks to Wolfram Koeppé for this information.
4. Göres 1980, pp. 37–38.

NOTES TO THE APPENDICES

Appendix 1. The Hidden History of a Roentgen Commode

Mechthild Baumeister

1. Wolfram Koeppé in Kisluk-Grosheide, Koeppé, and Rieder 2006, pp. 180–83, no. 75.
2. For the London commode, see Sarah Medlam in Wilk 1996, pp. 128–29. For the Munich commode, see Himmelheber 1991. At the Victoria and Albert Museum, I thank Christopher Wilk, Sarah Medlam, and Nigel Bamforth, and at the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Frau Dr. Sigrid Sangl and Frau Roswitha Schwarz for facilitating the study of the two Roentgen commodes.

3. Ramond 2000, vol. 3, pp. 98–101.

4. The composition is simple and plausible for the period in terms of style. Rather than being part of a complete, professionally written piece, it may have been created for the sake of this imagery. It is possible that the music originally included a bass part, which would have mitigated some of the harmonic infelicities of the upper two parts. Essentially, the same composition appears on both sides of the Metropolitan's commode. The notation is clearly for two violins: it uses treble clefs and includes double stops, ruling out wind instruments, and it does not descend below the range of the violin. But on the proper left side, the cellist and violinist are both reading from these music sheets. On the proper right side, the figures are evidently woodwind players, but the musical notation is the same, if slightly shorter, violin music. I thank Bruce Alan Brown, Professor of Musicology at the Thornton School of Music, University of Southern California, for the interpretation of the musical notations on the three commodes.

5. The green-stained wood was microscopically identified as European hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus* L.) by Daniel Hausdorf, Assistant Conservator in the Department of Objects Conservation at the Metropolitan Museum. The bluish-green colorant was identified as indigo carmine by Nobuko Shibayama, Associate Research Scientist in the Metropolitan Museum's Department of Scientific Research, using high-performance liquid chromatography (HPLC). Copper was detected as well through nondestructive X-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF) by Pablo Londero, Research Associate in the same department. Further investigation will be required to help determine whether the occurrence of copper is due to contamination or the presence of both organic and inorganic dyes.

6. Michaelsen et al. 2008. See also Hans Michaelsen's appendix in this volume.

7. The same mounts are used on the large secretary cabinet, now in the Kunstgewerbemuseum, Berlin, that was delivered to the successor to the Prussian crown, Frederick William II, in 1779, as well as on a rolltop desk made for him, dated 1783, now in the Marmorpalais in Potsdam. For the Berlin secretary, see Stiegel 2007, pp. 40–63, especially p. 45, fig. 4c, and cat. 34 in this volume. For the desk in Potsdam, see Fabian 1996, p. 111, no. 243; Stiegel 2007, p. 102, fig. 12d. *Milleraies* plates are present on the stiles and feet of the London and Munich commodes.

8. To unlock the frieze drawer on the London and Munich commodes, the key is placed upside down in the lock and turned to the right; when it is turned once more to the right the center door opens. To operate the side doors the key is placed into the lock the normal way until a notch in the stem of the key is reached. When the key is turned right, the proper right door opens; pushing the key farther into the lock and turning it again to the right releases the top interior drawer, which slides out and swings sideways. Turning the key to the left will open the proper left door and top interior drawer. See also the appendix by Daniela Meyer and Hans Werner Pape in this volume.

9. The proper right lock also secures the center door. This locking system can also be operated with a small oval ormolu knob at the top of both center stiles; when turned, it opens the adjacent side door. The proper right knob also unlocks the center door when turned in the opposite direction.

10. Kisluk-Grosheide 2005. Other commodes in Versailles were also stamped twice with the Versailles mark on their back, such as the commode by Guillaume Benemann (inv. no. Vmb 14360) delivered in 1787 for the bedroom of the comte de Provence. Several models of the Versailles stamps, varying in design and size, were used in the late eighteenth century. The version used on the New York commode is also present on the following furniture: a chair by Boulard in the collection of the Mobilier National in Paris (inv. no. GMT 17278); a bergère by Pothier at Versailles (inv. no. V 4307); one of a pair of console tables by Jean-Henri Riesener (Sotheby's, Monaco, sale cat., June 18, 1999, lot 88); a table by Benemann (Hôtel George V, Paris, sale cat., June 8, 1990, lot 127; M. Oger Dumont, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, sale cat., March 19, 2004, lot 106); and a corner cabinet delivered to Versailles in 1786 (Palais d'Orsay, Paris, sale cat., December 8, 1977, lot 55). I thank Bertrand Rondot, Chief Curator at the Château de Versailles, for this information.

11. See the essay by Bertrand Rondot and the entry for cats. 32, 33 in this volume; see also Baulez 1996.

12. The original text of the 1792 description of Louis XVI's commode and its English translation are given in note 7 of the entry for cats. 32, 33 in this volume. The English translation of the 1793 description of the commode owned by the comtesse d'Artois is given in note 8 of the same entry. The two photographs published in the 1884 *Mentmore* catalogue show the New York commode with a different—possibly original—marble top, but because the images are overexposed, it is difficult to see the exact shape and pattern of the slab. See *Mentmore* 1884, vol. 2, p. 187.

13. The width of the unaltered top rail and center stiles of the back frame is $3\frac{3}{8}$ inches (8.5 cm), while the bottom rail measures 3 inches (7.7 cm) and the proper right and proper left vertical frame members are $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches (8.4 cm) and $3\frac{1}{8}$ inches (7.9 cm) wide, respectively. Tool marks from a handsaw remain in several areas along the bottom edge, whereas additional marks on the sides and the bottom surfaces strongly suggest they have been planed with a jointer, a modern woodworking machine. I thank Daniel Hausdorf for conducting reflectance transformation imaging (RTI) on the back of the commode to visually enhance the tool marks.

14. I thank Bertrand Rondot for the information about the crowned double V stamp.

15. The backs of all three commodes (New York: $24\frac{3}{8} \times 48 \times 7\frac{1}{8}$ in. [62.5 × 122 × 2.2 cm]; London and Munich: $24\frac{1}{2} \times 49\frac{3}{4} \times 5\frac{1}{8}$ in. [62.3 × 126.5 × 1.5 cm]) are made of oak and constructed as frames with three panels mounted in grooves. The edges of the frame members surrounding the panels are beveled on the front, rounded in the back. Whereas the frame of the New York back has mortise-and-tenon joints, both the London and the Munich frames have more sophisticated sliding-dovetail lap joints. The rear posts on these two commodes have rabbets rather than grooves, and the backs are attached with screws. The central compartments of the London and Munich commodes each have a separate back panel that is veneered on the inside with stained maple, like the rest of the compartment (see app. 1.2, p. 223). There is no evidence that such an additional back panel was ever installed in the New York commode where the varnished center panel of the oak back is exposed in the interior. It is noteworthy that one outer stile on the back frame of both the Munich and London commodes measures less in width ($3\frac{3}{8}$ in. [8.5 cm]) than the other frame

members, which range between $3\frac{3}{4}$ and $3\frac{7}{8}$ inches (9.5 and 9.8 cm).

16. After the wood strips were inserted, the backs of the panels were stained.

17. Nondestructive quantitative X-ray fluorescence (XRF) analyses were conducted by Federico Carò, Associate Research Scientist in the Metropolitan's Department of Scientific Research. The metal mounts, referred to as gilt bronzes, a common misnomer for gilded-metal components on historical furniture, are gilded brass. In their zinc/copper ratios the frames differ from the brass mounts thought to be original. A photograph taken in the late nineteenth century shows the proper right side of the commode with this torus molding frame in place; see *Mentmore* 1884, vol. 2, p. 187.

18. The widths of the beaded molding on the London and Munich commodes with and without the wood strips are about $\frac{9}{32}$ inch (7 mm) and $\frac{13}{64}$ inch (5 mm), respectively.

19. See Hans Michaelsen's appendix in this volume.

20. The red dye was identified as an extract of brazilwood by Pablo Londero, using Surface Enhanced Raman Spectroscopy (SERS).

21. X-ray fluorescence (XRF) analysis showed that on the side doors a copper-based stain was used to color the green stripes of the curtains' borders and that an organic dye (probably indigo carmine) was used for corresponding stripes on the central door. The XRF analysis was conducted by Pablo Londero.

22. Radiographs were taken of the New York commode's three doors. The central door is of a panel-and-frame construction, with its stiles and rails connected by lap joints. Similarly, the three straight doors of both the Munich and London commodes, which are of the same thickness as the New York commode's central door, also have a panel-and-frame construction, although the frame members are joined with mortises and tenons. The concave side doors of the New York commode consist of panels with cleats at the tops and bottoms. Their curvatures were created by gluing pieces of oak to the front sides of the flat panels along the vertical edges and subsequently shaping the fronts and backs. The radiographs of both New York side doors revealed no evidence of an earlier marquetry decoration or of the attachment of gilt-bronze mounts, adding to the belief that they are not original.

23. The side doors of the New York commode measure $18\frac{1}{2}$ inches (47.1 cm) in height and $12\frac{1}{2}$ inches (31.7 cm) in width, and the original sections (which have been extended) of the Paris oval panels are $18\frac{3}{8}$ inches (46.7 cm) high and $12\frac{1}{8}$ inches (30.8 cm) wide. The side doors of the London and Munich commodes are slightly smaller, measuring $18\frac{1}{4}$ inches (46.5 cm) in height and 12 inches (30.5 cm) in width.

24. I thank Benoît Jenn, furniture conservator at Les Arts Décoratifs, Paris, for re-examining the oval panels, and I am grateful to him and to Pierre Ramond for sharing photographs taken during the 1980s treatment. See Ramond 1989, pp. 166–69.

25. *Ibid.*; Ramond 2000, vol. 3, pp. 99–100. See also Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 216.

26. William Rieder in Metropolitan Museum of Art 1984, pp. 223–25, no. 136. Rieder suggested that they might have been placed on the commode according to the wishes of the original patron, and if so they reflect a contemporary alteration. The New York mounts are similar to ormolu mounts attributed to Étienne Martincourt on furniture made by the

French cabinetmaker Jean-Henri Riesener in 1771 for Pierre-Élisabeth de Fontanieu and on furniture made by Joseph Baumhauer. See Alcouffe, Dion-Tenenbaum, and Lefébure 1993, vol. 1, pp. 194–97; Baulez 1996, p. 109.

27. Other examples with similarly curved side panels, such as a fall-front secretary of about 1780 in the Victoria and Albert Museum (inv. no. 1107:3-1882) and another in a private collection, are decorated with mounts and rosettes conforming to their concave substrates as well. See Greber 1980, vol. 2, pp. 284–85, ill. nos. 554, 555; Ramond 2000, vol. 3, p. 116.

28. Plans to dismantle the cabinet and integrate sections of it into other pieces of furniture were made as early as 1789 and 1791. See Himmelheber 1994, p. 462; Fabian 1996, pp. 164–65; Ramond 2000, vol. 3, pp. 118–29; Barth and Jamet 2006.

29. The spelling of the words is also different in the two inscriptions; the earlier ones are written “agauch” and “adroit,” the later, “gauche” and “droite.”

30. Huth 1928, pls. 54, 90. The table's last known owner, Edwin Marriott Hodgkins, bought it in 1920 at a London auction sale and, according to the catalogue, it was said to have come from the Château de Versailles. This claim is questionable and could only apply to the marquetry decoration, which could have originated from a Roentgen commode at Versailles. The table had been purchased in 1838 in Paris by the father of the seller, Miss Cooper of Southampton. See Christie's, London, sale cat., November 30–December 2, 1920, lot 103. I thank Carolyn Sargentson for this reference. No further information about the table or its whereabouts since the 1920s has been found. For Hodgkins, see Westgarth 2009, p. 117.

31. In order to adapt the marquetry panels to the size of the tabletop, the panels with the musicians were reduced in width, while a tessellated floor was added to the scenes, and the floor of the stage was extended by one row. The sheets of music appear similar to those on the New York commode: “Allegro Imo” and “Allegro Illo” can be deciphered at the top of the scores.

32. Second Beurdeley sale, Paris, May 27–June 1, 1895, lot 564. Antenor Patiño (his sale at Palais Galliera, Paris, November 26, 1975, lot 120); Sotheby's, New York, November 19, 1993, lot 70; Sotheby's, New York, December 16, 1998, lot 188; Christie's, London, December 12, 2002, lot 45. See also Baulez 1996, pp. 101–2.

33. Bonhams London, November 23, 2004, lot 238; Sotheby's London, October 31, 2006, lot 557.

Appendix 2. Painting in Wood: Innovations in Marquetry Decoration by the Roentgen Workshop

Hans Michaelsen

1. Koeppé 2011.

2. Three styles of diamond mosaics are described; see Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 63.

3. Roubo 1774, pl. 289; reconstructions in Michaelsen and Buchholz 2006, p. 130, fig. 179, and Buchholz 2007, p. 109, fig. 4. For geometric marquetry, see also Michaelsen, Meyer-Doberenz, and Kolowski 1989.

4. Engravings by the Dutch painter Nicolaes Berchem (1620–1683) or Augsburg copies that were very popular at the time (see Koeppé 2011 and cat. 12) served as the marquetry patterns for the Walderdorff secretary; see also Greber 1980, vol. 1, pp. 79–80.

5. This production technique is described and illustrated in Roubo 1774, pl. 307.
6. King wood, amaranth (or purpleheart), ebony, maple, pear, olive, boxwood, barberry, and sycamore have been identified on the Walderdorff secretary. See Baarsen 1998b; Stiegel 2007, p. 22.
7. Additional examples of marquetry enhanced with washes are found in Fabian 1986b, pp. 161–63, 261–64. Presumably the painter Heinrich Foelix was responsible for their application; Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 76.
8. Scientific analyses on a dressing table from 1765 found the natural dyes indigo carmine and berberine used for blues and greens, and carminic acid (cochineal) for the reds. The holly (*Ilex aquifolium* L.) used for the floral arrangements was stained in multiple colors by mixing those dyes. See Roger 1996, pp. 116–21.
9. See Krutisch 2007, pp. 22–27.
10. The technique is illustrated in Roubo 1774, pls. 301–3.
11. For analysis of the red filler, see Buchholz 2007, p. 114, and p. 110, figs. 6, 7. Red filler for engravings was also used by other workshops, for example by Johann Justus Schacht on the choir stalls for the Mainz charterhouse, 1723–26, and by the Spindler brothers in Potsdam on furniture from about 1767–68.
12. See the detail photograph of a butterfly in Cornet 1998, p. 64.
13. Another example is the marquetry on the top of the Nuremberg desk (see Krutisch 2007, pp. 22–27).
14. See “Plan einer Lotterey” (Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 90 [ill. in facsimile]; Fabian 1996, p. 331, doc. no. 2.71 [ill. in facsimile]).
15. Chinoiseries by Jean-Baptiste Pillement (1728–1808) and François Boucher (1702–1770) first served as patterns, whereas later designs were created specially for the workshop, based in part on paintings or washed pen drawings by Januarius Zick (see, for example, Ursula Weber-Woelk in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, pp. 204–5, nos. 36.3, 36.4; Stiegel 2007, p. 80, fig. 7b, p. 90, fig. 9a) and redrawn as marquetry patterns in the engraving workshop of Elie Gervais (see Fabian 1996, p. 355, doc. no. 2.99, p. 341, doc. no. 2.135, for excerpts from the Gervais account books).
16. Fabian 1996, p. 294. See also Strasser 1994.
17. Fabian 1996, p. 288.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 312, 334–41, doc. nos. 2.92, 2.99–2.101, for excerpts from the account books of Elie Gervais.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 292, 357, doc. no. 2.194. For Michael Rummer, see Mieg 1780.
20. Fabian 1996, p. 293.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 291.
22. See *ibid.*, p. 363, doc. no. 2.227, for an excerpt from an anonymous document from Neuwied in which it is related that Krause experimented with dyed woods and varnishes.
23. Michaelsen 1983, pp. 57–58; Michaelsen 1989, p. 113, fig. 21. For knife marks in the wood substrate, see M. Becker 1971, p. 28; Michaelsen 1989, p. 116; Ramond 1989, p. 169; Krutisch 2007, p. 67.
24. Presumably, of each element only the outlines and the most important lines of the internal drawing were transferred onto the veneer from the design drawing.
25. This method was possible because the individual pieces, all carefully cut from a single piece of veneer, could always be fitted together perfectly, like a puzzle. Depending on his skill, the marquetry artist could improvise with his saw, add new details, or by using especially thin saw blades achieve an intricate division of the surface that could barely be accomplished with a drawing tool.
26. Michaelsen 1983, p. 56.
27. Twenty-four continuous hours were required to reproduce the marquetry. The time could easily be cut in half with practice and division of labor. *Ibid.*, p. 58.
28. See *ibid.*, p. 51; see also Krutisch 2007, pp. 56–63.
29. Not all colorants used by the Roentgen workshop in this late period have been positively identified as of yet. Relatively secure information based on HPLC (high-performance liquid chromatography) analysis is available for the blue and green dyes, which were based on solutions of indigo in sulfuric acid as well as yellow dyestuffs like fustic and barberry. The red tones were probably achieved with dyes from brazilwood and cochineal. See Michaelsen 1989, p. 117; Piening 1996, p. 305; Michaelsen and Buchholz 2009, pp. 140–46.
30. See the description by Claude Pahin de la Blancherie of the marquetry coloring of a table by David Roentgen in *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres et des Arts*, no. 8, March 16, 1779, p. 51, col. 1 (Fabian 1996, p. 347, doc. no. 2.169). The marquetry colors in the interior of the large secretary cabinet from 1779 in Berlin are still in an extraordinary state of preservation (see cat. 34).
31. For example, the motif of garden tools hanging on ribbons with flowers was often used on oval tabletops in both monochrome and polychrome versions. See Fabian 1996, pp. 46–47.
32. See fig. 11 in this volume for an illustration of the princess’s chamber in Wörlitz Palace, Dessau; see also Fabian 1996, frontispiece, and Büttner 2007, p. 50, for additional views of the chamber.
33. Abraham Roentgen inventory list from about 1765–66: “An inlaid desk on a gray ground” (Fabian 1996, p. 329, doc. no. 2.67); excerpt from 1771 from the expense book of the landgrave Friedrich II of Hessen: “A writing desk in silver-gray wood, inlaid with lively flowers and figures” (Fabian 1996, p. 334, doc. no. 2.93); Claude Pahin de la Blancherie in *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres et des Arts*, no. 9, March 23, 1779, p. 57, col. 2: “The ground into which the colored woods are inlaid is in a lovely light gray tone” (Fabian 1996, p. 347, doc. no. 2.170 [translated from the French; ill. in facsimile, p. 348]).
34. Analysis of samples of maple background veneers from various Roentgen pieces revealed, in addition to indications of iron, traces of nitrates, which suggest the use of nitric acid. Depending on the concentration of the acid and the quantity of iron filings added, a light silver-gray to dark gray-brown staining of maple veneers could be achieved. See Michaelsen et al. 2008.
35. In addition, the wood is affected by ongoing deterioration due to the breakdown of the ferric acid into oxides and hydroxides with resultant brown staining.
36. For example, see Bernd Willscheid in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 216, no. 39.4; Andreas Büttner in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 236, no. 46.5.
37. See Claude Pahin de la Blancherie in *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres et des Arts*, no. 9, March 23, 1779, p. 57, col. 2: “All columns are made of a gray burl wood that perfectly resembles the most exquisite marble” (Fabian 1996, p. 347, doc. no. 2.170 [translated from the French; ill. in facsimile, p. 348]). See also an inventory list from 1798: “One oval table, gray with marbled woods”; “One box gray with marbled woods” (Eberspächer 1999, p. 1295).
38. See Greber 1980, vol. 2, p. 354, ill. no. 719; Stiegel 2007, p. 154, fig. 28a.
39. Fabian 1996, p. 363, doc. no. 2.227 (excerpt from a letter from Neuwied dated November 10, 1785).
40. See Claude Pahin de la Blancherie in *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres et des Arts*, no. 9, March 23, 1779, p. 57, col. 2: “. . . a table in mahogany whose polish is so perfect that one mistakes it for marble” (Fabian 1996, p. 347, doc. no. 2.170 [translated from the French; ill. in facsimile, p. 348]). See also a passage about Roentgen in *Gemaehle von St. Petersburg* (1794) by Heinrich Friedrich Storch: “. . . which by the most laborious and extraordinary polishing have been given a gloss that requires no further polishing to maintain it” (quoted in Fabian 1996, p. 375, doc. no. 2.274).
41. The original varnish is still especially well preserved in the interior of the large secretary cabinet from 1779 in Berlin (see cat. 34 in this volume). Chemical analysis has failed as yet to produce definite results regarding the composition of the coatings. The natural resins copal and sandarac have been identified, but whether other resins were added, what solvent was used, and how the varnish was applied are secrets of the Roentgen workshop still to be revealed.

Appendix 3. Hidden Technology in Roentgen Furniture

Daniela Meyer and Hans Werner Pape

1. Greber 1980, vol. 1, pp. 166–68, from a facsimile of a description of the Berlin cabinet, probably by David Roentgen himself; the original, most recently in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, has been lost.
2. Huth 1974, ill. nos. 91, 92; Greber 1980, vol. 1, pp. 161ff.; Fabian 1986b, pp. 173–75, ill. nos. 410, 411.
3. Huth 1974, ill. nos. 93–107; Greber 1980, vol. 1, pp. 161ff.; Fabian 1986b, pp. 181–84, ill. nos. 425–42; Stiegel 2007, pp. 40–63, no. 4. This large secretary cabinet includes a bracket clock with display of the moon phases and musical selections; eight-day movement and chime; three brass cylinders, each holding four melodies played by flute, cymbals, and glockenspiel; music box and clock movement by Peter Kinzing (see Fabian 1986b, p. 175, ill. no. 411). The desk itself features letter compartments behind marquetry panels on turning cylinders; automatically accessed letter and medal cupboard; automatically opening money box; and spring-activated drawers.
4. Greber 1980, vol. 1, pp. 161ff.; Fabian 1986b, p. 173; Himmelheber 1994; Barth and Jamet 2006.
5. Greber 1980, vol. 2, p. 325, ill. nos. 656, 657; Fabian 1986b, p. 108.
6. Fabian 1986b, pp. 130, 131, ill. nos. 296, 297.
7. Greber 1980, vol. 2, p. 337, ill. no. 682; Fabian 1986b, p. 134, ill. nos. 307–10.
8. Fabian 1986b, pp. 132–33, ill. nos. 300–306; Stratmann-Döhler 1998, pp. 116–19, no. 22. The rolltop desk has a coupled cylinder and desktop mechanism, and a standing desk and lecturn mechanism in the top compartment. Except for the bronze mounts, the piece represents the same construction as the one in the J. Paul Getty Museum.
9. Privilege granted to Christian Härder by Duke Carl Wilhelm Ferdinand von Braunschweig, September 6, 1800 (Staatsarchiv Braunschweig, Pol. Dep. F.2XVII); see Meyer (Daniela) 2011. The desk has been attributed by Achim Stiegel to Johann Georg Stein or Christian Härder (Stiegel 2003, pp. 319–25; Stiegel 2007, pp. 120–27).
10. See Meyer (Daniela) 2011.
11. Less noticeable sections were given only a light polishing, whereas the invisible undersides of pieces were left unfinished.

CHECKLIST OF THE EXHIBITION

Numbers preceding titles refer to exhibition catalogue numbers. Exhibition objects included in this volume as figures are identified in parentheses. Despite the best efforts of our colleagues in Russia, at press time we were not sure whether the objects from Saint Petersburg would travel to the exhibition.

1 Tilt-top table

Abraham Roentgen, ca. 1742–45
Cherry; brass inlay
H. 27 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (70 cm); diam. of top 30 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (78 cm)
Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel (BXI.311)

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Huth 1928, pls. 44, 68; Huth 1933, ill. nos. III, VI; Huth 1974, ill. nos. 8, 9; Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 42, vol. 2, p. 11, ill. nos. 8, 9; Fabian 1986b, pp. 76–77, ill. nos. 128–30; Hayward and Medlam 1993, pp. 25–26, pl. 16; Fabian 1996, p. 75, no. 133; Weber-Woelk 2007, p. 42, ill. p. 41; Ursula Weber-Woelk in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 139, no. 7.2; Koeppe 2011, p. 93, fig. 2

2 Tea chest

Abraham Roentgen, ca. 1750–55
Oak, cedar, veneered with rosewood; brass, iron, and steel
6 $\frac{1}{2}$ (without handle) \times 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ \times 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.
(16.5 \times 24.1 \times 14.6 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, Friends of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts Gifts, 1999 (1999.147)

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Koeppe 2011, p. 101, n. 18

3 Casket

Abraham Roentgen, ca. 1756–58
Cherry, veneered with rosewood; brass, mother-of-pearl, and ivory inlay
6 $\frac{3}{4}$ \times 11 \times 5 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (17 \times 28 \times 15 cm)
Mittelrhein-Museum, Koblenz (Kg6.014)

LITERATURE

Huth 1928, pl. 66; Huth 1965, pp. 85, 84, fig. 1; Thornton and Fitz-Gerald 1966, p. 146, fig. 14; Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 67, vol. 2, p. 61, ill. nos. 106, 107; Fabian 1986b, p. 282, ill. nos. 659, 660; Fabian 1992, pp. 56, 50, fig. 106; Fabian 1996, p. 248, no. 567; Ursula Weber-Woelk in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 159, no. 15.4; Koeppe 2011, p. 95, fig. 6

4 Rotating tabernacle

Abraham Roentgen, ca. 1758
Oak, ebony, and rosewood, veneered with amaranth, yew, walnut, olive, rosewood, ebony, and ivory; tortoiseshell and engraved mother-of-pearl (partially stained); sheet silver, gilded yellow metal
H. 50 in. (127 cm); diam. 26 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (68 cm)
Bischöfliches Dom- und Diözesanmuseum Mainz (ML 00040)

MARKS

On the front of the base of the niche that originally held the monstrance is a cartouche with the letters IHS; on the base's top appear the interlaced

letters CV/MFPA. In the niche with the small altar crucifix, a mother-of-pearl roundel at the bottom of the net is incised with initials AGB and a cross (signature of the mother-of-pearl cutter?). On the entablature of the niche depicting *The Last Supper* is a rocaille cartouche inscribed HOC FACITE IN MEAM COMMEMORATIONEM.

LITERATURE

Adam and Reber 1994, pp. 162–64, no. 34; Engelmann 2007; Ursula Weber-Woelk in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, pp. 182–83, no. 26; Ecker and Engelmann 2008, figs. 3–5, 14; Ecker and Engelmann 2009

5 Harlequin table

Abraham Roentgen, ca. 1760–65
Oak, pine, walnut, rosewood, and mahogany, veneered with rosewood, tulipwood (stained), pearwood (stained); ivory, mother-of-pearl; gilt bronze, brass, and iron
31 $\frac{1}{2}$ \times 42 $\frac{1}{2}$ \times 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (80 \times 108 \times 52 cm)
Kunstgewerbemuseum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (W-1979,93)

LITERATURE

Age of Rococo 1958, p. 247, no. 860; Huth 1964, pp. 86, 87, fig. 6; Kreisel and Himmelheber 1968–73, vol. 2 (1970), p. 296, fig. 993; Huth 1974, ill. nos. 126–28; Dreier 1979, figs. 66–68, 70; Dreier 1980, figs. 1, 2, 4; Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 64, vol. 2, p. 49, ill. nos. 82–84; Fabian 1981c, pp. 21, 20, ill. nos. 10, 11; Fabian 1982, pp. 22, 23, figs. 34–36; Franz Adrian Dreier in Kunstgewerbemuseum 1985, p. 191, no. 255, pl. 35; Fabian 1986b, p. 35, ill. nos. 16–21; Mundt 1989, pp. 15, 14, fig. 4; Fabian 1996, p. 25, no. 8; Stiegel 2007, pp. 16–21, no. 2

6 Reading and writing stand

Abraham Roentgen, ca. 1760–65
Pine, oak, and walnut, veneered with rosewood, alder, and palisander; ivory, ebony, and mother-of-pearl; gilt bronze;
30 $\frac{1}{2}$ \times 28 $\frac{1}{4}$ \times 19 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (77.5 \times 71.7 \times 48.9 cm).
The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles (85.DA.216)

MARKS

Coat of arms and monogram (arms surmounted by a crown with an orb, sword, and crosier) of Johann Philipp von Walderdorff, archbishop and elector of Trier, inlaid in ivory in the central cartouche on the top.

LITERATURE

Huth 1928, pl. 45; Kreisel and Himmelheber 1968–73, vol. 2 (1970), fig. 992; Huth 1974, ill. no. 110; Greber 1980, vol. 1, pp. 55–58, vol. 2, pp. 32, 33, ill. nos. 57, 58; Fabian 1981c, p. 20, ill. no. 14; Fabian 1982, pp. 10–12, fig. 10; Himmelheber 1985a, pp. 257, 255, fig. 12; Fabian 1986b, pp. 28–29, 32–33, ill. nos. 8, 11–13; “Recent Acquisitions” 1986, p. 462, no. 67; Bremer-David 1993, p. 232, no. 401; Fabian 1996, p. 30, no. 21; Himmelheber 1998, pp. 345, 347, fig. 13

7 Sofa

Abraham Roentgen, ca. 1762–64
Walnut, beech, oak, veneered with walnut and birch (partially stained and painted with colored washes); green silk (replacement)
43 $\frac{1}{4}$ \times 87 $\frac{3}{8}$ \times 29 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (110 \times 222 \times 74 cm)
Private collection

LITERATURE

Huth 1974, ill. nos. 181, 182; Greber 1980, vol. 2, pp. 87–89, ill. nos. 163, 165, 166; Fabian 1981b, pp. 4, 6, figs. 13, 14; Himmelheber 1985a, pp. 251, 253, 258, 248, 249, pls. III, IV; Fabian 1986b, pp. 261–63, ill. nos. 623, 625, 629; Fabian 1996, p. 235, no. 511; Himmelheber 1998, p. 347, figs. 16, 17

8 Multifunctional commode

Abraham Roentgen, ca. 1755–60
Oak and cherry, with mahogany veneer and walnut, maple, and birch marquetry; gilt bronze
33 $\frac{7}{8}$ \times 53 $\frac{1}{2}$ \times 26 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (86 \times 136 \times 67 cm)
Hessische Hausstiftung, Museum Schloss Fasanerie, Eichenzell/Fulda, Germany (Inv. no. FAS M124)

LITERATURE

Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 82, vol. 2, p. 103, ill. no. 190; Fabian 1986b, pp. 152–54, 163, ill. nos. 385–87; Fabian 1996, p. 71, no. 123; Penelope Hunter-Stiebel in Hunter-Stiebel et al. 2005, pp. 48, 49, ill.

9 Harlequin table

Abraham Roentgen, ca. 1760–65
Walnut, mahogany, and apple, veneered with kingwood; ivory, mother-of-pearl, and brass inlay; gilt bronze
31 $\frac{7}{8}$ \times 41 \times 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (81 \times 104 \times 52 cm)
Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Frankfurt, Jubilee gift of the Friends of the Kunstgewerbemuseum, 1926 (V70)

LITERATURE

Thornton and Fitz-Gerald 1966, pp. 137, 142, figs. 6, 7; Honour 1969, ill. p. 176; Huth 1974, ill. nos. 124, 125; Bauer, Märker, and Ohm 1976, p. 116, no. 159; Feulner 1980, fig. 338c; Greber 1980, vol. 1, pp. 63–64, vol. 2, pp. 53–56, ill. nos. 91–97; Himmelheber 1985a, pp. 257–58, figs. 15, 15a; Fabian 1986b, pp. 28–29, 34, ill. no. 15; Fabian 1996, p. 26, no. 10; Himmelheber 1998, p. 347, fig. 14; Zinnkann 2005

10 Writing desk

Abraham Roentgen, ca. 1760–64
Spruce, oak, walnut, and mahogany; yellow metal
31 $\frac{7}{8}$ \times 62 $\frac{3}{8}$ \times 30 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (81 \times 158.5 \times 76.6 cm)
Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel (MHK 2.3.29)

LITERATURE

Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 67, vol. 2, p. 60, ill. no. 105; Fabian 1982, p. 61, figs. 88, 89; Fabian 1986b, p. 80, ill. nos. 142, 143; Fabian 1996, p. 78, no. 147; Wolfram Koeppe in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 186, under no. 273

11**Corner commode**

Abraham Roentgen, ca. 1757

Oak, fir, veneered with rosewood, plum, and walnut; gilt bronze, marble, and leather
31 1/8 × 47 1/4 × 33 5/8 in. (79.5 × 120 × 85.5 cm)
Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich (66/156)

LITERATURE

Greber 1980, vol. 1, pp. 68–69, vol. 2, pp. 70–71, ill. nos. 124–28; Himmelheber 1985a, pp. 256, 258, 253, fig. 10; Fabian 1986b, p. 139, ill. no. 313; Cornet 1990–92, pt. 2 (1990), figs. 9, 12–23; Fabian 1996, p. 125, no. 286; Himmelheber 1998, pp. 339, 346, fig. 6; Cornet 2011, p. 113, fig. 30

12**Writing desk**

Abraham Roentgen, ca. 1758–62

Oak, sycamore, walnut, and cherry, veneered with sycamore, purplewood, kingwood, pearwood, olive, barberry, boxwood, plane, sycamore, various burl woods, and other woods (partially stained); tortoiseshell, mother-of-pearl, ivory (partially stained); gilt bronze, brass, copper, and silver
58 1/4 × 44 1/2 × 24 3/8 in. (148 × 113 × 62 cm)
Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (BK-16676)

MARKS

Legend on the medallion: IOAN.PHILIP.D.G.ARCHIEPIS. TREVIR.S.R.I.PRIN.ELECT.ADMIN.PRUM.P.P.; the monogram JPC appears on the canopy on the outside of the slant front and on the inner board underneath the sliding writing surface; inscription ALL:/GLOR: appears on the books of music on the mounts; inscription in pencil on the plank behind the left panel in the lower section reads WER R[E]DLICH DENCKDT UNDT/FREUNDSC[HA]FT HÄLDT, VERDIENDT/DEN GE[NU]SS DER WELDT.

LITERATURE

Feulner 1924, pp. 276, 274, fig. 1; Huth 1928, p. 62, pls. 6, 7; Honour 1969, ill. p. 178; Kreisel and Himmelheber 1968–73, vol. 2 (1970), pp. 300, 302, figs. 986–99; Huth 1974, pp. 34–35, ill. nos. 20–31; Feulner 1980, fig. 339; Greber 1980, vol. 1, pp. 77–82, vol. 2, pp. 90–101, ill. nos. 167–83; Fabian 1981b, pp. 4, 5, figs. 11, 12; Fabian 1982, pp. 29, 32, 28, figs. 45, 46; Himmelheber 1985a, pp. 247–51, 246, figs. 1–1b; Fabian 1986b, pp. 40–41, ill. nos. 32–39; Fabian 1996, p. 31, no. 22; Baarsen 1998b, pp. 56–73, no. 13; Himmelheber 1998, p. 347, fig. 15; Weber-Woelk 2007, ill. p. 49; Ecker and Engelmann 2008, pp. 192–94, figs. 6–13

13**Chair**

Abraham Roentgen, ca. 1758–60

Walnut, cherry, palisander, veneered with walnut, amaranth, hazelnut, mahogany, poplar, maple (stained), birch, and ebony
42 1/2 × 20 1/2 × 19 1/4 in. (108 × 52 × 49 cm)
Museum of Applied Art, Cologne (Inv. no. A30)

MARKS

On the back appears the monogram JPC, representing Johann Philipp von Walderdorff, archbishop and elector of Trier.

LITERATURE

Huth 1928, p. 70, pl. 62; Feulner 1980, fig. 338a; Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 85, vol. 2, p. 105, ill. nos. 195, 196; Himmelheber 1985a, pp. 253, 250, fig. 3; Fabian

1986b, pp. 250, 255, ill. nos. 601–3; Fabian 1992, pp. 50–51, 43, fig. 88; Fabian 1996, p. 232, no. 491; Colzman 1999, pp. 300–301, no. 166; Himmelheber 1998, p. 347, no. 11

14**Fall-front secretary**

Abraham and David Roentgen, ca. 1763–68

Oak, fruitwood, and maple, veneered with walnut and rosewood; leather; gilt (possibly regilded) bronze

56 1/4 × 35 7/8 × 17 3/4 in. (143 × 91 × 45 cm)
The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (EPR-1248)

LITERATURE

Göres 1980, suppl., pp. 43–44, no. 1; Fabian 1986b, p. 187; Fabian 1996, p. 146, no. 338

15**Corner cabinet**

Abraham and David Roentgen, ca. 1765–67

Fir and oak, veneered with maple, palisander, and mahogany; gilt bronze

30 3/4 × 26 3/8 × 18 1/2 in. (78 × 67 × 47 cm)
The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (EPR-401)

LITERATURE

Kreisel and Himmelheber 1968–73, vol. 2 (1970), p. 298, fig. 1003; Göres 1980, suppl., pp. 44–45, no. 2; Fabian 1986b, p. 242, ill. no. 561; Fabian 1996, p. 226, no. 457; Himmelheber 1999, p. 30, fig. 10

16**Dressing table**

Abraham and David Roentgen, 1769

Walnut, oak, cherry, and pearwood, veneered with palisander, kingwood, maple, boxwood, and ash; mother-of-pearl and ebony; mirror glass; gilt bronze
32 5/8 × 39 3/4 × 24 3/8 in. (82.9 × 101 × 62 cm)
Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Frankfurt (13877)

MARKS

The date of manufacture, 1769, is inlaid in mother-of-pearl on the underside of a panel that rises behind the mirror on the table's top. This panel is also inlaid with the coats of arms of the house of Wettin and those of the electorate of Saxony.

LITERATURE

Feulner 1924, pp. 278–79, 277, figs. 2, 3; Huth 1974, ill. nos. 133, 134; Sotheby's, London, sale cat., June 23, 1978, lot 598; Stürmer 1979–80, pt. 1, p. 27, fig. 6; Feulner 1980, fig. 392b; Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 135, vol. 2, pp. 156–57, ill. nos. 296–300; Fabian 1986b, pp. 28–29, 44–47, ill. nos. 44–55; Markowitz 1989, p. 71; Stürmer 1993, ill. p. 29; Fabian 1996, p. 33, no. 26; Zinnkann 2005

17**Architect's table**

David Roentgen, ca. 1769

Oak, beech, and other woods, veneered with maple, rosewood, and other woods; leather; gilt bronze

31 1/2 × 31 × 22 in. (80 × 78.7 × 55.9 cm)
House Collection, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C. (F390)

LITERATURE

Falke 1941, p. 166, fig. 4; Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 103, vol. 2, p. 147, ill. nos. 281–83; Fabian 1996, p. 34, no. 27

18**Rolltop desk**

Abraham and David Roentgen, ca. 1770–74

Oak, cherry, and other woods, veneered with sycamore, tulipwood, rosewood, and maple; mother-of-pearl and ivory; mirror glass; leather; gilt bronze and steel

45 3/4 × 42 × 25 in. (116.2 × 106.7 × 63.5 cm)
Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens, Washington, D.C., Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (33.222)

MARKS

On the outside of the cylinder top appear letters that read either MA or MAW or MAC, surmounted by a crown with orb and cross.

LITERATURE

Ricci 1913, p. viii; Feulner 1924, pp. 291, 293, fig. 13; Feulner 1927, fig. 629, pls. 14, 15; Huth 1928, p. 63, pls. 14, 15; Huth 1955, pls. 8, 9; *Marie-Antoinette* 1955, p. 221, no. 709, pl. xxix; Otto 1960, pp. 102, 103, ill. no. 2; Kreisel and Himmelheber 1968–73, vol. 2 (1970), p. 302, figs. 1014, 1016, pl. xv; Huth 1974, pp. 14, 64–65, ill. nos. 38–41; Feulner 1980, fig. 391; Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 155, vol. 2, pp. 210–15, ill. nos. 416–25; Fabian 1986b, pp. 52–53, ill. nos. 71–76; Fabian 1996, p. 51, no. 69, ill. no. 69a; Liana Paredes Arend in Odom and Arend 1998, pp. 181–83, no. 88, ill. p. 6

19**Oval table**

Abraham and David Roentgen, ca. 1770–73

Oak, pine, cherry, maple (partially stained), mahogany, and holly; gilt bronze, steel; leather
H. 28 3/4 in. (73 cm); top 28 3/8 × 20 1/2 in. (72 × 52 cm)
Private collection

LITERATURE

Wolfram Koeppe in Scarpa and Lupo 2007, p. 486, no. v.51, ill. p. 348; Koeppe in Scarpa 2008, p. 305, no. 131, ill. p. 185

20**Oval table**

David Roentgen, ca. 1774–80

Oak, walnut, pine, cherry, cedar, and maple, veneered with maple, hornbeam, holly (all partially stained), cherry, mahogany, tulipwood, and other woods; gilt bronze, iron, brass, steel; partially tooled and gilded leather

29 1/2 × 29 × 20 1/2 in. (74.9 × 73.7 × 52.1 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Samuel H. Kress Foundation, 1958 (58.75.39)

LITERATURE

Parker 1960, pp. 301, 298, fig. 31; Metropolitan Museum of Art 1964, pp. 100–102, no. 17, figs. 87, 88; Stürmer 1979–80, pt. 2 (1979), pp. 39, 38, figs. 8, 9; Greber 1980, vol. 2, p. 173, ill. no. 337; Theodore Dell in *Dodge Collection* 1996, p. 68; Fabian 1996, p. 49, no. 59; Wolfram Koeppe in Kisluk-Grosheide, Koeppe, and Rieder 2006, p. 175, n. 6; Koeppe in Scarpa and Lupo 2007, p. 489, under no. v.58; Koeppe in Scarpa 2008, p. 305, under no. 130

21

Oval table

David Roentgen, ca. 1775–80
Oak, pine, and cherry, veneered with tulipwood, maple, and holly; leather; gilt bronze and brass
29 3/8 × 29 3/8 × 20 in. (74.5 × 74.5 × 50.8 cm)
Private collection

LITERATURE

Wolfram Koepe in Scarpa and Lupo 2007, p. 486, no. v.52, ill. p. 348; Koepe in Scarpa 2008, pp. 305–6, no. 132, ill. p. 185

22

Oval table

David Roentgen, ca. 1775–80
Oak and cherry, veneered with holly, maple, walnut, tulipwood, and various other woods; tooled leather; gilt bronze, iron, and steel
29 5/8 × 29 5/8 × 20 5/8 in. (75.1 × 75.1 × 52.5 cm)
Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Henry P. McIlhenny Collection in memory of Frances P. McIlhenny, 1986 (1986–26–117)

LITERATURE

Wolfram Koepe in Scarpa and Lupo 2007, p. 486, under no. v.52; Koepe in Scarpa 2008, pp. 305–6, under no. 132

23

Rolltop desk

David Roentgen, ca. 1773–76
Oak and cherry, veneered with maple, amaranth, burl elm, tulipwood, and various other woods (partially stained); gilt bronze, brass, and steel
45 3/4 × 44 1/2 × 23 in. (116.2 × 113 × 58.4 cm)
Kravis Collection

MARKS

Recent shipping label is attached to the underside.

LITERATURE

Huth 1928, p. 63, pl. 13; Ramond 2000, vol. 3, ill. p. 80

24

Multifunctional table

David Roentgen, ca. 1774–80
Oak, pine, and walnut, veneered with maple, boxwood, elm, ebony, and beech; gilt bronze, brass, and ivory
31 1/8 × 35 1/2 × 19 5/8 in. (81.5 × 90 × 50 cm)
Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich (84/239)

LITERATURE

Greber 1980, vol. 1, ill. pp. 142–47; Fabian 1982, pp. 24, 26, figs. 41, 42; Fabian 1986b, pp. 62–65, ill. nos. 85–95; Cornet 1990–92, pt. 9 (1991), figs. 74–81; Fabian 1996, pp. 52–53, no. 71

25

Secretary cabinet

David Roentgen, ca. 1772–75
Walnut and various other woods (partially painted green), veneered with marquetry panels; gilt bronze, brass
Bottom 41 7/8 × 54 1/4 × 24 1/8 in. (106.4 × 137.8 × 61.3 cm); top 59 1/4 × 54 3/4 × 14 1/2 in. (150.5 × 139.1 × 36.8 cm).
The Art Institute of Chicago, Gift of Count Pecci-Blunt (1954.21)

LITERATURE

Huth 1974, pl. II; Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 158, vol. 2, pp. 222, 223, ill. nos. 443–45; Fabian 1986b, p. 169, nos. 402, 403; Cornet 1990–92, pt. 10 (1991), pp. 2644, 2645, fig. xxxviii; Wardropper and Roberts 1991, ill. p. 68; Fabian 1996, p. 141, no. 327

26

Longcase clock

David Roentgen, ca. 1774–75
Oak, veneered with maple, burl woods, holly, hornbeam (all partially stained), and other woods; mother-of-pearl; gilt bronze and brass
122 1/2 × 27 × 16 in. (311.2 × 68.6 × 40.6 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Mrs. Edgar Worch, in memory of her husband, 1975 (1975.101)

MARKS

Signed “Achenbach & Schmidt à Neuwied” on the zodiac dial and “Reusch” in the marquetry on the front panel.

LITERATURE

Penelope Hunter[-Stiebel] in Metropolitan Museum of Art 1975, p. 263; Fabian 1981a, pp. 11–12, 6, 7, figs. 9–9b, 10; Fabian 1981b, pp. 11, 16, fig. 38; Fabian 1984, pp. 200–203, ill. nos. 65–71, 73, p. 317, no. 32; Fabian 1986b, pp. 222–23, ill. nos. 523–25, 527; Fabian 1996, p. 188, no. 388; Stürmer 1992, ill. p. 18; Fowler 2007, ill. p. 81

27

Game table

David Roentgen, ca. 1774–75
Oak and other woods, veneered with burl wood, mahogany, maple, and other woods; gilt bronze
32 1/8 × 35 × 17 1/2 in. (81.5 × 89 × 44.5 cm)
MAK—Austrian Museum of Applied Arts / Contemporary Art, Vienna (H270)

LITERATURE

Lemoine-Isabeau 1972, p. 25, ill. nos. 9, 10; Huth 1974, p. 37, ill. no. 130; Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 148, vol. 2, p. 181, ill. nos. 360–62; Fabian 1981c, p. 24, ill. nos. 30, 30a; Fabian 1986b, pp. 29, 66, ill. nos. 96–99; Fabian 1996, p. 51, no. 67; Baarsen 2005, p. 94, fig. 22; Ursula Weber-Woelk in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 203, no. 36.2

28

Rolltop desk

David Roentgen, ca. 1780
Oak, pine, walnut, cherry, tulipwood, and mahogany (later drawers), veneered with maple, hornbeam (both partially stained), tulipwood, burl wood (stained), mahogany, holly, walnut, and other woods; gilt bronze, brass, steel, and iron; marble; partially tooled and gilded leather
44 7/8 × 45 3/4 × 26 1/2 in. (114 × 116.2 × 67.3 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Samuel H. Kress Foundation, 1958 (58.75.55)

LITERATURE

Parker 1960, pp. 301, 299, fig. 32; Metropolitan Museum of Art 1964, pp. 83–86, no. 13, figs. 67, 68; Kreisel and Himmelheber 1968–73, vol. 3 (1973), p. 18, fig. 4; Stürmer 1979–80, pt. 3 (1980), pp. 50, 51, figs. 9, 10; Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 156, vol. 2, p. 216, ill. no. 426; Fabian 1986b, p. 117, ill. nos. 252, 253; Fabian 1996, p. 104, no. 226; Wolfram Koepe in Kisluk-Grosheide, Koepe, and Rieder 2006, pp. 174, 175, fig. 101

29

Rolltop desk

David Roentgen, ca. 1776–79
Oak, cherry, pine, mahogany, veneered with maple, burl woods, holly, hornbeam (all partially stained), tulipwood, mahogany, and other woods; mother-of-pearl; partially gilded and tooled leather; gilt bronze, iron, steel, brass, and partially gold-lacquered brass
53 1/2 × 43 1/2 × 26 1/2 in. (135.9 × 110.5 × 67.3 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1941 (41.82)

MARKS

The monogram DR is inlaid beneath the keyhole escutcheon on the lower middle drawer.

LITERATURE

Champeaux 1885, vol. 2, p. 276; Dilke 1901, p. 192; Vial, Marcel, and Girodie 1922, p. 128; Salverte 1927, pp. 300–301; Huth 1928, p. 63, pl. 17; Remington 1941, figs. 1, 2, ill. p. 129; Benisovich 1952, ill. pp. 167, 168; Otto 1960, pp. 104, 105, ill. nos. 7, 8; Metropolitan Museum of Art 1970, p. 283, pl. 321; Kreisel and Himmelheber 1968–73, vol. 3 (1973), p. 18, fig. 5; Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 56, vol. 2, pp. 217–19, ill. nos. 429–36; Fabian 1986b, pp. 118, 119, ill. nos. 257, 262, 263; Fabian 1996, p. 105, no. 230; Morley 1999, pp. 288, 289, ill. no. 593; Ramond 2000, vol. 3, pp. 109–11, ill. (includes line drawings); Wolfram Koepe in Kisluk-Grosheide, Koepe, and Rieder 2006, pp. 172–76, no. 72; Knothe 2009, p. 48, fig. 4

30

Portraits of an Elderly Woman and an Elderly Man

Roentgen manufactory, 1775–80
Partially stained marquetry in maple, hornbeam, beech, boxwood, and other woods, frame in mahogany, picture backing in cherry; gilt bronze, glass, and iron
Diam. without frame 5 3/4 in. (14.7 cm), diam. with frame 7 5/8 in. (19.5 cm)
Kunstgewerbemuseum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (1904,54 [woman], 1904,55 [man])

LITERATURE

Huth 1928, p. 71, pl. 105 (left; portrait of an elderly man) (as by a successor of the Roentgen workshop); Huth 1974, ill. no. 243 (portrait of an elderly woman); Fabian 1986b, p. 276, ill. nos. 647, 648; Fabian 1992, pp. 55, 29, figs. 101, 102; Strasser 1994, p. 537, nos. M31, M32; Fabian 1996, p. 244, nos. 551, 552; Stiegel 2007, pp. 78–81, no. 7

31

Portrait of an Elderly Woman

David Roentgen, 1779
Marquetry in oak, maple, plane, ash, and other woods; passe-partout frame in ebonized maple
15 × 12 1/8 in. (38 × 30.8 cm)
Private collection

MARKS

Written in pencil on lower right corner under the ebonized maple passe-partout frame: “J. A. / Kaergling / Ao 1779 zur / arbeit in / Neuwied bey / Herrn Röntgen.”

LITERATURE

Lemoine-Isabeau 1972, p. 25; Fabian 2003, pp. 11, 13, figs. 18, 20; Wolfram Koepe in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 212, no. 38

32

Commode

David Roentgen, ca. 1775–79 (with later alterations)
Oak, pine, walnut, mahogany, and cherry, veneered with hornbeam (partially stained), tulipwood, walnut, holly and maple (both partially stained), boxwood, mahogany, and other woods; red brocatelle marble; gilt bronze, iron, steel, and brass
35¼ × 53½ × 27¼ in. (89.5 × 135.9 × 69.2 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Jack and Belle Linsky Collection, 1982 (1982.60.81)

MARKS

Branded twice on the uprights of the back panel with a double V beneath a crown (the château mark of Versailles).

LITERATURE

Mentmore 1884, vol. 2, p. 187, no. 10; Watson 1960, p. 99, no. 2; Huth 1974, p. 57, pl. III, ill. no. 179; Greber 1980, vol. 2, pp. 274–75, ill. nos. 537–42; William Rieder in *Metropolitan Museum of Art* 1984, pp. 223–25, no. 136; Fabian 1986b, p. 147, ill. nos. 337–41; Pradère 1989, pp. 414, 413, ill. no. 509; Himmelheber 1991, pp. 3014–15, figs. LII, LIII; Fabian 1992, pp. 35, 27, fig. 48; Baulez 1996, p. 109, fig. 14; Fabian 1996, p. 131, no. 299; Kisluk-Grosheide 2005, pp. 86, 87–88, 91, figs. 42–44; Kisluk-Grosheide 2006, pp. 30–32, figs. 40–42; Wolfram Koeppe in *Kisluk-Grosheide, Koeppe, and Rieder 2006*, pp. 180–83, no. 75

33

Commode

David Roentgen, ca. 1779–early 1780s
Oak, pine, cherry, maple, and mahogany, veneered with maple (?) burl wood (stained), walnut, holly, maple (last two partially stained), boxwood, mahogany, and other woods; *bleu turquin* marble; gilt bronze, iron, steel, brass, and lead
34½ × 53½ × 26¼ in. (86.7 × 134.8 × 66.8 cm)
Victoria and Albert Museum, London (W 51-1948)

MARKS

Written on a white label with printed blue edge on the underside of the marble top: “Weimar R Schloss 21”; written in pencil on the underside of the marble top: “Weimar 20.”

LITERATURE

Otto 1960, p. 105, ill. no. 9; Huth 1974, ill. no. 178; Stürmer 1979–80, pt. 2 (1979), pp. 38, 39, 41, figs. 13, 14; Greber 1980, vol. 2, pp. 276–78, ill. nos. 543–49; Fabian 1986b, pp. 148–49, ill. nos. 342–48; Pradère 1989, p. 414; Himmelheber 1991, p. 3012; Fabian 1992, p. 35; Baulez 1996, pp. 102, 100, fig. 6; Fabian 1996, pp. 130–31, no. 298; Sarah Medlam in *Wilk 1996*, pp. 128–29; Kisluk-Grosheide 2005, p. 88; Kisluk-Grosheide 2006, p. 32; Wolfram Koeppe in *Kisluk-Grosheide, Koeppe, and Rieder 2006*, pp. 180–83, under no. 75

34

Berlin secretary cabinet

David Roentgen, 1778–79, 1786
Oak, pine, walnut, mahogany, cherry, and cedar, veneered with curly maple, burl maple and mahogany (both stained), and with marquetry in maple (partially stained), hornbeam, apple, walnut, mulberry, tulipwood, and rosewood; ivory, mother-of-pearl, gilt bronze, brass, steel, iron, and silk
141¾ × 59¾ × 34¾ in. (359 × 152 × 88 cm)
Kunstgewerbemuseum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (O-1962,24)

MARKS

Monogrammed in several places: R on tree trunk (king’s apotheosis); 4R (4 signifying D, the fourth letter of the alphabet) on crate (Arithmetic); spines of volumes D and F on the right are darkened, signifying “David fecit” (Grammar); signed “Kintzing à Neuwied” on the right-hand wall of clock. (See also cat. 36.)

LITERATURE

Archenholtz 1785, pp. 692ff.; Hohenzollern-Museum 1878, pl. IX; Seidel 1910; Huth 1928, pp. 63–64, pls. 20, 95–99; Verlet 1961; Schade 1970; M. Becker 1971; Gummelt 1972; Kreisel and Himmelheber 1968–73, vol. 3 (1973), pp. 17–18, fig. 3; Göres 1974, pp. 50–53, fig. 7; Huth 1974, ill. nos. 93–107; Feulner 1980, fig. 397; Greber 1980, vol. 1, pp. 164–74, vol. 2, pp. 240–43, ill. nos. 479–82, pp. 246, 247, 248, 250–57, ill. nos. 489, 490, 492, 494–512; Fabian 1984, pp. 142–43, 274–75, ill. nos. 204, 205, p. 340, no. 83; Fabian 1986b, pp. 172–73, 180–84, ill. nos. 425–42; Burkhardt Göres in *Kunstgewerbemuseum 1988*, p. 114, no. 261, ill. p. 203; Pradère 1989, p. 415, ill. no. 512; Cornet 1990–92, pt. 10 (1991), pp. 2644, 2646, 2648, figs. XL, XLIV; Fabian 1992, pp. 40–42, 32, figs. 62–64; Göres 1995, p. 187, fig. 1; Baulez 1996, pp. 99, 98, fig. 2; Fabian 1996, pp. 166–70, no. 366; Göres 1997a, ill. pp. 170–72; Göres 1997b, p. 213; Göres and Schendel 1997, p. 221; G. Croll 1998; Barbara Mundt in *Kunstgewerbemuseum 1998*, p. 91, no. 74, ill. p. 90; Ramond 2000, vol. 3, pp. 124–27; Meiner 2001; Kemper 2005, figs. 70, 177, 178; Stiegel 2007, pp. 40–63, no. 4

35

Marquetry panel from the former Versailles secretary cabinet

David Roentgen, ca. 1776–78
Maple, cedar, boxwood, mahogany, and oak (all partially colored)
27½ × 20¾ × 1½ in. (69.7 × 52.9 × 2.7 cm)
Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich (78/395)

LITERATURE

Claude Pahin de la Blancherie in *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres et des Arts*, no. 9, March 23, 1779, p. 57, col. 1; Archenholtz 1785, pp. 692ff.; Verlet 1961, p. 132; Baulez 1978, p. 362; Sotheby’s, New York, sale cat., June 16, 1978, lot 62; Greber 1980, vol. 1, pp. 164, 169; Fabian 1981b, pp. 16, 27, fig. 65; Fabian 1982, pp. 56–59; Fabian 1984, pp. 139–40, 339, no. 82; Fabian 1986b, pp. 172–73, 272, 273, ill. nos. 636, 637; Cornet 1990–92, pt. 10 (1991), fig. 82; Himmelheber 1994, pp. 462, 473, fig. 12; Fabian 1996, pp. 164–65, no. 365; Andreas Büttner in *Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007*, p. 207, no. 37.2

36

Marquetry panels from the former Versailles secretary cabinet

David Roentgen, ca. 1776–78
Boxwood, maple, ash, and walnut
Overall 31¾ × 44¾ × 1 in. (80.8 × 113.8 × 2.5 cm)
Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich (L 83/198)

MARKS

Monogrammed 4R (4 refers to letter D) on the left panel, IZ (Januarius Zick) on the book below, R centered on tree trunk, and spines of D and F volumes on the right are darkened (“David fecit”). (See also cat. 34.)

LITERATURE

Claude Pahin de la Blancherie in *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres et des Arts*, no. 9, March 23, 1779, p. 57, col. 1; Archenholtz 1785, pp. 692ff.; Verlet 1961, p. 132; Baulez 1978, p. 362; Greber 1980, vol. 1, pp. 164, 169; Fabian 1981b, pp. 16, 24, fig. 59; Fabian 1982, pp. 56–59; Fabian 1984, pp. 139, 339; Fabian 1986b, pp. 172–73, 178, 179, ill. no. 423; Cornet 1990–92, pt. 10 (1991), fig. 83; Himmelheber 1994, p. 462; Baulez 1996, p. 100, fig. 5; Fabian 1996, pp. 164–65, no. 365

37

Mechanical table, including parts of the former Versailles secretary cabinet

David Roentgen, ca. 1776–78 and ca. 1827
Mahogany and oak, veneered with tulipwood, satinwood, and bird’s-eye maple; top: oak and poplar, veneered with sycamore (stained), ash, and boxwood
Marquetry 33¾ × 52¼ × 20¼ in. (86 × 132.5 × 51.5 cm)
Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (Inv. no. V 5789)

LITERATURE

Hôtel Drouot, Paris, sale cat., November 5, 1993, lot 144; Christian Baulez in “Acquisitions” 1998, p. 91; Ramond 2000, vol. 3, pp. 128–29; Meyer (Daniel) 2002, pp. 226–28, no. 57; Barth and Jamet 2006, figs. 1, 4–12, 14–16; Andreas Büttner in *Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007*, p. 208, no. 37.3

38

Automaton of Queen Marie Antoinette, called *La Joueuse de Tympanon* (The Dulcimer Player)

David Roentgen, ca. 1782–84
Mahogany (*acajou moucheté*), thuja burl wood, and oak; ivory and textiles; brass and iron
Stand 48 × 47¾ × 22½ in. (122 × 121.5 × 57.5 cm); podium case 44½ × 18½ × 5½ in. (112 × 46 × 14 cm); H. of figure 20¾ in. (53 cm); instrument 12¾ × 27¾ × 14¾ in. (31.5 × 70.5 × 36.5 cm)
Musée des arts et métiers de Paris (07501-0001)

MARKS

Signed “Roentgen et Kinzing / à Neuwied” on the frame.

LITERATURE

Chapuis and Gélis 1928, vol. 2, p. 282; Huth 1928, p. 65, pls. 60, 61; Fabian 1984, pp. 290–91, ill. nos. 226–29, p. 345, no. 92; Fabian 1986b, pp. 88–89, ill. nos. 169, 170; Baulez 1996, pp. 104, 105, fig. 11; Fabian 1996, p. 84, no. 168; Haspels 1996, pp. 182–86, no. 33; Fowler 2007, p. 87, ill. p. 86; Arminjon 2010

39

Inkstand

David Roentgen, ca. 1780–83/85
Walnut; ormolu, gilt brass, and gilt bronze
3½ × 11½ × 9¾ in. (9 × 29.4 × 23.8 cm)
Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Henry P. McIlhenny Collection in memory of Frances P. McIlhenny, 1986 (1986-26-113)

LITERATURE

Unpublished

40

Letter box

David Roentgen, ca. 1780–85
Mahogany, veneered with mahogany; gilt bronze
7½ × 14¼ × 9¾ in. (19.1 × 36.2 × 24.4 cm) Ruth S. Stanton, New York

LITERATURE

Sotheby's, Monaco, sale cat., July 3, 1993, lot 130; Sotheby's, Monaco, sale cat., April 28–29, 2000, lot 304

41

Coffer

David Roentgen, ca. 1785–89
Mahogany, veneered with mahogany; leather; gilt bronze
12⅝ × 22¼ × 15 in. (32 × 56.5 × 38 cm)
Private collection, Germany

MARKS

Written in crayon under the writing slab: "Blake 1878 Burg. . ."

LITERATURE

Sotheby's, Monaco, sale cat., April 30, 1976, lot 76; Christie's, Monaco, sale cat., June 17, 2000, lot 310; Droguet 2004, p. 139, fig. 127; Stiegel 2007, p. 112, fig. 15a; Bernd Willscheid in Willscheid and Thillmann 2011, p. 266, no. 24

42

The Apollo Desk

David Roentgen, ca. 1783–84
Hornbeam, pearwood, rosewood, oak, cedar, veneered with mahogany; gilt bronze
60⅝ × 63¾ × 36⅝ in. (154 × 162 × 93 cm)
The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (EPR-5089)

LITERATURE

Huth 1928, p. 64, pl. 21; Vil'chevskaja 1941, p. 236; Greber 1948, pp. 111–13; Huth 1955, fig. 19; Sokolova 1967, ill. no. 107; Biriukova 1974, ill. no. 119; Huth 1974, p. 20, ill. no. 63; Feulner 1980, fig. 396; Göres 1980, pp. 13–14, no. 1; Jarvis 1990, pp. 148, 147, ill. nos. 6, 7; Baulez 1996, pp. 112–13, fig. 20; Fabian 1996, p. 100, no. 213; Rappe 1998, p. 513; Göres 2000, pp. 102, 103; Rappe 2005, pp. 239, 241, fig. 104; Stiegel 2007, p. 114

43

Children's architect's table

David Roentgen, ca. 1783
Oak, veneered with mahogany; gilt bronze, brass; gilded and tooled leather
24 × 26¾ × 18⅞ in. (61 × 68 × 46 cm)
The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (EPR-48)

LITERATURE

Göres 1980, p. 40, no. 24; Tamara Rappe in Grewenig and Letze 1994, p. 98, ill.; Fabian 1996, p. 59, no. 89

44

Architect's table

David Roentgen, ca. 1780–95
Oak, mahogany, walnut, pine, and cherry, veneered with mahogany; gilt bronze, brass, iron, steel; partially tooled and gilded leather
31⅞ × 44⅞ × 27½ in. (81 × 112 × 70 cm)
Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution (Inv. no. 1952-160-1)

LITERATURE

Cooper-Hewitt Museum 1979, pp. 10, 12, 13, fig. 5; Fabian 1996, p. 60, no. 94

45

Game table

David Roentgen, ca. 1780–83
Oak and walnut, veneered with mahogany, maple, holly (the last two partially stained); iron, steel, brass, gilt bronze; felt and partially tooled and gilded leather
30⅞ × 38¾ × 19½ in. (78.3 × 98.3 × 49.5 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Pfeiffer Fund, 2007 (2007.42.1a–e, .2a–o, aa–nn)

MARKS

Stamped MACRET on the underside.

LITERATURE

Sotheby's, Zurich, sale cat., December 7, 1994, lot 257; Fabian 1996, p. 56, no. 85; Wolfram Koeppel in "Recent Acquisitions" 2007, p. 34; Daniëlle O. Kisluk-Grosheide in Kisluk-Grosheide and Munger 2010, pp. 94–95, no. 36

46

Rolltop desk

David Roentgen, ca. 1783–84
Oak and mahogany, veneered with mahogany; gilt bronze and brass
53⅞ × 53⅞ × 35 in. (137 × 135 × 89 cm)
Chatsworth House Trust

LITERATURE

Lees-Milne 1968, p. 1043 (in situ in the State Drawing Room); Duchess of Devonshire 1991, pp. 228–29; Morris 1993, pp. 54, 56, fig. 6 (in situ in the State Drawing Room); Duchess of Devonshire 2002, pp. 78–79

47

Swivel armchair

David Roentgen, ca. 1783–84
Walnut and mahogany, veneered with mahogany; leather (replacement); brass, steel, and horn
36 × 31¼ × 26¾ in. (91.5 × 79.5 × 68 cm)
Chatsworth House Trust

LITERATURE

Morris 1993, p. 56, fig. 6 (in situ in the State Drawing Room); Duchess of Devonshire 2002, pp. 78–79; Bernd Willscheid in Willscheid and Thillmann 2011, p. 269, nos. 26a, b

48

Oval table

David Roentgen, ca. 1783–84
Oak and mahogany, veneered with mahogany; tooled leather; brass and gilt bronze
30½ × 28 × 20⅞ in. (77.5 × 71 × 51)
Chatsworth House Trust

LITERATURE

Morris 1993, p. 56, fig. 6 (in situ in the State Drawing Room)

49

Dressing table

David Roentgen, ca. 1783–84
Oak and mahogany veneered with mahogany; mirror glass and horn; gilt bronze
30⅜ × 38 × 26⅞ in. (77 × 96.5 × 66.5 cm)
Trustees of the Chatsworth Settlement

MARKS

Labeled "Chatsworth" on the underside.

LITERATURE

Unpublished

50

Clock

David Roentgen, ca. 1780–90
Oak, pine, and mahogany, veneered with mahogany; brass, gilt bronze, and enamel
18¼ × 12½ × 8¼ in. (46.4 × 31.8 × 21 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of The Ruth Stanton Family Foundation, in honor of Wolfram Koeppel, 2002 (2002.237)

MARKS

Engraved "Jean Thomas / Petersbourg" on dial.

LITERATURE

Wolfram Koeppel in "Recent Acquisitions" 2003, p. 26; Koeppel 2009, pp. 225–26, 227, fig. 9.8

51

Casket

David Roentgen, ca. 1785–95
Pau amarello (yellowheart) wood, pearwood, boxwood, oak, maple (stained), and walnut, veneered with maple burl (stained gray), maple, and hornbeam; brass, gilt brass, gilt bronze, steel; iron key, partly blued (original?); and linen (jalousie)
7¼ × 12⅞ × 7⅞ in. (18.3 × 32.7 × 20 cm)
Kunstgewerbemuseum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (1935,93)

MARKS

Small inventory sticker (white with blue printing); the inscription BLUMEN (?) ZIMMER [ILLEGIBLE] 5 and the later K are stamped on the beading strips.

LITERATURE

Schmidt 1943, p. 171, fig. 7; Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 228, vol. 2, p. 306, ill. no. 601; Fabian 1986a; Fabian 1986b, p. 285, ill. nos. 672, 673; Mundt 1989, pp. 15, 17, 16, fig. 5; Rust 1989; Fabian 1996, p. 253, no. 584 (includes a photograph of the interior taken before restoration showing the inner case in a raised position); Stiegel 2007, pp. 110–13, no. 15

52

Clavichord

David Roentgen, 1785
Oak and pine veneered with mahogany, boxwood, ebony, and other woods (partly stained); ivory; gilt bronze and brass
31⅞ × 67⅞ × 32¼ in. (81 × 171 × 82 cm)
Private collection

MARKS

Signed and dated "David Roentgen & Kinzing à Neuwied sur le Rhin Anno 1785" above the keyboard.

LITERATURE

Greber 1980, vol. 2, p. 316, ill. nos. 629–31; Fabian 1984, p. 346, no. 96; Fabian 1986b, p. 236, ill. nos. 552–54; Sotheby's, New York, sale cat., May 16, 1987, lot 126; Fabian 1996, p. 217, no. 434; Wolfram Koeppel in Scarpa and Lupo 2007, pp. 489–90, no. v.61, ill. p. 359; Koeppel 2009, pp. 222–23, fig. 9.4

53**Armchair**

David Roentgen, ca. 1780–90
Mahogany; leather (replaced); partially gilt bronze
35 × 25⁵/₈ × 24 in. (88.9 × 65.1 × 61 cm)
Kravis Collection

LITERATURE

Christie's, London, sale cat., December 12, 1996, lot 212; Dampierre 2006, ill. p. 238

54**Pair of oval writing tables**

David Roentgen, ca. 1785–92
Oak, mahogany, pine, cherry, tulipwood, maple, and holly, veneered with mahogany; tooled leather; copper and gilt bronze
H. 29¹/₈ in. (74 cm); top 29¹/₈ × 19³/₄ in. (74 × 50 cm)
Ruth S. Stanton, New York

LITERATURE

Sotheby's, Monaco, sale cat., June 14–15, 1981, lot 90; Sotheby's, New York, sale cat., December 5–6, 1991, lot 279

55**Rolltop desk**

David Roentgen, ca. 1785–90
Oak, with mahogany veneer; tooled leather; gilt bronze and brass
56³/₄ × 52³/₈ × 32³/₈ in. (144 × 133 × 83 cm)
Hessische Hausstiftung, Museum Schloss Fasanerie, Eichenzell/Fulda, Germany (FAS M 89)

LITERATURE

Fabian 1982, pp. 20, 22, fig. 31; Fabian 1986b, p. 160, ill. nos. 375–78; Fabian 1996, p. 142, no. 332; Hunter-Stiebel et al. 2005, ill. p. 50

56**The Stroganov desk**

David Roentgen, ca. 1785–90
Oak, cherry, and walnut, veneered with birch burl wood; brass and gilt bronze
45³/₄ × 44¹/₄ × 24 in. (116 × 112.5 cm × 61 cm)
Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich (L75/222)

LITERATURE

Rudolph Lepke's Kunst-Auctions-Haus, Berlin, sale cat., May 12–13, 1931, lot 214; Kreisel and Himmelheber 1968–73, vol. 3 (1973), p. 22, fig. 22; Sotheby's, London, sale cat., June 20, 1975, lot 77; Himmelheber 1976, ill. nos. 1–10; Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 246, vol. 2, p. 342, ill. no. 693; Stürmer 1979–80, pt. 4 (1980), pp. 66–67, fig. 15; Fabian 1986b, p. 89, ill. nos. 171–73; Cornet 1990–92, pt. 12 (1992), figs. 86–93; Fabian 1996, p. 89, no. 185; *Furniture: From Rococo to Art Deco* 2000, pp. 242–43; Koeppel 2009, pp. 221, 222, fig. 9.3

57**Clock**

David Roentgen, ca. 1785
Oak, with burl-wood veneer; silk; gilt bronze and brass
23¹/₄ × 12¹/₄ × 8¹/₄ in. (59 × 31 × 21 cm)
Private collection

LITERATURE

Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 253, vol. 2, p. 364, ill. no. 739; Fabian 1984, p. 360, no. A10; Fabian 1996, p. 178, no. 376; Eugen Denkel and Ian D. Fowler in Kinzing & Co. 2003, p. 133, no. 28

58**Obelisk clock with a Franklin movement**

David Roentgen, ca. 1785–90
Thuja burl wood; gilt bronze, partially silvered brass, and steel
75 × 21¹/₈ × 7⁵/₈ in. (190.4 × 53.8 × 19.3 cm)
Private collection, Germany

MARKS

Signed on the dial "Roentgen & Kinzing / A NEUWIED."

LITERATURE

Edey 1982, p. 100, no. 93, ill. p. 103; Fabian 1984, p. 329, no. 64; *Biennale Internationale* 1988, pp. 822–23 (Dalva Brothers); Fabian 1996, p. 214, no. 425

59**Rolltop desk**

David Roentgen, ca. 1785–86
Oak, veneered with pau amarello (yellowheart) and mahogany; gilt bronze and copper
44¹/₂ × 40¹/₂ × 27¹/₄ in. (113 × 103 × 69 cm)
Ruth S. Stanton, New York

LITERATURE

Greber 1980, vol. 1, pp. 240–43 (with didactic drawings), vol. 2, pp. 334–35, ill. nos. 676–79; Fabian 1982, p. 45, pp. 36–38, figs. 60–62; Fabian 1986b, pp. 96, 123, ill. nos. 274–76, p. 124, ill. nos. 277, 278; Fabian 1996, pp. 108–9, no. 235; Eller 2006, pp. 276, 278, ill. pp. 277, 279, figs. 248, 249

60**Fall-front secretary on stand**

David Roentgen, ca. 1785–90
Oak, veneered with mahogany and thuja burl wood; gilt bronze, brass
48⁷/₈ × 36⁵/₈ × 13 in. (124 × 93 × 33 cm)
Private collection

LITERATURE

Scarpa 2008, p. 306, no. 133, ill. p. 186

61**Commode**

David Roentgen, ca. 1785–90
Oak, walnut, and pine, with drawers in oak (stained reddish) and mahogany veneer; partially gilt brass, iron; marble (replaced) Chest without marble top:
32¹/₄ × 41⁷/₈ × 20¹/₂ in. (82 × 106.5 × 52 cm)
Kunstgewerbemuseum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (W-1984,168)

MARKS

Branded on the back CA topped with a crown; upper pulls stamped with numbers 6 through 9 on the fronts of the swags; lower pulls have the same numbers on the backs of the swags.

LITERATURE

Franz Adrian Dreier in Kunstgewerbemuseum 1985, p. 192, no. 257, pl. 36; Mundt 1989, pp. 17, 16, fig. 6; Fabian 1996, p. 133, no. 304; Stiegel 2007, pp. 94–97, no. 11

62**Tilt-top table**

Workshop of David Roentgen, ca. 1785–90
Mahogany; gilt bronze and brass
H. 29¹/₈ in. (74 cm); diam. of top 22¹/₂ in. (57 cm)
Ruth S. Stanton, New York

LITERATURE

Christie's, London, sale cat., December 7, 2000, lot 124

63**Apollo Clock**

David Roentgen, ca. November 1789
Oak and maple, veneered with walnut burl wood; enamel; gilt bronze and steel
89³/₈ × 24 × 20⁷/₈ in. (227 × 61 × 53 cm)
Roentgen-Museum, Neuwied (Inv. no. 4055)

MARKS

Signed on the dial "Roentgen & Kinzing A NEUWIED"; musical mechanism signed "I.W.Weyl" and "1789."

LITERATURE

Rudolph Lepke's Kunst-Auctions-Haus, Berlin, sale cat., November 6–7, 1928, lot 80; Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 250, vol. 2, pp. 350–51, ill. nos. 712–14; Fabian 1981a, pp. 18, 20–21, figs. 37–40; Fabian 1984, pp. 222–36, ill. nos. 112, 114–38, p. 324, no. 48, ill. p. 126; Fabian 1986b, pp. 209, 230–33, ill. nos. 542–47; Fabian 1992, pp. 36–37, 45; Fabian 1996, p. 196, no. 404; Eugen Denkel and Ian D. Fowler in Kinzing & Co. 2003, pp. 108–9, no. 14; Willscheid 2003; Bernd Willscheid in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, pp. 216–17, no. 39.4; Dömling and Schlorer 2007, ill. p. 128; Weber-Woelk 2007, p. 57, ill. p. 56; Prieur 2011, p. 137, fig. 6

64**Rolltop desk**

David Roentgen, ca. 1787–88
Oak, fir, and Scots pine, veneered with mahogany and maple burl wood; gilt bronze and steel
66¹/₄ × 61³/₈ × 35¹/₄ in. (168.3 × 155.9 × 89.4 cm)
The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles (72.DA.47)

LITERATURE

La Gazette de France, October 30, 1857; Riegl 1898, p. 188, pl. xxxv (facing p. 194); Conger and Pool 1970, pp. 224, 226, no. 23; Kreisel and Himmelheber 1968–73, vol. 3 (1973), p. 30, fig. 17; Huth 1974, ill. nos. 64–68; Greber 1980, vol. 2, p. 338, ill. nos. 683, 684; Stürmer 1979–80, pt. 3 (1980), p. 47, fig. 5, pt. 4 (1980), pp. 59, 58, 61, figs. 1–3; Fabian 1982, pp. 45, 40, figs. 66, 67; Wilson 1983, pp. 88–89, no. 44; Fabian 1986b, pp. 96, 134, ill. nos. 307–10; Pradère 1989, p. 417, ill. no. 514; Bremer-David 1993, pp. 228–29, no. 397; Baulez 1996, pp. 116, 117, figs. 26, 29, 32, 33; Fabian 1996, p. 116, no. 257; Stratmann-Döhler 1998, p. 119

65

Cabinet for gems

David Roentgen, ca. 1788–89

Oak and mahogany, with mahogany veneer; gilt bronze and brass

96½ × 50 × 19¾ in. (245 × 127 × 50 cm)

The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (EPR-152)

LITERATURE

Georgi 1794, p. 337; *Khudozhestvennyye sokrovishcha Rossii* 1901, pl. 24; Huth 1928, p. 65, pl. 36; Suslov 1929, ill. p. 17; Vil'chevskaia 1941, p. 237, ill. no. 9; Greber 1948, p. 122; Benisovich 1952, p. 166; Kreisel and Himmelheber 1968–73, vol. 3 (1973), p. 20, fig. 30; Huth 1974, ill. no. 108; Göres 1980, p. 36, no. 17, and pp. 35–36, under no. 15; Greber 1980, vol. 1, pp. 224–25, vol. 2, pp. 293, 294, ill. nos. 570, 571; Fabian 1986b, pp. 239–40, 248, ill. nos. 586–88; Fabian 1992, pp. 42–43, figs. 65, 66; Baulez 1996, p. 115, fig. 25; Fabian 1996, p. 224, nos. 449–53; Kagan and Neverov 1996, ill. p. 158; Rappe 1998, pp. 512–13; Tamara Rappe in State Hermitage Museum 1999, vol. 5, p. 28, no. 54; *Collections de Catherine II* 2000, pp. 184–85, no. 276; Göres 2000, p. 102; Rappe 2005, pp. 239–40

66

Clock

David Roentgen, ca. 1785–90

Oak, veneered with mahogany; gilt bronze, brass

83 × 29 × 18⅞ in. (210.8 × 73.7 × 48 cm)

The Nemours Foundation (Inv. no. 83-27)

MARKS

Three of six original brass cylinders survive. The movement is signed “Roentgen & Kintzing à Neuwied” on a right-hand plate.

LITERATURE

Ord-Hume 1995, pp. 168–70, pls. VIII/10, 11; Koeppel 1997, p. 98

67

Rolltop desk

David Roentgen, ca. 1785–93

Oak, with mahogany veneer; gilt bronze, brass

59⅞ × 59 × 34¼ in. (152 × 150 × 87 cm)

Klassik Stiftung Weimar, Museen (Inv. no. N 16/81)

LITERATURE

Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 243, vol. 2, p. 333, ill. no. 673; Fabian 1996, p. 115, no. 254; Ulferts 2001, pp. 77–78, fig. 47; “*Ihre Kaiserliche Hoheit*” 2004, p. 164, no. 19.1, figs. 179, 180; Andreas Büttner in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 221, no. 40.4; Ulferts 2008, p. 311, fig. 4; Büttner 2009, pp. 73–75, figs. 3, 4

68

Writing desk

David Roentgen, ca. 1785–93

Oak, with mahogany veneer; gilt bronze

48 × 65⅞ × 36⅞ in. (122 × 166 × 92.5 cm)

Klassik Stiftung Weimar, Museen (Inv. no. N 17/81)

LITERATURE

Himmelheber 1964, pp. 229, 231, ill. no. 184; Göres 1976, pp. 161–62, no. 13, fig. 18; Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 246, vol. 2, p. 344, ill. no. 696; Fabian 1996, p. 86, no. 173; Andreas Büttner in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 220, no. 40.3; Büttner 2009, p. 72, fig. 2

69

Coin cabinet

Christian Meyer and Heinrich Gambs, early 19th century; doors by David Roentgen, ca. 1786–87

Mahogany and oak veneer; gilt bronze and brass

72 × 24 × 14⅝ in. (183 × 61 × 37 cm)

The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (EPR-155)

LITERATURE

Foelkersam 1911, ill. facing p. 28; Suslov 1929, ill. p. 15; Vil'chevskaia 1941, p. 232; Sokolova and Orlova 1973, p. 19, ill. no. 151; Huth 1974, ill. no. 109; Göres 1980, pp. 37–38, no. 20; Greber 1980, vol. 2, p. 294, ill. no. 572; Fabian 1986b, p. 248, ill. no. 585; Jervis 1990, pp. 148, 146, ill. nos. 4, 5; Tamara Rappe in *St. Petersburg um 1800* 1990, p. 424, no. 379; Fabian 1992, pp. 42–43, fig. 67; Tamara Rappe in Grewenig and Letze 1994, p. 98, ill. p. 99; Baulez 1996, p. 115, fig. 24; Fabian 1996, p. 224, no. 448a; Tamara Rappe in *Catherine the Great and Gustav III* 1998, p. 515, no. 506; Rappe 1998, p. 513, ill. p. 512; Tamara Rappe in *Catherine the Great* 2005, p. 302, no. 147; Rappe 2005, p. 239

70 (fig. 54)

Landgrave Wilhelm IX of Hessen-Kassel

Anton Wilhelm Tischbein, ca. 1770

Oil on canvas

41⅜ × 34 in. (105 × 86.5 cm)

Hessische Hausstiftung, Museum Schloss

Fasanerie, Eichenzell/Fulda, Germany

(Inv. no. FAS B144)

PROVENANCE

The landgraves and grand dukes of Hessen-Kassel in Schloss Fasanerie, from ca. 1770, when it was commissioned by the family; by descent.

LITERATURE

Anton Wilhelm Tischbein 2004, p. 20, no. 3.3; Wolfram Koeppel in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 185, no. 2.2

71 (fig. 85)

Landgravine Philippine von Hessen-Kassel

Johann Heinrich Tischbein the Elder, 1783

Oil on canvas

53 × 37¾ in. (134.5 × 96 cm)

Hessische Hausstiftung, Museum Schloss

Fasanerie, Eichenzell/Fulda, Germany (FAS B 27)

PROVENANCE

The landgraves and grand dukes of Hessen-Kassel in Schloss Fasanerie, from 1783, when it was commissioned by the family; by descent.

72 (fig. 62)

Flight from Troy

Januarius Zick, ca. 1780–90

Oil on canvas

19¾ × 59½ in. (50 × 151 cm)

Mittelrhein-Museum, Koblenz (M 1972/91)

MARKS

Signed “Zick J.”

PROVENANCE

Schloss Harff, Bedburg; (sale, Carola van Ham, Cologne, October 11–14, 1972, lot 1646, to Mittelrhein-Museum).

LITERATURE

Carola van Ham, Cologne, sale cat., October 11–14, 1972, lot 1646, fig. 3; Metzger 1972, p. 29, ill. p. 119;

Metzger 1981, pp. 178–79, fig. 7; Marquart and Schneider 1983, p. 127, no. 57, fig. 99; Strasser 1994, p. 416, no. G 350, fig. 141

73 (fig. 15)

Abraham Roentgen

Johannes Juncker, 1772

Oil on canvas

Overall 31½ × 26 in. (80 × 66 cm); framed 35½ × 30 in. (90 × 76.2 cm)

Roentgen-Museum, Neuwied (Inv. no. 3523)

MARKS

Signed “J. Juncker” and marked 1772 on back.

PROVENANCE

Estate of David Roentgen; by descent in the Roentgen family and later the Roentgen-Wenck family, Frankfurt (sold to the Roentgen-Museum, Neuwied, 1941).

LITERATURE

Stürmer 1979–80, pt. 1, p. 24, fig. 1; Stürmer 1993, p. 13; Fabian 1996, ill. p. 9; Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, ill. p. 14; Willscheid 2007a, ill. p. 4; Bernd Willscheid in Willscheid and Thillmann 2011, pp. 27, 29–31, fig. 1 (photograph taken in 1920 of the portrait on view in the home of Ida Wenck in Hernnhut), fig. 3

74 (fig. 17)

Susanna Maria Roentgen

Johannes Juncker, 1771

Oil on canvas

Overall 31½ × 26 in. (79.3 × 66 cm); framed 35⅝ × 30½ in. (90.5 × 77.3 cm)

Roentgen-Museum, Neuwied (Inv. no. 3524)

MARKS

Signed “Johannes Juncker” and marked 1771 on back.

PROVENANCE

Estate of David Roentgen; by descent in the Roentgen family and later the Roentgen-Wenck family, Frankfurt (sold to the Roentgen-Museum, Neuwied, 1941).

LITERATURE

Fabian 1996, ill. p. 9; Bernd Willscheid in Willscheid and Thillmann 2011, pp. 27, 31, fig. 1 (photograph taken in 1920 of the portrait on view in the home of Ida Wenck in Hernnhut), fig. 4

75 (fig. 1)

David Roentgen

Unknown artist, ca. 1785

Oil on canvas

Overall 21⅝ × 18⅞ in. (55 × 46 cm); framed 28 × 24⅞ in. (71.1 × 61.3 cm)

Roentgen-Museum, Neuwied (Inv. no. 3525)

PROVENANCE

Estate of David Roentgen; by descent in the Roentgen family and later the Roentgen-Wenck family, Frankfurt (sold to the Roentgen-Museum, Neuwied, 1941).

LITERATURE

Stürmer 1979–80, pt. 2, p. 32, fig. 1; Stürmer 1993, ill. p. 6; Fabian 1996, ill. p. 10; Eberspächer 1999, pp. 1293–95, fig. 2; Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, ill. p. 18; Bernd Willscheid in Willscheid and Thillmann 2011, pp. 27, 33, 35, fig. 1 (photograph taken in 1920 of the portrait on view in the home of Ida Wenck in Hernnhut), p. 24, fig. 6

76 (fig. 5)

Katharina Dorothea Roentgen

Heinrich Foelix, 1792

Oil on canvas

Overall 24¼ × 18¾ in. (61.5 × 47.5 cm); framed 31¾ × 25 in. (80.5 × 63.5 cm)

Roentgen-Museum, Neuwied (Inv. no. 3526)

MARKS

Signed “pinct par Hei’ Foelix 1792” on the lower left front.

PROVENANCE

Estate of David Roentgen; by descent in the Roentgen family and later the Roentgen-Wenck family, Frankfurt (sold to the Roentgen-Museum, Neuwied, 1941).

LITERATURE

Fabian 1996, ill. p. 10; Bernd Willscheid in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, ill. p. 230; Willscheid 2011, pp. 35–36, p. 37, fig. 7

77 (fig. 61)

Portrait of Lady Eden

John Singer Sargent, 1906

Oil on canvas

43½ × 34⅙ in. (110.6 × 86.5 cm); framed 52⅜ × 42⅞ × 3¾ in. (133 × 108.9 × 9.5 cm)

Philadelphia Museum of Art, Purchased with the W. P. Wilstach Fund, 1920 (W1920-2-1)

MARKS

Signed “John S. Sargent” upper left; marked 1906 upper right.

PROVENANCE

Sir William Eden; from his estate (sale negotiated by Trotter, Bruce & Loft, Bishop Auckland, County Durham, February 1919, lot 6255), to [M. Knoedler & Co., New York]; [Wilstach Gallery, Philadelphia, December 1918].

LITERATURE

Ormond and Kilmurray 2003, pp. 169–70, no. 513 (with bibliography)

78 (not illustrated)

Benjamin Franklin

Jean-Antoine Houdon, 1778

Marble

Overall 23⅙ × 14½ × 11¼ in. (58.7 × 36.8 × 28.6 cm); height without base 17½ in. (44.5 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of John Bard, 1872 (72.6)

MARKS

Signed “houdon.f./1778” on back.

PROVENANCE

The artist; left by him with Robert Edge Pine (d. 1788); possibly Pierre Samuel du Pont de Nemours (by 1785 and in 1802; d. 1817); possibly Eleuthère Irénée du Pont (d. 1834); possibly Nicholas Cruger (d. 1800) or his daughter-in-law Catharine Church (Mrs. B. P. Cruger; d. 1839); her husband, Bertram Peter Cruger (d. 1854); their son John Church Cruger, by 1836; Dr. and Mrs. Samuel Bard (Cruger’s son and daughter-in-law); John Bard (their son).

LITERATURE

Breck 1912; *Benjamin Franklin and His Circle* 1936, p. 40, no. 32; “French Decorative Art” 1954, p. 104; Gardner 1956, pp. 16–17, ill. p. 19; Sellers 1962, pp. 118ff., 309–10, no. 8, pl. 18; Arnason 1975, pp. 53–54, fig. 118, pl. 58; H. H. Arnason in *Eye of Thomas Jefferson* 1976, p. 109, no. 173, ill.; Dean Walker in Poulet 2003, pp. 247–50, fig. 1; McCormick 2004, pp. 1, 2, fig. 1; Scherf 2008, pp. 72, 74, fig. 36

79 (fig. 73)

Frieze ornament depicting the theme of reading and writing

French or German, before 1783

Gilt bronze

3¾ × 3⅙ in. (9.5 × 7.9 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1906 (07.225.510.404)

PROVENANCE

Georges Hoentschel, Paris, until 1906; sold to J. Pierpont Morgan.

LITERATURE

Collections Georges Hoentschel 1908, vol. 4, pl. XLIV, 3

80 (not illustrated)

Frieze ornament: Allegory of the Fine Arts

French, 1785–90

Gilt bronze

Overall 3 × 9⅝ × ⅜ in. (7.6 × 24.3 × 0.9 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1906 (07.225.510.357)

PROVENANCE

Georges Hoentschel, Paris, until 1906; sold to J. Pierpont Morgan.

LITERATURE

Collections Georges Hoentschel 1908, vol. 4, pl. XLIV, 4; Parker 1953, ill. p. 71

81 (fig. 93)

Frieze ornament: Allegory of Science

François Rémond, after a design by François-Aimé Damerat, ca. 1785–90

Gilt bronze

4⅙ × 16⅙ in. (10.5 × 41 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1906 (07.225.510.416)

PROVENANCE

Georges Hoentschel, Paris, until 1906; sold to J. Pierpont Morgan.

LITERATURE

Collections Georges Hoentschel 1908, vol. 4, pl. XLIV, 1

82 (not illustrated)

Pair of frieze ornaments

French (possibly Étienne Martincourt), ca. 1770–85

Gilt bronze

14¼ × 13⅞ × ½ in. (36.2 × 35.2 × 1.3 cm); 14¼ × 13¾ × ¾ in. (36.2 × 34.9 × 1.9 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1906 (07.225.510.353.a, .b)

PROVENANCE

Georges Hoentschel, Paris, until 1906; sold to J. Pierpont Morgan.

LITERATURE

Margon 1968, ill. p. 192

83 (not illustrated)

Catherine II of Russia

Philippe de Lasalle, ca. 1771

Woven and embroidered silk

Overall loom width 40 × 29½ in. (101.6 × 74.9 cm); framed 45 × 33½ in. (114.3 × 85.1 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1941 (41.78)

MARKS

Inscribed in upper left corner: LASALLE FECIT; across bottom: DU NIL AU BOSPHORE, L’OTTOMAN FREMIT. SON PEUPLE L’ADORE, LA TERRE APPLAUDIT (From the Nile to the Bosphorus, the Ottoman trembles. Her people adore her, the world applauds). Both inscriptions embroidered in white silk in satin stitch.

PROVENANCE

Mrs. Henry Walters, New York; (her sale, Parke-Bernet Galleries, New York, April 25, 1941, lot 623).

LITERATURE

Parke-Bernet Galleries, New York, sale cat., April 26, 1941, lot 623, ill.; Phillips 1941, ill.; Weibel 1952, p. 160, no. 321; Standen 1967, pp. 194–95, 192, fig. 6; *Soieries de Lyon* 1988, p. 114 (example in the Musée Historique des Tissus, Lyon); Voltchkova 1999, pp. 115–17 (example in the State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg)

84 (fig. 45)

David Roentgen and Company in Saint Petersburg

Johann Friedrich Anthing, 1784–86

Cut paper, ink, watercolor, gold foil

Sheet 17⅞ × 23⅞ in. (45.3 × 60.6 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Leopold Heinemann, 1948 (48.73.1)

PROVENANCE

Estate of David Roentgen; by descent in the Roentgen family and later the Roentgen-Wenck family, Frankfurt (sold to Leopold Heinemann).

LITERATURE

Benisovich 1952, pp. 165–66, ill.; Greber 1980, vol. 1, pp. 205–7; Bernd Willscheid in Büttner, Weber-Woelk, and Willscheid 2007, p. 218, under no. 39.5; Willscheid 2011, p. 38

85 (fig. 48)

David Roentgen’s reminder to Catherine the Great regarding an overdue payment

June 22, 1789

Ink on paper

Estimated overall 11 × 8 in. (27.9 × 20.3 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Thomas J. Watson Library, Gift of Leopold Heinemann, 1948

PROVENANCE

Estate of David Roentgen; by descent in the Roentgen family and later the Roentgen-Wenck family, Frankfurt (sold to Leopold Heinemann).

LITERATURE

Benisovich 1952, pp. 165, 166, ill.; Greber 1980, vol. 1, p. 205; Fabian 1996, p. 370, doc. no. 2.246; Watson Digital Collections (MS 44, folder 7, letter 1) (www.library.metmuseum.org)

86 (not illustrated)

Commercial patent for David Roentgen

February 23, 1791

Ink on paper

Estimated overall 11 × 8 in. (27.9 × 20.3 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Thomas J. Watson Library, Gift of Leopold Heinemann, 1948

PROVENANCE

Estate of David Roentgen; by descent in the Roentgen family and later the Roentgen-Wenck family, Frankfurt (sold to Leopold Heinemann).

LITERATURE

Benisovich 1952, p. 165; Fabian 1996, pp. 370–71, doc. no. 2.254; Watson Digital Collections (MS 44, folder 9, letter 2) (www.library.metmuseum.org)

87 (not illustrated)

Appointment of David Roentgen as Prussian agent of the Lower Rhine

November 24, 1791

Ink on paper

Estimated overall 11 × 8 in. (27.9 × 20.3 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Thomas J. Watson Library, Gift of Leopold Heinemann, 1948

PROVENANCE

Estate of David Roentgen; by descent in the Roentgen family and later the Roentgen-Wenck family, Frankfurt (sold to Leopold Heinemann).

LITERATURE

Benisovich 1952, p. 165; Fabian 1996, p. 373, doc. no. 2.265; Watson Digital Collections (MS 44, folder 9, letter 4) (www.library.metmuseum.org)

88 (not illustrated)

Autopsy report on David Roentgen

February 13, 1807

Ink on paper

Estimated overall 11 × 8 in. (27.9 × 20.3 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Thomas J. Watson Library, Gift of Leopold Heinemann, 1948

PROVENANCE

Estate of David Roentgen; by descent in the Roentgen family and later the Roentgen-Wenck family, Frankfurt (sold to Leopold Heinemann).

LITERATURE

Benisovich 1952, p. 165; Watson Digital Collections (MS 44, folder 17, letter 4) (www.library.metmuseum.org). For a full transcription of the report, see p. 240, note 74, in this volume.

89 (not illustrated)

Abbildung in- und Ausländischer Hölzer Nürnberg: In Commission der Seligmännischen Kunsthandlung

Johann Michael Seligmann, 1773–77

Book on veneers, text in Latin and German, with 36 hand-colored plates

Estimated overall 14 × 11 in. (35.6 × 27.9 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Thomas J. Watson Library, 2010

90 (fig. 72)

Allegory on the Marriage between the Dauphin and Marie Antoinette

Gabriel de Saint-Aubin, 1770

Brush and gray wash, accents in pen and brown ink, over black chalk; framing lines in pen and brown ink; margins tinted with blue-green wash

8⁷/₈ × 6³/₄ in. (22.1 × 17.1 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1937 (37.165.106)

MARKS

Signed “G de St Aubin 1770” in black chalk at lower left; label on verso, marked “31” in crayon; framer’s label.

PROVENANCE

Marcel Thévenin, France; (his sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, April 18, 1906, lot 40, to Paulme; (sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, June 9–11, 1914, lot 59; Marquis de Biron, Paris and Geneva, ca. 1850s–late 1930s.

LITERATURE

Dacier 1929–31, vol. 2, p. 17, no. 84; Allen 1938, p. 78; Williams 1939, pp. 51–52, fig. 4; Benisovich 1943, p. 73; Carlson, D’Oench, and Field 1975, pp. 93–94, no. 49; Bean 1986, pp. 242–43, no. 275, ill.

91 (not illustrated)

Louis XVI

Jean-Étienne Mascret for Sèvres Manufactory, 1820

Biscuit and glazed hard-paste porcelain

H. 10¹/₄ in. (26.0 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Bequest of Annie C. Kane, 1926 (26.260.26)

MARKS

Signed “Mas / 31 at 29 16 1” (incised) on back of bust; markings 1–4 on inside pedestal: (1) crossed Ls enclosing fleur-de-lis marking above “Sevres/20” factory mark printed in blue; (2) painted in black: “29 av 24 E”; (3) illegible mark in gold; (4) “SD” incised.

LITERATURE

Andreas Dobler in *Königliches Porzellan aus Frankreich* 1999, pp. 170–71, no. 61 (example in the Hessische Hausstiftung, Museum Schloss Fasanerie, Eichenzell/Fulda, Germany)

92 (not illustrated)

Marie Antoinette

Jean-Étienne Mascret for Sèvres Manufactory, 1821

Biscuit and glazed hard-paste porcelain

H. 12 in. (30.5 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Bequest of Annie C. Kane, 1926 (26.260.27)

MARKS

Signed “Mas” (incised) on back of bust; markings 1–5 on inside pedestal: (1) Crossed Ls enclosing fleur-de-lis above Sevres factory mark and illegible date printed in blue; (2) “I M.s 21” painted in black; (3) illegible mark in gold; (4) “SD” incised; (5) “20-4” incised.

LITERATURE

Andreas Dobler in *Königliches Porzellan aus Frankreich* 1999, pp. 170–71, no. 62 (example in the Hessische Hausstiftung, Museum Schloss Fasanerie, Eichenzell/Fulda, Germany)

93 (fig. 70)

Manufacturer’s Catalogue of Hardware

English, 18th century

Engraving

Overall 7¹/₈ × 10³/₈ in. (18.3 × 26.4 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1935 (35.41.1)

PROVENANCE

[James Rimell & Son, London, until 1935].

LITERATURE

Crom 1994 (facsimile ed. of the catalogue)

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Ingrid Adam and Horst Reber. *1300 Jahre Altmünsterkloster in Mainz*. Exh. cat. Landesmuseum Mainz; 1993–94. Mainz, 1994.

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William Howard Adams. *Gouverneur Morris: An Independent Life*. New Haven, 2003.

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Anton Wilhelm Tischbein 2004

Anton Wilhelm Tischbein, 1730–1804. Exh. cat. Historisches Museum Hanau, Schloss Philippsruhe; 2004. Hanau, 2004.

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H. J. Antweiler. “Die Uhr des Grafen Mercy d’Argenteau.” *Schriften des Historisch-Wissenschaftlichen Fachkreises “Freunde alter Uhren” in der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Chronometrie* 18 (1979), pp. 155–65.

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Johann Wilhelm von Archenholtz, ed. *Litteratur und Völkerkunde: Ein periodisches Werk* 8–9 (1785). [See especially pp. 686–96.]

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Fritz Viktor Arens. *Meisterrisse und Möbel der Mainzer Schreiner*. Beiträge zur Geschichte der Stadt Mainz 14. Mainz, 1955.

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Catherine Arminjon. “Les premiers androïdes: La tympanon de Marie-Antoinette.” In *Sciences & curiosités à la cour de Versailles*, edited by Béatrix Saule and Catherine Arminjon, p. 249. Exh. cat. Château de Versailles; 2010–11. Paris, 2010.

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Baarsen 2008

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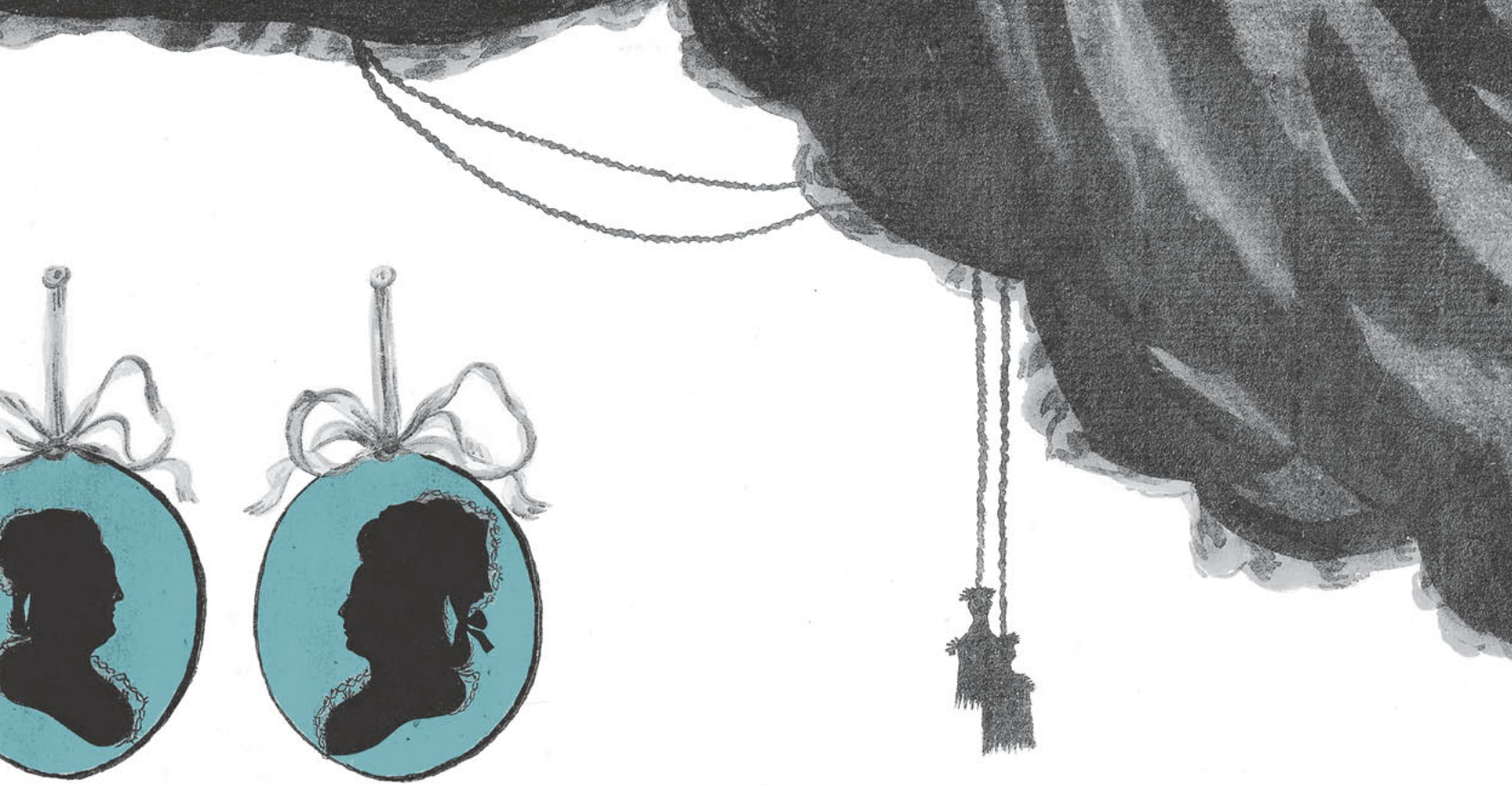
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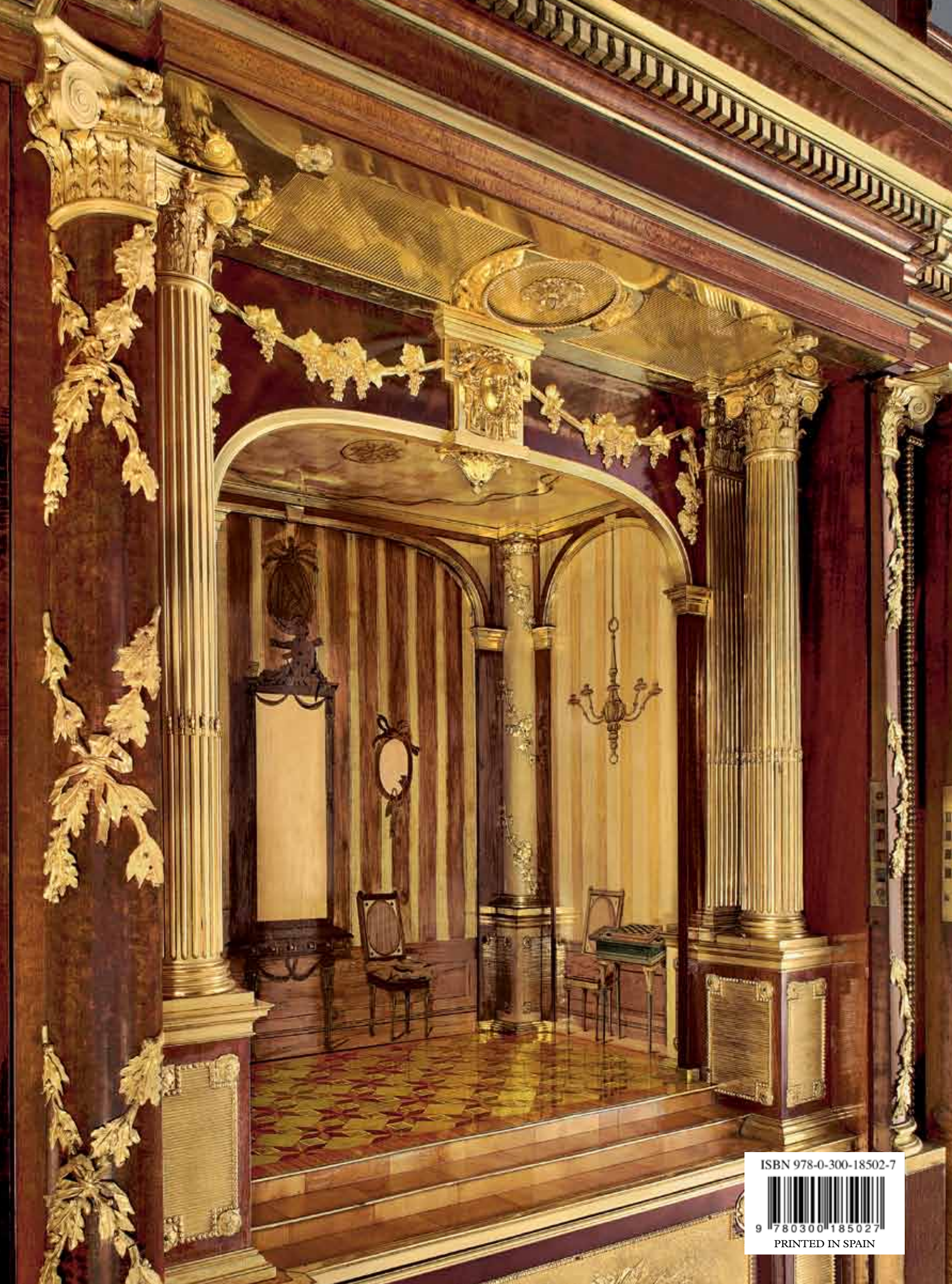
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