



Great Collections of the World *Princely Treasures: European Masterpieces 1600-1800* from the V&A

Saturday 24 September 2011 – Monday 9 January 2012

The Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), London has one of the greatest collections of European decorative art of the 17th and 18th centuries, from the miniature to the monumental. Ninety five masterpieces from these magnificent collections have been selected for this exhibition, including painting and sculpture, ceramics and glass, metalwork and furniture, textiles and dress, prints and drawings.

They were acquired and used by European men and women of power, wealth and taste. Many were made by Europe's finest artists and craftsmen, using precious materials from around the world. They come from all corners of the continent – from Britain and France, Italy and Germany, Russia and Spain, Austria and Belgium, Holland and Sweden.

Stefano Carboni, Director of the Art Gallery of Western Australia, said he was proud to have the V&A exhibition as the Gallery's second instalment of the *Great Collections of the World* series.

"It is great to have our Gallery as the exclusive Australian venue on this international tour. The exhibition will provide visitors with a unique opportunity to view these stunning treasures, some of which are travelling for the first time since their acquisition by the V&A," said Stefano Carboni.

The exhibition presents a series of themes encapsulating important aspects of courtly life in Europe. It begins with an opening section looking at power and patronage in Europe between 1600 and 1800, presenting key figures from European courts who were great patrons of the arts. The following sections focus on four different aspects of courtly life: the importance of war; the role of religion; the peaceful arts of the domestic interior and the magnificence of personal adornment.

Princely Patronage presents the key figures who were the great patrons of the arts in Europe between 1600 and 1800, and some of the most sophisticated objects that circulated around European courts.

Power and Glory explores how representations of war were used to decorate objects commissioned for courtly use, from armour and weapons to tapestries and paintings.

Religious Splendour reveals the nature of objects made for worship, commissioned by secular or ecclesiastical patrons for public or private devotional use.

Display and the Domestic Interior presents furniture, textiles and ceramics made for use in the home, either for decorative or social purposes.

Fashion and Personal Adornment reveals the care and attention aristocratic men and women took to dress in fashionable style from head to toe.

V&A Publishing will produce a richly illustrated book to accompany the exhibition.

The V&A is the world's leading museum of art and design with collections unrivalled in their scope and diversity. It was established to make works of art available to all and to inspire British designers and manufacturers. Today, the V&A's collections, which span over 2000 years of human creativity in virtually every medium and from many parts of the world, continue to intrigue, inspire and inform.

www.vam.ac.uk



François Boucher
Jeanne-Antoinette Poisson, Marquise de Pompadour
(1721–64)
France, 1758
Oil on Canvas
V&A: 487-1882
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Attributed to Hubert Le Sueur
Statue of Henry IV of France (1553 – 1610)
on Horseback trampling his enemy
Paris, c. 1620-5
Cast bronze
V&A: A.46-1951 and A.1-1992
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Exhibition organised by the Victoria and Albert Museum, London



Exhibition series sponsor



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