



Treasured Possessions: From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment

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This book explores the significance of beautiful and engaging objects—chosen, acquired, personalised and treasured—to the people who once owned them. With over 300 works discussed, it takes us on a dazzling visual adventure through the decorative arts, from Renaissance luxuries wrought in glass, bronze and maiolica to the elaborate tablewares and personal adornments available to shoppers in the Age of Enlightenment. En route the authors consider the impact of global trade on European habits and expectations: the glamour of the Eastern exotic, the ubiquity of New World products like chocolate and sugar, and the obsession with Chinoiserie decoration. They ask what decorative objects meant to their owners before the age of industrial mass production, and explore how technological innovation and the proliferation of goods from the sixteenth century onwards transformed the attitude of Europeans to their personal possessions. Illustrated throughout with superb colour photographs, many unfamiliar and hitherto unseen gems of the Fitzwilliam Museum's Applied Arts collection are here published for the first time.

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