



Marvels of Maiolica: Italian Renaissance Ceramics from the Corcoran Gallery

Jacqueline Musacchio

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Marvels of Maiolica explores the rich history and ornate styles of these beautiful wares as well as the key role they played in Renaissance society. Maiolica, or tin-glazed earthenware, flourished in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries throughout the Italian peninsula as apothecary jars, serving plates, bowls, intricately shaped flasks, graceful vases, decorative salts, and figurative inkstands, often painted with provocative narrative images based on subjects from classical mythology, history, or religion. They were testament to their owner's erudition and helped encourage lively conversation at the shop or dining table. Maiolica was also used for floor tiles, devotional objects, and splendid gifts to celebrate family events, such as betrothals, weddings, or childbirth. By recognizing the prominent place these valued ceramics held in everyday life, Jacqueline Marie Musacchio illuminates the complex nature of Italian Renaissance society. With full-color illustrations of the most impressive works from the Corcoran's William A. Clark Collection, this authoritative book is a rare treat for collectors and admirers of maiolica. Marvels of Maiolica is the first book on the collection in almost twenty years and is published to coincide with a traveling exhibition opening in April 2004. Jacqueline Marie Musacchio is Assistant Professor in the Art Department at Vassar College and the author of the award-winning book *The Art and Ritual of Childbirth in Renaissance Italy*.

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