

MUSÉE



Press kit

Exhibition from February 21 to November 17, 2014

Langeais Earthenware *a Novelty Revealed*

Opening Reception Friday, February 21, 2014 from 6:30



44 rue Haute Saint-Maurice
37500 Chinon tél. 02 47 93 18 12

In 2014, the Carroi Museum will present the exhibition "Langeais Earthenware – a Novelty Revealed". **For the first time in Chinon, in the region home to the production of Langeais earthenware, an unprecedented collection will be on exhibit to the public.**

Langeais earthenware is above all the result of the meeting of a man, Charles de Boissimon, and a regional clay soil, of which he was able to recognize and apply its refractory and exceptional modelling properties with rare sensibility.

At the end of the 17th century the HEARD DE BOISSIMON family moved to the Bas – Maine region (France). In 1839 Charles de BOISSIMON, then 22 years old, settled in Langeais (located 25 km from Tours) with his cousin Julien Boileve, and they founded a ceramic products company under the name "Charles de Boissimon", with production extending from 1839 to 1909. From the beginning, Charles de Boissimon added firebricks to the local production that would soon outpace traditional manufacture. Presented in 1841 at the "Industry and Arts Products of Tours" Exhibition, they received a silver medal, but it was with his ornamented potteries that he would create his own particular style. He participated in numerous international exhibitions and received numerous medals.





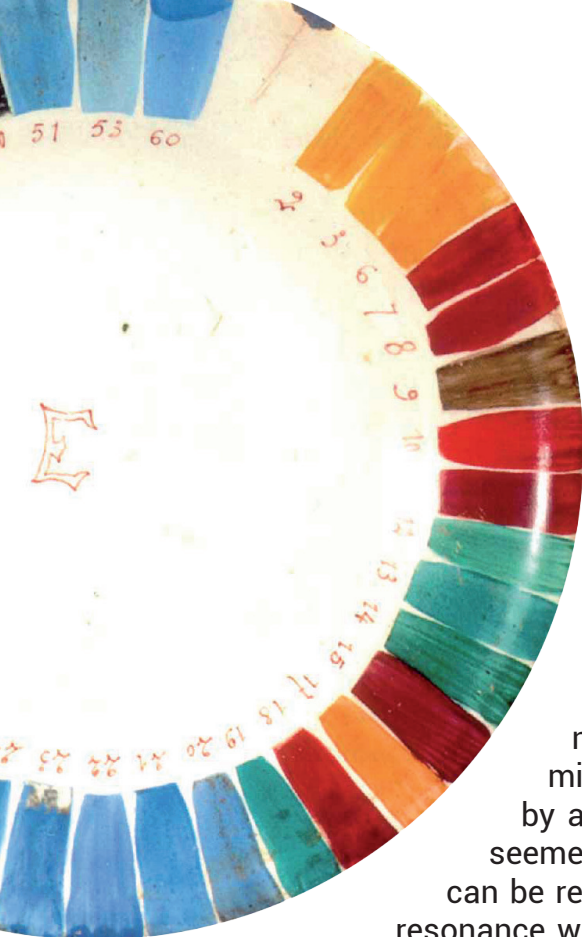
He started the pottery studio in 1842 with a single potter working. In 1844 his studio had 42 employees, 30 of which worked directly in production, and in 1850 he acquired sole ownership of the factory. A journal created for the Universal Exhibition in Paris, 1867, stated that at that time, more than 200 workers (men, women and children) were employed at the factory. "The same clay soil today serves to make luxury pottery with a perfection of form and elegant decoration that has made it sought after throughout Europe", wrote Victor Luzarche, member of the Regional Commission of Industry mandated at the Exhibition. With fine china and platinum (that he imported from Peru and Chilli), Charles de Boissimon had the insight to integrate the new techniques of his era and at the same time create forms adapted to the taste of the day. He died on February 25, 1879. All of his employees, down to the very poorest, rendered homage to him by contributing to a splendid funeral monument, asking that he lie near them.

His son Raoul de Boissimon, art amateur, inherited the factory on his father's death and dissolved the company to reopen under his own name. The first years were good, but in 1884 the competition from hard porcelain and economic depression were weakening factors. He died on August 16, 1889 at the age of 40. It was his wife, Josephine Salmon de Maison Rouge that took over and managed the family company. In 1909 production stopped and the company was sold. She died August 30, 1927, bringing to an end the de Boissimon family line and 70 years of working for the development and renown of Langeais earthenware.

Created in Langeais, in the Touraine region on the banks of the Loire, the production of this particular earthenware existed from 1839 to 1909 and possesses its own very characteristic shapes and forms that are to be found throughout its entire production – only the surface decoration differs. The clay used to make **fine earthenware china** is a fine clay soil which is easy to model. The defining characteristic of Langeais earthenware is found in its ornamentation, exclusive to this production, a rarity at a time when the majority of decoration was inspired by other pre-existing styles. The production consisted of very diverse objects: dishes, goblets, pots, candy dishes and jars, baptismal fonts, hot chocolate pots, baskets, casks, sewing boxes, cigar holders, soup tureens, cups, coffeepots, vases...and among the most representative of the mark, the braided baskets.



The materials used at this time already offer a wide possibility of colour, obtained from metal oxides like chrome, cobalt, copper, tin, iron, magnesium, lead, uranium, zinc...all of which permit one to obtain a large palette of greens, blues, greys, yellows, browns, nuances of red and red-orange, deep violet, and ivory. Such a manufacture, unusual for its quantity and quality, quickly attracted numerous collectors – conservators of a production no longer in existence.



The exhibition proposes a discovery of the particular history of this exceptional manufacture **selected from the collection of Paul-Jean Souriau**, the largest collector of Langeais earthenware. It was in 1956 that Souriau, an industrialist originally from the Pays de Loire region, discovered the mark.

In the Vendôme auction house, the lots followed one after another, up until the moment when the auctioneer held up an item, and Paul-Jean Souriau was irresistibly attracted by this new, unusual object. Before him was a small milk white pitcher, its form completely covered by a design of leaves, fruit, and grapevines of what seemed an immaterial luminosity. His sudden passion can be resumed by this one small phrase that would find resonance with all those who love ceramics, "But who could have put so much light in such a small thing?" He was intrigued, seduced by its festive appearance, but there was little reaction from the audience - at that time, earthenware was not in style. And so he acquired the little pot. He would go on to amass a prestigious and diverse collection of 3,000 items of Langeais earthenware over 50 years, a selection of which will be on exhibit now for the first time to the public.

The exhibit will display a selected collection in the glass cases **on the top floor of the museum in order to fully reveal the inherent grace of this fine earthenware china, the perfection and multiplicity of forms and the elegance of its lines.**

Shapes, colours, confidential production procedures, historical anecdotes, Langeais earthenware will reveal all of its secrets.

An unprecedented collection on exhibit for the first time - refined and complex forms, colours to inspire passion, fine earthenware not seen anymore.

Informations

On exhibit from February 22 to April 30, from Friday to Monday 2 to 6 p.m.

From May 1st to September 22, from Wednesday to Monday, 2:30 to 6:30 p.m.

And September 23 to November 17, from Friday to Monday, 2 to 6 p.m., 2014

Entry fee: 3 euros, free for children under 12, members of les Amis du Vieux Chinon and those having purchased the Chinon cultural PASS 2014

Family pass: 15 euros, free entry for 4 to the museum and its programming for 2014

Exhibit Events Program

Guided visits of the exhibit on Sunday April 13, June 22, October 5, at 5 p.m.

"Midi-Musée" "Langeais Earthenware – a Novelty Revealed", Tuesday May 6 from 12:15 to 1 p.m. (from the "noontime museum visits" program, in French)

"Nuit Européenne des Musées": Saturday through the evening May 17, with guided visits of the exhibit

School groups: educational children's visits on request, Tel: 02 47 93 18 12

Creative workshops for children ages 4 to 11 during the summer school vacation, Wednesday July 9 and August 6, for further information: 02 47 93 18 12

Contact Information

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