

SILVER IN THE SPOTLIGHT: A REPORT FROM TEFAF, MAASTRICHT 2018

By Karolina Stefanski



Fig. 1. Vetting process at TEFAF, Maastricht, 2018. Photography by Loraine Bodewes.

Fig. 2. An important silver mounted coconut cup, probably Antwerp, coconut dated 1550, unmarked, with several later Dutch duty marks. Photography courtesy of Kunsthandel Jacques Fijnaut B.V. Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

Once a year, the most prestigious international art dealers, art lovers, serious collectors, and art connoisseurs meet at The European Fine Art Fair (TEFAF) in the medieval city of Maastricht, in the southern tip of the Netherlands. TEFAF is recognized as the world's finest and pre-eminent organization for fine and decorative art,

antiques, and design.

Celebrating three decades of excellence this year, TEFAF was founded by Maastricht art dealers in 1988 as a non-profit organizational art fair and over the years has grown to display the most exceptional art and antiques from more than 7,000 years of art history.





Figs. 3a & 3b. A pair of silver-gilt reliefs from Ulm, Germany, dated 1650-1680. Each panel is about 6.02 inches high x 8.3 inches wide. Photography by Helga Matzke, Grünwald, Germany.



Figs. 4a & 4b. A collection of glass coolers (Monteith) dated 1707-1711. Used to cool and clean glasses during the eighteenth century. Photography by Helga Matzke, Grünwald, Germany.



Fig. 5. A teapot by Dutch silversmith Gabijnus van der Lely from Leeuwarden, Netherlands, 1734. The techniques of this object include repoussé, chiseling, and casting. Photography courtesy of Kunsthandel Jacques Fijnaut B.V., Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

TEFAF is also known as the international platform for museum-quality works of art from all areas and genres. The art fair professes to stand for authenticity, transparency, and quality of artworks with immaculate provenance, which allows collectors to purchase with certainty and confidence. This year's fair categorized eight major sections: antiques, modern art, paintings, works on paper, design, ancient art, tribal art, and *haute joaillerie*.

Dealer participation is extremely competitive, and TEFAF's "vetting process" (Figure 1) is the main reason it is such an extremely successful fair, as it assures, protects, and guarantees all potential buyers. The vetting committees, who peruse art pieces judiciously, are formed of expert members from various fields, including museum curators, art historians, dealers, restorers, conservators, and academics.

For this year's TEFAF, the vetting committees for silverworks were

comprised of the following ten members: Dr. D.J. Biemond, curator of the silver department at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam; E. Aardewerk, exhibitor from The Hague; D. Cawte, F.I.P.G., silver and goldsmith, member of the Antique Plate Committee Goldsmiths Hall in London; H. Charteris, consultant for the silver department at Sotheby's in London; J. Estié, exhibitor from Amsterdam; T. Martin, exhibitor from New York; Dr. W. Nys, curator of the head collections and research DIVA in Antwerp; Dr. J. Pijzel-Dommisse, former curator of decorative arts at the Gemeentemuseum, The Hague; Dr. T. Schroder, independent scholar, London; and Dr. K. Tebbe, curator of decorative arts at the Kurpfälzisches Museum in Heidelberg, Germany.¹

Dealers exhibiting silver are required to meet strict measures outlined in the vetting guidelines' paragraph nineteen entitled "Silver, Gold and Platinum."² It states, "Pieces that have been so

extensively restored or altered such as to change or disguise their original nature or function are not acceptable."³ Any minor repairs, re-gilding or re-plating of silver items must be clearly indicated to the public. Any silver with a "coat-of-arms or other blazons must be contemporaneous with the objects and may not have been added at a later date."⁴ Although these strict regulations may eliminate a wide range of beautiful silver from galleries and collections around the world, it is what potential buyers expect.

Predictably, silver, as it has in the past years, had a major presence at TEFAF this year. The majority of dealers offered silver in the antiques section of the fair, which was the largest of the eight categorical sections. Other dealers featured silver mixed among the various items in their booths. Important silver pieces from around the world were presented ranging from the sixteenth through the twentieth centuries. Although European silver was the major



Fig. 6. Dutch tea chest containing four tea caddies, 1730. Signed by François Lambregts, Amsterdam; 6.7 inches x 8.7 inches. Photography by A. Aardewerk Antiquair Juwelier, The Hague, Netherlands.

focus of the show, exquisite silver from other parts of the world, such as Latin-America, China, and India, for example, were also featured.

The first silver art form that attracted my attention was an important silver-mounted coconut cup, created in Antwerp and dated 1550 (Figure 2).⁵ In my opinion, it was one of the many highlights of the fair. The silver of this vessel was hand-chased in low relief with exuberant floral garlands. Its lid is surmounted by a naked youth with a scepter and supporting a double armorial corresponding to the families of Van de(n) Cappel and Zeldeghem, which suggests that the cup might have been a wedding gift.⁶ The coconut shell is also elaborately carved in low relief and divided in three panels, each depicting a different scene.⁷ The first panel displays the two armorials of the families, the second panel depicts allegorical figures of *Spes* (Hope), *Tribulatio* (Distress), *Invidia* (Envy) and *Tolerantia* (Tolerance), and the third panel presents Adam and Eve and the Tree of Knowledge in the

shape of a skeleton.⁸ Coconuts were prized, precious, natural collectable commodities as early as the Middle Ages and became more popular during the Renaissance. Usually crafted into small pitchers and drinking cups with costly metal embellishments, they were believed to have medicinal, therapeutic, and apotropaic potential.

Another exceptional piece was the seventeenth-century pair of silver-gilt reliefs from Ulm, Germany, presenting Old Testament biblical scenes from the life of King Solomon (Figures 3a & 3b).⁹ They were sold on the first preview day to a private American collector. The reliefs were crafted by silversmith Hans Georg Bauhoff in Ulm between 1660 and 1670. One relief depicts the judgment of Solomon and the other the visit of the Queen of Sheba. It is possible that these reliefs were a part of a triptych with King Solomon as the central figure and a decorative element from an altar.¹⁰

An early eighteenth-century highlight at TEFAF was the collection of glass coolers (Monteith) created by the silversmith Johann Friedrich Breuer

from Augsburg, Germany (Figures 4a and 4b).¹¹ During the *service à la française*, a serving style of various dishes of a meal presented at the same time, drinking vessels were not placed on the table directly in front of the guests, but on a buffet across the table and handled by servants who filled the guest's glass and served it. Because wine and champagne were usually enjoyed served cool, glass coolers were used. The glass coolers were filled with crushed ice and cold water; glasses were hung upside down in the vessel in order to cool the drinking glass. The shape of the glass cooler as we see in the images only became popular in the last quarter of the seventeenth century.¹²

Another exceptionally crafted piece was a silver teapot created in 1734 by silversmith Gabijnus van der Lely from Leeuwarden, Netherlands (Figure 5).¹³ This teapot stands on a low foot and features a wide, round barrel gradually merging into a tapered neck. Its curved spout ends in an animal's head, the vaulted lid has a vase-shaped knob. The vessel's barrel, spout, and lid are



Fig. 7. Dutch sugar baskets by silversmith Johannes van der Toorn II, 1774-75, The Hague. Length: 73.6 inches, width: 4.7 inches, and height: 6.6 inches. Photography by A. Aardewerk Antiquair Juwelier, The Hague, Netherlands.

decorated with finely stylized leaves between banding on granulated ground, connected by ribbed horizontal frets. The handle is composed of a c-scroll stylized leaf with a human head en ronde-bosse. A comparable example by the same silversmith in 1738 is part of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (BK-NM-12987)¹⁴ collection.

More examples that stood out were the Dutch meticulously-pierced tea chest containing four tea caddies, dated 1730 (Figure 6) and the pair of oval-shaped pierced sugar baskets by Dutch silversmith Johannes van der Toorn II, dated 1774-75, from The Hague (Figure 7).¹⁵ These rare sugar baskets feature a silver stem in the center of the vessel, terminating in a large tulip with open petals. Four stalks with leaves spring from the stem of the tulip, holding one spoon in each. “The style of this set echoes the silver bread baskets that occurred in the Netherlands around the middle of the eighteenth century.”¹⁶ These type of sugar baskets were typically made in The Hague and consisted of four to six spoons for

servicing sugar that was placed in the center flower (here the tulip) of the basket. This pair of sugar baskets sold during TEFAF’s first preview day.

Eighteenth-century silver not only included a wide variety of European pieces, but major Latin-American examples as well. A soup tureen from



Fig. 8. A silver soup tureen of the Viceroyalty of Peru. Height: 5.7 inches, width: 13.1 inches, depth: 10.2 inches. Photography by Eguiguren Arte de Hispanoamérica, Buenos Aires, Argentina.



Fig. 9. A French silver pot à oille with its presentoir by renowned Parisian silversmith Robert-Joseph Auguste (1723-c. 1805). Paris, 1779-1780; 13.3 inches in height. Photography by Galerie Neuse, Bremen, Germany.

the Viceroyalty of Peru (Figure 8), dated 1780-1790, shows influences from that same period in the United States, along with artworks that travelled from Asia to the Pacific Coast (Acapulco) by means of the *Manila Galleon*,¹⁷ Spanish trading ships that navigated between the Philippines and Mexico mainly carrying Chinese goods from the Orient through

Manila. These ships made up to two voyages per year from ports in Asia to Manila, onward to Acapulco then, over land to Vera Cruz, Mexico, whereupon the goods were again loaded on ships sailing to Havana, Cuba, and lastly ending their voyage in Spain.

Silver services from the French East India Company (*Compagnie*

des Indes Orientales), a commercial shipping company founded by French King Louis XIV (reign 1643-1715) and his finance minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert (1619-1683) with the aim to promote the industrial, commercial, and colonial development of France, show Chinese evidence in this soup tureen.¹⁸ The adaptations concentrate



Figs. 10a & 10b. A French silver-gilt and ebony Empire coffee service by Jean-Baptiste Claude Odier (1763-1850) with the original presentation case. Paris, 1809-1819; coffee pot: 14.1 inches in height. Photography by Koopman Rare Art, London.



Fig. 11. A pair of French Empire silver-gilt coffee pots by Parisian silversmith Jean-Baptiste Claude Odiot (1763-1850), Paris, 1819; 12.9 inches x 11 inches. Photography by Helga Matzke, Grünwald, Germany.



Fig. 12. A set of twelve silver dinner plates by British silversmith Paul Storr (1771-1844), London, 1818. Diameter is 10.25 inches. Photography by S. J. Shrubsole, New York, United States.

on the shell-shaped handles and the delicately stylized rococo acanthus-leaf engraving.¹⁹

Late eighteenth-century silver offerings seemed to be rather rare in this year's TEFAF. An exceptional example of French silver from the Louis XVI period (reigned 1774-1791) was the 1779/80 important *pot à oille* with its *présentoir* (Figure 9) by Parisian silversmith Robert-Joseph Auguste (1723-c.1805). Auguste was a royal goldsmith to Kings Louis XV (reigned 1715-1774) and Louis XVI and a sculptor. Highly skilled craftsmanship and sculptural artistry is visible in this masterpiece with the arms of the Dukes of Cadaval.²⁰ The oval-shaped vessel features a domed cover with a berry and acanthus leaf finial on a spread of acanthus leaves. The vessel's body has a ribbon-tied laurel rim and laurel festoons adorned with scrolling acanthus leaves from the handles. It rests on four out-swept acanthus leaf feet and its underside features an engraved armorial shield. The matching oval base is centrally raised and adorned with the coat of arms surrounded with a laurel wreath and a gadrooned border. The base has four polished panels with a matted frame on which are presented sunflowers in low relief and a ribbon-tied laurel border.

Early nineteenth-century silver was also less common at this year's TEFAF. A few excellent examples that I discovered were the silver-gilt and ebony French Empire coffee service (Figures 10a & 10b) from the second decade of the nineteenth century by Jean-Baptiste Claude Odiot (1763-1850). This typical Empire coffee service was commissioned for the Count Golovkine of Vienna, a Russian diplomat who served as a minister in Vienna from 1818 through 1822. An Odiot archives document places the order in 1819.²¹ An identical service was ordered by the Duc de la Varguon (1746-1828) on October 1, 1816. This coffee service is presented in its original red velvet interior black leather case with original wax seals.

Another outstanding example of the French Empire style was the pair of Odiot's silver-gilt coffee pots (Figure 11). Both vessels have a vase-shaped



Fig. 13. A silver samovar by British silversmith Paul Storr (1771-1844), London, 1811; 15 inches in height. Photography by S. J. Shrubsole, New York, United States.

body with one foot, an ear-shaped ebony handle, and a flat hinged cover with a swan finial en ronde-bosse. The curved spouts feature a mythical beast's and a lioness' head. Various mythological appliques have been applied to the vessel's highly-polished body.

The TEFAF market offered more nineteenth-century English than French silver this year. A few well-crafted examples by the internationally renowned



Fig. 14. A five-piece silver condiment service (ménagère) with malachite and glass by Josef Hoffmann (1870-1956), Wiener Werkstätte, Vienna, 1914; 88.5 x 68.8 x 5.5 inches. Photography by Bel Etage, Vienna, Austria.

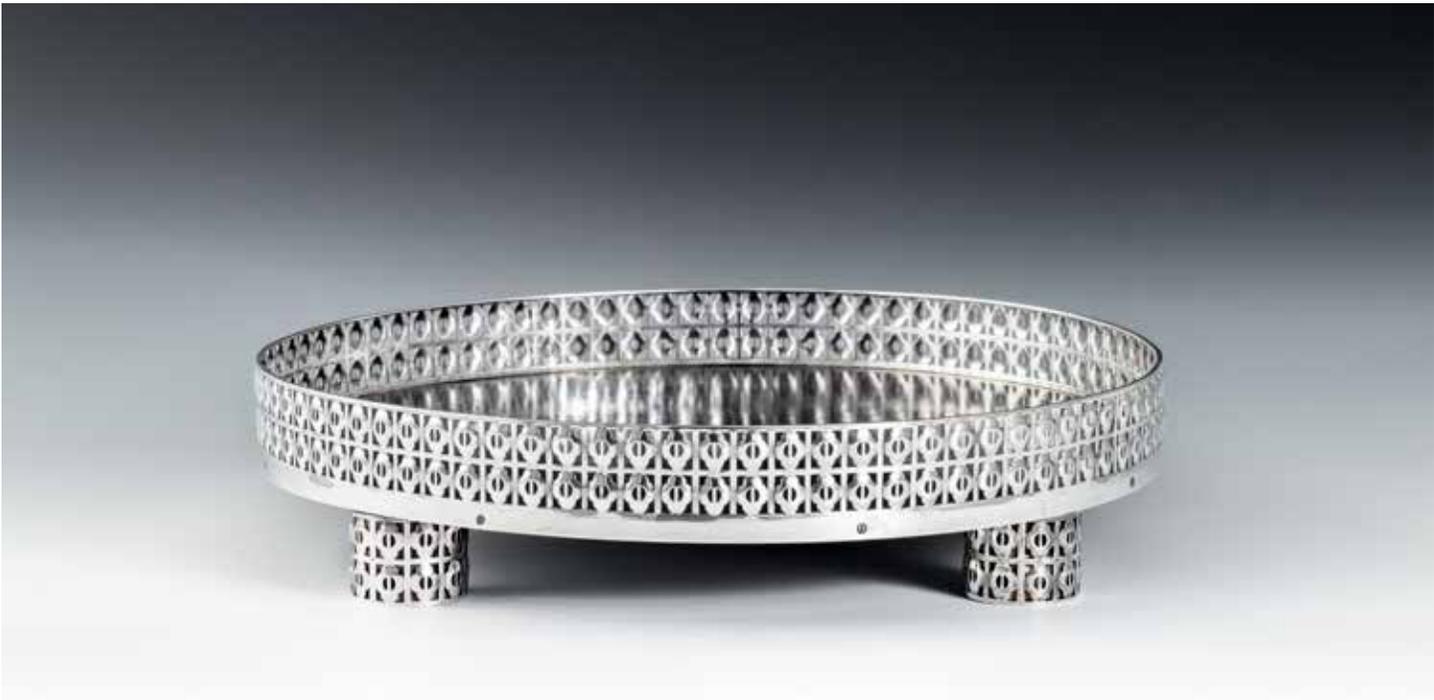


Fig. 15. A silver tray in a blossom pattern and rosewood by Josef Hoffmann (1870-1956), Wiener Werkstätte, Vienna, 1909/10; 3.1 x 14.5 inches. Photography by Bel Etage, Vienna, Austria.



Fig. 16. A silver tray by Josef Hoffmann (1870-1956), Wiener Werkstätte, Vienna, 1905-11; 19.7 x 18.5 inches. Photography by Fr. Janssens van der Maelen, Brussels, Belgium.



Fig. 17. A set of silver cutlery with malachite by Josef Hoffmann (1870-1956), Wiener Werkstätte, Vienna, 1912. Forks: 7 inches and knives: 7.4 inches. Photography by Galerie Yves Macaux, Paris, France.



Fig. 18. Parisian art deco silver centerpiece by Bointaburet & Henry adorned with old carved jade, Paris, 1929; 8.2 x 14.1 x 9.8 inches. Photography by Fr. Janssens van der Maelen, Brussels, Belgium.



Fig. 19. A silver centerpiece by Jean E. Puiforcat (1897-1945), Paris, 1930; 5.9 x 11.4 inches. Photography by Fr. Janssens van der Maelen, Brussels, Belgium.



Fig. 20. A cylindric tea container by Hans Przyrembel (1900-1945), Bauhaus, Dessau, Germany, 1926; 8.2 x 2.4 inches. This tea container was part of the exhibitions Die neue Wirklichkeit, Abstraktion als Weltentwurf at Wilhem-Hack-Museum in Ludwigshafen, Germany, 1994/95 and L'ésprit du Bauhaus at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, France, 2016/17.



Fig. 21. A pair of silver rafraichissoirs by French silversmith Ronald Daraspe (b. 1950), 2016; 10.2 x 7.87 inches. Photography by Fr. Janssens van der Maelen, Brussels, Belgium.

British silversmith Paul Storr (1771-1844) were exhibited, including a set of twelve dinner plates, dated 1818 (Figure 12) and a samovar (Figure 13), dated 1811. The circular dinner plates are adorned with a border of shell, leaf, and anthemion and engraved with a ducal coronet and the initials "HStA" for Harriet Mellon (1777-1837), Duchess of St. Albans, and "AGBC," the initials for the Duchess' niece, Baroness Angela Georgina Burdett-Coutts (1814-1906), who inherited the plates from her aunt. Storr's George III (1760-1820) samovar is a rather typical English tea urn from the period and has a half-lobed body with leaf-capped handles supported on lion masks. Its square pedestal is raised on four lion paws and anthemion feet. The spout of the samovar shows an obvious reference to water, the function of the vessel, which features a dolphin head form, a popular decorative motif of the period and one that also directly relates to water.

A fairly large selection of twentieth-century silver was also represented at TEFAF, ranging from art nouveau to art deco, Bauhaus style silver, and modern design. Several important pieces of the renowned *Wiener Werkstätte* silversmith and founder Josef Hoffmann (1870-1956) were displayed.²² Among Hoffmann's silver was a five-piece condiment service (*ménagère*) enhanced with malachite and glass from 1914 (Figure 14), a large tray, dated 1909, in the blossom pattern in silver and

rosewood (Figure 15), another tray with an unusual pattern (Figure 16), and a set of cutlery in silver and malachite (Figure 17). My favorite art deco pieces included the Parisian silver centerpiece by Bointaburet & Henry adorned with old carved Jade, dated 1929 (Figure 18), and the Jean E. Puiforcat (1897-1945) silver centerpiece dated 1930 (Figure 19).

The German Bauhaus movement (frequently referred to as German modernism), was founded by Walter Gropius (1883-1969) as a school of arts in Weimar in 1919. Characteristics of the Bauhaus style are the absence of decorative ornaments and a harmony of an object's function with its form or design. There were silver pieces from the Bauhaus period on display, and one that particularly caught my eye, was a cylindrical tea container (Figure 20) by Hans Przyrembel (1900-1945) hallmarked and dated 1926. Although made of brass and silverplate, its design is the epitome of iconic Bauhaus design.

Modern and contemporary silver design made a grand entrance at TEFAF this year. Although present last year, its presence was not as celebrated or plentiful as it was this year. A perfect example was a beautiful 2016 pair of wine or champagne coolers (*rafraichissoirs*) by contemporary French silversmith Ronald Daraspe (Figure 21). The timeless design stands out in its combination of nature-inspired décor and geometric form construction.

This year's TEFAF exhibitions were inspiring, exuberant albeit overwhelming, in that the quantity of the more than 200,000 museum-quality pieces presented by the 275 exhibitors necessitated multiple visits. The fair is generally open to the public for nine days in March. Despite the growing categories of twentieth-century design, the amount of silver presented at Maastricht this year was a sign of continuous interest in silver as both, collectible art and as an investment.

If one is unable to travel to the Netherlands, the New York City TEFAF fair is scheduled for October 27-31, 2018. I recommend making the effort to experience this wondrous event at next year's TEFAF in Maastricht, March 15-24, 2019.

1. "Vetting Guidelines," *TEFAF Maastricht 2018*, exhibition catalogue (TEFAF, Helvoirt, 2018), 42-51.
2. *Ibid.*, 47.
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*
5. Kunsthandel Jacques Fijnaut B.V., Amsterdam, The Netherlands. An important silver mounted coconut cup, probably Antwerp. Coconut dated for 1550, unmarked, with several later Dutch duty marks.
6. Exhibitor Kunsthandel Jacques Fijnaut B.V., Maastricht TEFAF, March 10, 2018.
7. For more information about the cup, contact the dealer directly or refer to the following literature: Rolf Fritz, *Die Gefäße aus Kokosnuss in Mitteleuropa 1250-1800* (1983), ill. 55; Rolf Fritz, "Zwei deutsche Kokosnusspokale in New York," in: *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Veriens für Kunstwissenschaft* (1976), 30; Charles Ephrussi, *Albrecht Dürer et ses dessins*, Paris (1882), 213. There is also extensive literature about the drawing and engraving of the cup. Please refer to the dealer.
8. Exhibitor Kunsthandel Jacques Fijnaut B.V., Maastricht TEFAF, March 10, 2018.
9. Helga Matzke, Grünwald, Germany, object number 328. Each panel is about 6.02 inches x 8.3 inches and weighs approximately 6.41 oz. (182 g).
10. *Ibid.*
11. Matzke, object number 304 (16.93 inches x 7.87 inches). Object number 325 (14 inches x 8.5 inches).
12. *Ibid.* For more information about glass coolers and the silversmith Johann Friedrich Breuer, see: Karl Hernmarck, *Die Kunst der europäischen Gold- und Silberschmiede von 1450-1830* (München 1978); Helmut Seling, *Die Augsburger Gold- und Silberschmiede 1529 – 1868. Meister Marken Werke* (München 1980 and 2007).
13. Kunsthandel Jacques Fijnaut B.V., Amsterdam, the Netherlands.
14. Rijksmuseum Collection website, <http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.18385> (accessed June 2018.) See also: Johan Willem Frederiks, *Dutch silver from the Renaissance until the end of the 18th century* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1952-1961), Cat. No. 339; and E. Alfred Jones, *Old silver of Europe and America from early times to the XIXth century* (London, 1928), 244.
15. Both silver pieces presented by A. Aardewerk Antiquair Juwelier, The Hague, the Netherlands.
16. A. Aardewerk, description of silver piece on display at TEFAF, Maastricht, March 10, 2018.
17. Javier und José Eguiguren Molina, *Highlights of Hispanic American Silver and Equestrian Silver in the River Plate* (Buenos Aires: Eguiguren Arte de Hispanoamérica, 2017), 60.
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Ibid.* For more information refer to: Alain Gruber, ed., "Chinoiserie" *The History of Decorative Arts. Classicism and the Baroque in Europe* (New York, London, Paris: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1994), 226-323; see also: "Platería del Perú Virreinal 1535-1825," *Archivo Español de Arte*, vol. 70, (1997), cat. 91.
20. Refer to Bonhams sale "Fine Silver and Gold Boxes," June 18, 2014, London, New Bond Street, Lot 152. "The Dukes of Cadaval have their origins in Dom Álvaro of Braganza, Lord of Tentúgal, Póvoa, Buarcos and Cadaval, 4th male son of Dom Ferdinand I, 2nd Duke of Braganza. Dom Álvaro married Dona Phillipa of Melo, the rich daughter and heir of Rodrigo Afonso de Melo, 1st. Count of Olivenza. The title was created on April 26, 1645, by King John IV of Portugal to his distant cousin, Dom Nuno Álvares Pereira de Melo (1638–1727), who was already 3rd Marquis of Ferreira and 5th Count of Tentúgal."
21. For more information, refer to: Jean-Marie Pinçon & Olivier Gaube du Gers, *Odiot L'Orfèvre, 3 Siècles d'Histoire d'Art & de Créations*, 127, illustrated color plate 205.
22. Josef Hoffmann's silver was represented by several dealers: Janssens Van Der Maelen, Brussels; Bel Etage, Vienna, Austria; and Yves Macaux Gallery, Brussels, Belgium.

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