

THE ARTS UNDER NAPOLEON

The Metropolitan Museum of Art



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An exhibition of the Department of
European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, with
loans from the Audrey B. Love Foundation
and other New York collections

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James David Draper

Introduction to Napoleonic silver and entries
on silver and goldsmiths' work by
Clare Le Corbeiller

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THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

On the cover: Silver gilt ewer and basin by P.-J.-B.
Huguet (cat. no. 160) ; background of green silk
(cat. no. 178)

Authors' Acknowledgements

There have been recent Napoleonic exhibitions in France and in Kansas City and Providence, but never one in New York. That alone would be reason enough to hold one now. Our eagerness doubled when the opportunity came to exhibit Empire silver and other objects from the collection formed by the late C. Ruxton Love, Jr. They have been lent by the Audrey B. Love Foundation, and we are immensely grateful to Mrs. Love for her willingness to share this most distinguished collection. Thanks are also due to Paul Doll, who aided us as well as Mrs. Love at every step.

We are further indebted to Russell Barnett Aitken and Irving Moskowitz, as generous with information on the period as they have been with the fine works in their keeping; to Hugh Bullock, who very kindly made available the beautiful objects assembled by his father Calvin Bullock; to Mrs. Walter C. Baker; John Abbott and Peter Guggenheim; Christian Rohlfing, of the Cooper-Hewitt Museum of Design; and our other lenders. Lincoln Kirstein and Gérard Hubert, of the Musée National du Château de Malmaison, have given scholarly advice and assisted with numerous favors.

In an exhibition of wider range than that normal to the Department of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, the organizers were able to turn for help to curators in other departments of the Metropolitan, notably Arms and Armor, Prints and Photographs, and the Costume Institute. They and staff members in all departments concerned have reacted patiently and efficiently, and it is hoped that each will feel the warmth of our general but heartfelt thanks. In two cases, however, it would be very thoughtless if specific mention were omitted: James Parker unstintingly shared his vast knowledge of furniture and decorations of the period, and the Costume Institute volunteers under Elizabeth Lawrence have spent many hundreds of hours restoring the costumes that are among the exhibition's glories.

Introduction

Napoleon Bonaparte was born in 1769, a child of the Enlightenment. In his youth, he was acquainted with a variety of current political beliefs, invariably backed by lessons from Greco-Roman history. At age thirty-five, having won immense popularity through the successes of his troops, he forged those lessons into a singular conclusion by crowning himself Emperor of the French.

In his rise to power, he marshaled support by calculating the historical sensibilities and the store of visual references held in common by his contemporaries. The people of his time were convinced alike by revolutionary theories and by the saving powers, political as well as artistic, of classical antiquity. Throughout the revolutionary period in France, the imitation of austere Roman republican models was accounted a positive virtue, in society and in design. Bonaparte's *coup d'état* of 1799 supplanted the existing Directory with the Consulate, in which he became First Consul, later First Consul for Life. It was an imaginative revival of a Roman institution in the name of stronger government.

He looked about for additional models, decreasingly republican in proportion to his growing ambitions. While still a general during the Egyptian campaign of the 1790s, he had visited the ruins of Pelusium and found a medallion of Julius Caesar. It was seen as a flattering omen. Artifacts were again found to have suggestive powers during preparations to invade Britain in 1803. The First Consul's official bulletin, the *Moniteur*, reported that while his camp was being excavated, "a war hatchet was found, which probably belonged to the Roman army that invaded Britain. There were also medals of William the Conqueror found at Ambleuse, where the First Consul's tent was pitched."

The First Consul and his consort, Josephine, lived in the Palais des Tuileries, Paris residence of the deposed Bourbon monarchs. This palace, which once connected the two westward arms of the Louvre, was the scene of many dramatic events in French history. The revolutionary Committee of Public Safety had assembled for a time in the apartments of Marie-Antoinette, which became Josephine's. On moving in, Napoleon found the red republican cap, symbol of liberty, painted on all the walls. He ordered the architect Lecomte: "Get rid of all these things. I don't like to see such rubbish." Busts of Alexander and Frederick the Great were placed in the gallery of the Tuileries along with ones of Brutus and Demosthenes.

Little protest greeted the creation of the Empire in 1804. When Napoleon placed the crown on his head with his own hands in Notre-Dame, with the Pope looking on, he demonstrated to the world that he was more powerful than Charlemagne, who had journeyed to Rome to be crowned. New medals were struck, showing Napoleon majestic in countenance, crowned with laurel. His image, as a reborn Caesar, William the Conqueror and Charlemagne rolled into one but greater than all, required artists who could bring great conviction to their efforts. They took refuge in

Augustan idealization in order to make their representations appear timeless, and out of necessity—for the new Emperor, though compellingly handsome, hated to pose.

For several years after he became Emperor, Napoleon was content to sleep at the Tuileries in a bed formerly used by Louis XVI. Indeed, Bourbon customs were minutely scrutinized for court protocol, and Napoleon was ever fascinated by Louis XIV. But he was increasingly moved to put a personal seal on his exalted circumstances. By 1811, requisitions from the much depleted stock of former royal furnishings were out of the question. The official who offered a Louis XVI cabinet for Napoleon's use got the reply: "His Majesty wishes to create the new, not buy the old." It was a question of appropriate settings for the Tuileries and country palaces such as Fontainebleau, Saint-Cloud and Compiègne as well as Josephine's Malmaison, continuously being remodeled, and the various houses of a numerous and sometimes raucously exigent family.

In his creation of the new, Napoleon soon surrounded himself with streamlined, harmoniously placed furnishings in the prevailing neoclassical taste, grown more generic, of his decorators. The Bourbon Restoration and the 1870 fire that destroyed the Tuileries have since wiped out any comprehensive picture of its effect. However, two objects of gilt bronze that originated in the Tuileries, a faceplate for a door lock bearing Napoleon's capital N and a wall sconce with a bearded mask between leafy branches (figs. 14, 15), are eloquent reminders of his designers' invention acting in concert with his judgement.

"Simplify. This is for the Emperor." Napoleon dashed these words across a sketch for a candelabrum submitted by his architect Percier. The imperial household budget in 1807 provoked his comment to General Duroc: "We must have very solid things, made to last a hundred years." This was an oddly modest figure, given the air of permanence which Napoleonic artists were able to impart to objects. His requirements of simplicity and solidity remain salient characteristics of the Empire style, that hard, four-square, updated classical amalgam whose resplendent authority long outlived the master it served.

It was a sign of Napoleon's astuteness that he mobilized the energies of an enormous class of artisans. He did not call them into being. They existed, well trained and hungry for employment after the lean days of the Revolution. The metalworkers of Paris and the Lyons silk weavers formed large populations, potentially troublesome when out of work. As Napoleon remarked to Chaptal, his first Minister of the Interior: "I am afraid of these insurrections based on the lack of bread. I would be less afraid of a battle of 200,000 men." War and the blockade imposed by the enemies of France, making it impossible for artisans to export their wares, caused a steady threat to their livelihood. The Emperor responded by floating large loans to artist-entrepreneurs such as the furniture-maker Jacob-Desmalter and the bronze founder Thomire, both of whom employed large work forces. As collateral, they guaranteed to turn over a part of their output

worth more than the amounts he advanced.

Artists were happiest when they received direct commissions. To protect the silk workers, it was decreed that costumes worn at court had to be made of French stuffs—ladies were also supposed to forego their imported cashmere shawls, but Josephine and Napoleon's sisters defied this order. Imperial walls were lined with thousands of yards of Lyons silks. Still more hangings, often embellished with gold and silver, were ordered for the decoration of festival rites.

Portraits of the ruler and his family, richly robed, were sent to distant towns and high dignitaries. Their very frames influenced style from St. Petersburg to Philadelphia. Medals were widely distributed on state occasions, further commemorated by teams of engravers. Sèvres porcelains made excellent gifts, as for example the breakfast service presented to the imperial stepson, Eugène de Beauharnais, on New Year's Day, 1814 (fig. 34). All sustained the reputation of France as the center of luxury and taste. Napoleon's example encouraged others to build and spend on a lavish scale. Lesser thrones were created for his brothers and sisters, which meant that their principalities, too, would turn to Paris for the latest in Empire fashion.

After Napoleon's first abdication in 1814 and again after his final defeat at Waterloo in 1815, foreign rulers who descended on Paris went home impressed by French manufactures, determined to refurbish their palaces and rebuild their capitals. A local *maecenas* such as Count Nicholas Demidoff, if he wanted the best in silver, bought it in Paris (figs. 31, 32). He even sent a huge urn of malachite, mined from his family's lands in the Urals, to Paris to receive gilt bronze mounts in Thomire's foundry (fig. 38).

The painters and sculptors, designers and decorators who served Napoleon were not robots but men of intellect, taste and resiliency with sound training acquired under the old system of the French Royal Academy, a system basically reinstated under Napoleon. With few exceptions, those who had long careers survived by talent or hard work all the tumultuous political turnovers that marked the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The Empire was only one phase and one that lasted just over ten years—astonishing in view of how much was accomplished. In turn, the levels reached by Napoleon's artists and manufactories made them the natural suppliers of Louis XVIII when the Bourbon monarchy was reinstated in 1815. Jacques-Louis David was an outstanding case of an artist who chose exile rather than face the new regime.

Under Napoleon, artists typically followed the prevailing pattern of centralized authority by grouping themselves around leaders, almost as departments. Each major category had its presiding generals. In painting, there were David for masculine heroics, Pierre-Paul Prudhon for softer, more feminine decorations, and a host of gifted portraitists, notably François Gérard and the miniaturist Jean-Baptiste Isabey. It was to the great painters that Napoleon and his two empresses turned for the designs of special decorative needs.

Sculpture was dominated from Italy by a genius much respected by Napoleon, Antonio Canova. But Jean-Antoine Houdon still lived to make a most moving portrait of the Emperor, and busts by the Lyonnais Joseph Chinard are without peer in their peculiarly stylized immediacy.

Architecture and design in the broadest sense were dominated by the celebrated Percier and Fontaine, who together virtually invented modern interior decoration. They met as students at the French Royal Academy in Rome, where their shared enthusiasm for antiquity won them the nickname "the Etruscans." Their earliest success in Paris was with stage sets for the Opera during the Directory, and it was no doubt the pleasing theatricality of their style, coupled with their fluent classicism, that gained the attention of the discerning Josephine. A Percier scrapbook is in this exhibition (fig. 2), open to a page with sketches of chairs and candelabra for Josephine's bedroom at Saint-Cloud. But it contains many other ideas, including serene concepts for unbuilt palaces. Among the sketches, one encounters two attitudes that mark the period: a large, redoubtable public style, perforce influenced by ideas of military grandeur, and a more playfully linear, feline domestic manner.

The decorative arts had their leaders, too. In cabinet-making, Jacob-Desmaltre orchestrated the activities of a very large shop, but the harmony and order of all parts in any of his firm's products attest to great integrity of design and execution. For bronze mounts, Jacob-Desmaltre frequently turned to his fellow artist-entrepreneur Thomire, who employed seven to eight hundred men at moments of peak activity. Biennais and Odier for silver, Boutet for luxury firearms as well as regulation military gear, Breguet for clocks and Leroy for *haute couture* were similarly omnipotent in their fields, each depending on the energies of an army of skilled workers.

Official commissions came nominally from the Ministry of the Interior. It remains, however, to mention an infinitely more important cultural czar. Dominique Vivant Denon is one of the inescapable heroes of the period. Born of the artistocracy in 1747, he was a diplomat turned collector and engraver. He met Josephine during the Directory. Through her he was introduced to General Bonaparte and accompanied the Egyptian expedition as draughtsman. Under the Consulate, Vivant Denon at fifty-one became director of the Medallion Mint—that is why "Vivant D." appears alongside the signatures on Napoleonic medals. He was next made General Director of the Musée Napoléon, now the Louvre Museum, at that time the most extraordinary treasure-house the world has ever known. It overflowed with masterpieces, from the *Apollo Belvedere* to the *Sistine Madonna*, captured from enemy cities or coaxed from tributaries. Vivant Denon's selection was of the highest order, and his despair was great when he had to restore all the loot to its rightful owners, by terms of the Congress of Vienna.

By 1811, additional duties of Vivant Denon were cited in the *Almanach Impérial*: He was "head of the museums of French monuments and of the French school at Versailles, the galleries of government

palaces, the studios of chalcography, gem-engraving and mosaics," and charged with the "buying and transport of works of art, the supervision of modern works ordered by the government and of archaeological digs at Rome." Vivant Denon is remembered mainly as director of the Musée Napoléon, but he is perhaps more lastingly important as an arbiter of taste and for his encouragement of artists. Unfailingly patient with primary and secondary talents, immature and senile ones, even hopelessly bad ones, he was as gently helpful in his empire as Napoleon could be brutally daunting in his. We find him suggesting to an average sculptor, Romagnesi, that he convert his relief *Minerva Protecting the King of Rome* (fig. 12) into a group in the round: A group would be more impressive, "easily placed in the apartments of the Imperial Palaces, and the subject [the son born to the Empress Marie-Louise in 1811], which is perfectly suited to sculpture, could only be agreeable to their Majesties."

Vivant Denon retired from public life after the Bourbon Restoration but went on collecting until his death in 1825. At his estate sale the following year, the modern medals alone numbered three thousand, divided into sixteen lots. It is a pity that his collection did not stay together, to illustrate Empire taste at its most sophisticated. However, the Metropolitan benefited a century later by acquiring his silver-inlaid mahogany cabinet for ancient medals (fig. 5), an object apostrophizing Empire aspirations, severe and elegant at the same time.

It was once a matter of settled opinion that the Empire style is exclusively, aggressively masculine and unremittingly formal, the byproduct of a war machine. In fact, it has two strains, one masculine and the other feminine.

Without doubt, the regime's official moments could be ponderous, dampened by the Emperor's melancholy preoccupations. In trying situations, women with wit were definitely useful. Madame de Rémusat records that in 1806, while Napoleon was off fighting in Poland, Josephine and her retinue were sent to keep up flagging spirits in Paris. They got their orders from Talleyrand: "Ladies, this is no laughing matter; the Emperor *insists* that you amuse yourselves."

A lighter, delicate side of the style is reflected in many objects of the period—in the ubiquitous swans associated with Josephine and her children, in a Ravrio clock (fig. 16) whose case encloses a confection of a music room, or in a perfectly punctuated lace coverlet (fig. 24) made for the bed of an unknown enchantress.

The masculine side can perhaps best be understood as an expression of the period's utter confidence, short-lived but complete. Admirers of the style will point out its streamlined qualities, the commanding air of its broad planes, the strength of its sinuous gilt ornaments, the firm gradations of low relief obtained by classic draughtsmen, founders and carvers. They never tire of encountering yet another pair of the familiar, alert Victory candelabra, and will smile on recognizing the eagle, swarming bees, five-pointed stars and the stately flower, the crown imperial, that are Napoleon's emblems. They come to know the vibrant

Empire colors that have a symbolism all their own. There is the fiery poppy shade: It was worn because Bonaparte's men brought back the seeds of Egyptian field-poppies in their boots, muddied by the Nile. There is the forest green of Napoleon's liveries. And there is the splendid amaranth, the deep cockscomb red loved by the Bonapartes because it was the color of Immortality.

James David Draper
Associate Curator
European Sculpture and Decorative Arts

An Introduction to Napoleonic Silver

In 1804 Henry Auguste, formerly *orfèvre du roi* to Louis XVI, made a tureen for presentation to the new Emperor of the French. It is an indication of the continuity of patronage and style between monarchy and Empire that he repeated a model he had first produced in 1790. Although the guild system was abolished in 1791, the goldsmiths' guild alone was reinstated the same year and survived until its organization under new regulations in 1797. Many silversmiths disappear from record altogether in these years. Of those known to have bridged the two regimes, Auguste is the one whose work from 1785, when he became a master, to 1790 most clearly anticipated the style that he himself helped bring to maturity after the Revolution.

The possession of silver is certainly one sign of confidence and stability, and with the gradual return of both during the Directory the silversmiths, assisted by an active governmental policy, quickly found customers. The first *Exposition publique des produits de l'Industrie française* was held in 1797; although no silversmiths participated as exhibitors, their work was represented by the four prizes for the Olympic games. In the third exhibition, in 1802, silversmiths exhibited for the first time, and Auguste and Jean-Baptiste-Claude Odier shared the gold medal. To this public encouragement was added Napoleon's own patronage. No less than his royal predecessors did he require the silver table services, jewels and gold snuff-boxes appropriate to court life. From Auguste he commissioned a tiara as a gift to Pius VII on the occasion of the coronation; from the jeweler-goldsmiths Marguerite and Nitot he ordered dozens of gold boxes over the years—no fewer than one hundred from Marguerite in 1806 alone. But it was Martin-Guillaume Biennais (1764-1843) whose work is most closely identified with Napoleon's own taste. Notwithstanding the evidence of the silver that bears his mark, Biennais was not a silversmith by training. Born in the provinces, he set up shop in Paris at the time of the Revolution, inscribing himself about 1798 as a *marchand ébéniste*. His specialty then was small cabinetwork—gaming boards and tables, writing desks and *nécessaires*. These last, varying in size from small elegant cases cleverly fitted with coffee or dressing-table utensils to complete dining equipment requiring a small trunk (fig. 33), were to make and sustain his reputation. Napoleon and Josephine were among his earliest customers, and their patronage quickly extended to other members of the Bonaparte family: According to Madame Junot, a large bill was presented in 1800 for a *nécessaire* lavishly outfitted with razors, shaving brushes, combs and other instruments exclusive to shaving. The purchaser of this luxury was Napoleon's brother Jerome, a sybaritic—and beardless—fifteen years old.

In the 1800 exhibition Biennais showed only cabinetwork; thereafter he entered only silver and by 1805 had been appointed silversmith to the imperial couple. Basically an entrepreneur employing, it is said, over six hundred workmen, Biennais supplied Napoleon not only with table services but with coronation regalia, swords and sword mounts, shoe buckles, snuffboxes,

tables, cabinets and, of course, *nécessaires*. In view of his background and this heterogeneous activity, the consistent refinement and elegance of his work in silver is remarkable. Like Percier and Fontaine, on whom he depended for many of his designs, Biennais was part of a superbly organized machine devoted to producing the arts. But he was not simply a purveyor of goods: He was able to transform the most elaborately academic of Percier's schemes into objects of exceptional grace and delicacy of detail.

A more heroic manner characterizes the work of Jean-Baptiste-Claude Odier (1763-1850). A contemporary of Auguste who received his mastership in the same year (1785), he was also his inheritor, acquiring his designs after Auguste's retirement in 1806. In them, and in Auguste's completed work, are found the solid streamlined forms, the stylized overscaled decorative motifs, and the incorporation of sculptural elements that were eventually to dominate Odier's own work. It is this use of sculpture that marks the final separation of Empire from neoclassical silver. By 1789 Auguste and his colleagues had begun to turn from the worked to the plain surface, shifting the focus of the silversmith's art from the chasing and engraving that until then had regularly defined the form of a piece, to cast figural handles, plaques and pedestals that ultimately reduced that form to an abstraction. The individual objects in Odier's Demidoff service (cat. nos. 156, 159) are not so much dishes and cruet frames as they are fully realized small sculptures. The technical brilliance of these figures was due, again, to the extraordinarily coordinated system that integrated the skills of the *fondeurs-ciseleurs* with those of the silversmiths, resulting on occasion in such collaborations as that of Thomire and Odier on a mirror frame for Marie-Louise and a cradle for the King of Rome.

This extensive use of separate parts invited new techniques of construction. It appears to have been Odier who developed a method in which each element was attached by means of bolts inserted through holes in the body of a piece and fixed with nuts. In addition to permitting the efficient assembly of large orders, this also allowed greater flexibility of design, as additional casts of figures and plaques could easily be applied to different models in varying combinations.

If the work of Biennais and Odier is a reflection of official taste, that of a few of the more than nine hundred silversmiths working in Paris during the Empire exhibits more personal characteristics of that style. In such pieces as Marc Jacquart's conserve dish (fig. 28), a coffeepot by J.-B. Potot (cat. no. 164) and, above all, in the splendid ewer and basin of P.-J.-B. Huguet (on the cover) are found that synthesis of current fashion and individual flair that produced some of the most elegant examples of silver in the Napoleonic period.

Clare Le Corbeiller
Associate Curator
European Sculpture and Decorative Arts

At the entrance to the galleries

1. **Tapestry portrait: Napoleon in his coronation robes.** Wool, silk and metal thread in contemporary gilt pine frame. H. 81½ in.
Gobelins, atelier of Pierre-François Cozette (1714-1801)
Weavers: Harland, Abel-Nicholas, Sollier, Drury fils
Begun in 1808, completed in 1811
François Gérard's painted portrait of the Emperor, standing amid his regalia in the throneroom of the Tuileries, inspired numerous commissioned copies and this grandly framed tapestry. It was presented, as the surmounting inscription states, by Napoleon to his Arch-Chancellor, Cambacérès.
Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1943
43.99
2. **Pair of candelabra.** Gilt bronze winged female figures supporting wreaths with six branches. H. 50¼ in.
Stamped on back of each base: *THOMIRE à PARIS*
Manufactory of Pierre-Philippe Thomire (1751-1843)
Paris, about 1810-1815
Winged Victories, direct symbols of military triumph, were a staple of Napoleonic decoration. The exhibited page of the Percier scrapbook (fig. 2; cat. no. 70) shows that designer's plans for similar candelabra in Josephine's bedroom at Saint-Cloud in about 1801-1804.
Bequest of James Alexander Scrymser, 1926
26.256.2, 3

Revolution to Restoration

Many thousands of surviving images record or reflect the dramatic events that bracket Bonaparte's career, those that led him to power as well as to ruin. The few shown here may help to frame the period in our memory and reinforce it in our imagination.

3. **Portrait of Louis XVI.** Silk panel, compound weave with black and white warps and wefts in various bindings, woven on a Jacquard loom. 6½ in. square
Signed: *Maisiat père et fils. Lyon*
Lyons, early 19th century
Napoleon was an unknown captain of artillery when Louis XVI was beheaded in 1793. This delicate grisaille portrait medallion, framed in Greek key, is actually a work of the Bourbon Restoration, when images of the martyred king abounded with official encouragement.
Gift of Mrs. Elisa Parada de Migel, 1959
59.25.5
4. **Three drawings representing Couthon, President of the National Convention, dandling a dog; the arm of an executioner raising the dripping head of Robespierre; profiles of Gobel, Constitutional Bishop of Paris, and Chaumette, Procurator of the Commune.** Black chalk (a, c), pencil (b). Each 6⅞ x 4⅜ in.
Dominique Vivant Denon (1747-1825)
French, 1794 or after
All four of these revolutionary leaders were themselves struck down by the Terror, Chaumette and Gobel in April of 1794, Couthon and Robespierre in July. It is unclear when Vivant Denon drew them but will be of interest that he owned a death mask of Robespierre. Generally speaking, the death of Robespierre marked the end of the Terror and created a power vacuum which the Directory barely filled.
Rogers Fund, 1962
62.119.8a-c
5. **Short sword of a pupil of the Ecole de Mars.** Brass and steel, wooden sheath covered in red cloth. L. 28¼ in.
French, 1794
This sword illustrates to perfection the intensity with which the Revolution adapted the austere forms of republican Rome. It was designed in imitation of an ancient Roman gladius by the great painter Jacques-Louis David for the Ecole de Mars, a military academy that was in existence for one year only.
Lent by Russell Barnett Aitken
6. **Silver plate from an imperial traveling service.** Diam. 10½ in.
Marks of Martin-Guillaume Biennais (working about 1796-1819) and Marie-Joseph-Gabriel Genu (active 1788-after 1806)
French, 1804-1814
The front shows the imperial arms and a border of palmettes. The back bears an imperial inventory number and an engraved German inscription relating that the plate was taken by one Major von Keller from Napoleon's coach, abandoned at Jemmapes after the Battle of "Belle Alliance," the name given by Germans to Waterloo.
Lent anonymously
7. **Throne of Louis XVIII and elevation of rood screen of Reims Cathedral.** Drawing, pen and ink and watercolor. 29½ x 22 in.
Charles Percier (1764-1838) and Pierre-François-Léonard Fontaine (1762-1853)
French, about 1815
This is one of a group of drawings for a coronation that never took place, owing to Napoleon's return from Elba and the reinstated King's physical disability, among other factors in the confused years 1814-15. The designers, who had planned the decorations for Napoleon's coronation and second wedding (cat. no. 183), succeeded almost completely in suppressing Empire vocabulary, preferring a generic "Palladian gothic," as it has been called, that would underline the legitimacy of the Bourbon rule, rooted in centuries of history.
Gift of Lincoln Kirstein, 1956
56.559(5)

A military panoply

The fortunes of Bonaparte and of France as the leading European power were founded on military conquest. French arms of the Empire period have a streamlined appearance derived from the study of ancient models coupled with an awareness of the advantages in simple design as a matter of practicality. In turn, the zest for glory in battle as the fashion of the day greatly influenced the simplification and virility of domestic styles.

8. **Sword of a foot soldier (*chasseur à pied*) of the Imperial Guard.** Gilt and blued steel, brass, in brass and leather scabbard. L. 34¾ in.
(Blade) manufactory of Coulaux Frères
Klingenthal (lower Rhine), 1804-1814
Lent by Irving Moskowitz
9. **Naval officer's sword.** Gilt and blued steel, leather scabbard mounted in gilt bronze with nautical designs including cattails. L. 33 in.
French, 1804-1814
Lent by Irving Moskowitz
10. **Chapka of the Polish lancers** (first regiment of the Imperial Guard). Red felt, black leather, steel, gilt metal, white plume. H. 11 in.
French, 1804-1814
Lent by Irving Moskowitz
11. **Shako**, probably for an aide-de-camp of a hussar general. Green felt and braid, silver embroidery, black leather, brass, green and orange plume. H. 10 in.
French, 1804-1814
Lent by Irving Moskowitz
12. **Helmet of a dragoon colonel general.** Gilt bronze, silver, fur, horsehair, white plume. H. 16 in.
French, 1804-1814
Lent by Irving Moskowitz
13. **Cross-belts of a sapper of the Imperial Guard.** White leather straps, one suspending an eagle-headed saw-sword and a bayonet, the other suspending an ax and black leather cartridge box and ax cover, mounted with brass grenades, crossed axes and a Medusa head. L. of ax 38 in.
French, 1804-1814
Lent by Irving Moskowitz
14. **Cartridge box and belt.** Black leather, gilt bronze trim including the imperial eagle. W. of box 6¼ in.
French, about 1813
Lent by Irving Moskowitz

Objects in the Egyptian taste

The Egyptian campaign of 1798-99, led by the twenty-eight-year-old General Bonaparte, was a daring attempt to check British influence in the Mediterranean. Initial military successes in Egypt made ancient pharaonic motifs fashionable with French patriots, while aesthetes and scholars were fascinated by the arrival of archaeological relics including the Rosetta Stone. The rectilinear severities of the *retour d'Egypte* style contributed powerfully to the simplification of European neoclassicism in general.

15. **Battle of the Pyramids.** Drawing, pen and ink, brown wash, heightened with white, squared in pencil. 15¾ x 29½ in.
François-André Vincent (1746-1816)
French, about 1810
The battle ended in a decisive rout of sixty thousand Mamelukes by troops under the command of Generals Bonaparte and Desaix on July 21, 1798. This large drawing was preparatory to a picture exhibited in the Salon of 1810, now in the Château de Grosbois. The diagonal composition is somewhat baroque in character, but the wiry line used for individual figures is quintessentially Empire.
Rogers Fund, 1951
51.122
16. **Cotton piece: *Les Monuments de l'Egypte*.** Copperplate print in maroon on white, with alternating scenes of a fortress, pyramid, mastaba and ruins with obelisks. L. 98½ in.
Jouy, Oberkampf manufactory, early 19th century
The imagery, tumultuously and romantically expressed, is a popular distillation of archaeological interest, recorded for example in the monumental volumes the *Description de l'Egypte*, commissioned by Napoleon in 1809 from the French Institute at Cairo.
Source unknown (reclaimed from upholstery, newly joined and accessioned in 1965)
X.404
17. **Daybed.** Mahogany, mahogany veneered on beechwood, bronze and gilt bronze. L. 76¾ in.
Stamped: JACOB FRERES/R. MESLEE
Firm of François-Honoré-Georges Jacob-Desmaltre (1770-1841) and Georges II Jacob (1768-1803) in the rue Meslay
Paris, about 1800
Circumstances besides the handsome sphinxes forming the arms favor a dating soon after the Egyptian campaign. The form of stamp on the stretcher was employed by the Jacob firm only in the years 1795-1803. The daybed must have supported several Bonapartes, for it bears the inventory mark of the Château de Neuilly, used by two of Napoleon's sisters, Caroline Murat from her marriage in 1800 and Pauline Borghese from 1809, as well as marks of the Château de Trianon, the Palais des Tuileries, and the Château de Villeneuve l'Etang (a residence of Pauline Borghese and later of the Duchesse d'Angoulême and of Napoleon III).
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman, 1971
1971.206.213

- 18. Table.** Poplar marbled to resemble Aswan granite, gilt hieroglyphs, black marble top. H. 35½ in.

Probably Italian, late 18th-early 19th century

The hieroglyphs, in sunk relief, are in careful imitation of real ones, but the craftsman did not know their meanings: Some are reversed, others incomplete. Egyptian motifs had been revived in Italy long before Napoleon: A museum of Egyptian antiquities, containing Hadrian's Egyptian spoils discovered at Tivoli, was founded on the Capitoline in 1748.

Gift of Robert Lehman, 1941
41.188

- 19. Medals cabinet** of pylon shape. Mahogany with applied and inlaid silver mounts. H. 35½ in.

Design by Charles Percier (1764-1838) after Dominique Vivant Denon (1747-1825). Executed about 1805, probably by François-Honoré-Georges Jacob-Desmalter (1770-1841); silver mounts signed by Martin-Guillaume Biennais (working about 1796-1819)

Despite reluctance, based on his age, to take him along on the Egyptian campaign, Vivant Denon survived every hardship in order to draw the scenes and motifs that would illustrate his *Voyage dans la basse et la haute Egypte* (1802). He became a leading Empire tastemaker, and the exactness of his personal taste is exemplified by this superb object. The upper section is based upon the pylon at Ghos, in Upper Egypt (included in his book, see cat. no. 20). The twenty-two graduated drawers are embellished each with a scaraboid bee in silver relief, each right wing being hinged to provide a pull. (See detail, fig. 5.)

Bequest of Collis P. Huntington, 1926
26.168.77

- 20. The pylon at Ghos.** Plate 80 of Vivant Denon's *Voyage dans la basse et la haute Egypte* (Paris, 1802)

Vivant Denon drew the pylon in section and as it actually was, half covered with sand. See cat. no. 19.

Rogers Fund, 1906
Library collection, no. 10798

Napoleon: Images and insignia

"He looked like an antique medallion." So wrote the Comtesse de Rémusat. The painter David in turn said of the Emperor's head: "It is pure, it is great, it is beautiful as antiquity." To a public immersed in the classics, Napoleon's Roman handsomeness enhanced his reputation for genius and action. He is supposed to have told General Caulaincourt during the retreat from Moscow: "No idols for me, not even statues out of doors. . . . It was to my great displeasure and without my consultation that Denon had my statue made for the Vendôme column." Even so, he knew that the column in the Place Vendôme would be banded with reliefs depicting his triumphs. He could not prevent, had he wanted to, an idolatrous populace from placing his portrait wherever it could. His classically regular profile stared from all coins, while capital N's greeted visitors to his residences at every turn.

- 21. The three Consuls.** Bronze medal. Diam. 2 in.

Romain-Vincent Jeuffroy (1749-1826)
French, dated 1802

The Directory fell with the *coup d'état* of the 18 Brumaire (November 9, 1799), when the Consulate was established with Bonaparte, Sieyès and Roger-Ducos as consuls. After the Peace of Amiens in 1802 (celebrated on the reverse of this medal), Napoleon was elected First Consul for Life, with Cambacérès and Lebrun as second and third consuls.

Rogers Fund, 1977
1977.254.1

- 22. Napoleon as First Consul on horseback.** Calligraphic drawing, pen and ink, gray wash. 14⅞ x 11¼ in.

Signed: *Auvrest*
Paris, early 19th century

Elisha Whittelsey Collection, Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1963
63.608.12

- 23. Napoleon as Emperor on horseback.** Calligraphic drawing, pen and ink, gray wash. 15¼ x 12¾ in.

Signed: *Auvrest*
Paris, early 19th century

The calligrapher also gives his address, no. 10 rue de Sèvres. He shows the Emperor in later years, when he had put on quite a lot of weight.

Gift of Georgiana W. Sargent, 1924, in memory of John Osborne Sargent
24.63.610

- 24. Three twenty-franc pieces.** Gold. Diam. 1⅞ in.

French, coinage of the Consulate and Empire for the years 1803-04 and 1808

Gift of C. Ruxton Love, Jr., 1967
67.265.1,2,3

- 25. Napoleon, King of Italy**, wearing the iron crown of Monza. Bronze medal. Diam. $1\frac{1}{16}$ in.
Luigi Manfredini (1771-1840)
Milan, dated 1805
In ceremonies that rivaled the coronation in Notre-Dame the previous winter, Napoleon was crowned King of Italy in Milan Cathedral in 1805.
Rogers Fund, 1977
1977.254.2
- 26. Bust of Napoleon**. Carrara marble. H. $23\frac{1}{2}$ in.
Signed on the two back supports: *B.* and *F.*, for Bartolomeo Franzoni
Italian (Carrara), after an original by Antoine-Denis Chaudet (1763-1810), about 1807-1810
Napoleon's sister Elisa, Princess of Piombino and Lucca, later Grand Duchess of Tuscany, controlled the production of the marble quarries at Carrara and found the demand for Bonaparte portraiture in stone a very lucrative business. This is one of several copies after Chaudet's bust (a bronze is in the Louvre) by Carrara practitioners.
Lent by Maximilian E. Sands
- 27. Bust of Napoleon**. Carrara marble. H. 12 in.
Italian (probably Carrara), early 19th century
A reduction of the Chaudet composition (cat. no. 26), showing its adaptability on any scale.
Gift of John Davis Hatch, Jr., 1955
55.199
- 28. "To the Immortal Glory of Napoleon I."** Etching with stipple. $20 \times 13\frac{3}{8}$ in.
J.-F. Cazenave, after Thomas-Charles Naudet (1773-1810)
Paris, about 1805
Gift of Georgiana W. Sargent, 1924, in memory of John Osborne Sargent
24.63.637
- 29. Celebration of the Legion of Honor**. Etching with stipple, hand colored. $17\frac{3}{8} \times 11\frac{1}{4}$ in.
Louis-François Charon (1783-1831)
French, 1806-1808
Napoleon as First Consul envisioned the Legion of Honor as a recognition of "military bravery and civil merit." The order became an important tool for uniting the interests of various parties and talents under those of the Empire. In this print, Napoleon's portrait is centered on the star of the Legion. On the points of the star are his brothers Joseph as King of Naples and Louis as King of Holland, his brother-in-law Joachim Murat as Grand Duke of Cleves and Berg, his stepson Eugène de Beauharnais as Viceroy of Italy and Marshal Berthier, military chief of staff and Prince of Neuchâtel. The artist Charon persisted as a fervent Bonapartist after the Restoration, when his designs were often censored.
Gift of Georgiana W. Sargent, 1924, in memory of John Osborne Sargent
24.63.575
- 30. Medal of the Legion of Honor**. Enameled gold five-pointed star centered with the Emperor's head in right profile, wreath of laurel and oak. Surmounted by a gold crown, suspended from a red silk ribbon. H. with ribbon $4\frac{3}{4}$ in.
French, 1811-1814
The Legion of Honor did not evolve from traditional chivalry and the creation of knights but from a revived ancient custom of decorating Roman warriors known as the *honorati*. Jacques-Louis David appears to have designed the original model, but its pattern changed slightly over the years in the hands of various suppliers.
Lent by Russell Barnett Aitken
- 31. Napoleon as lawgiver**. Engraving with stipple. $11\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{3}{8}$ in.
J.-L. Benoist, after Innocent-Louis Goubaud (about 1780-1847)
French, about 1808
Gift of Georgiana W. Sargent, 1924, in memory of John Osborne Sargent
24.63.604
- 32. Painted miniature of Napoleon**. Watercolor on ivory. H. $2\frac{3}{16}$ in.
Signed and dated: *Isabey. 1810*
Jean-Baptiste Isabey (1767-1855)
Paris, 1810
Gift of Junius S. and Henry S. Morgan, 1947
47.33.3
- 33. Oval snuffbox**. Matte and polished gold, with enameled borders and a portrait miniature of Napoleon signed by Jean-Baptiste Isabey (1767-1855). L. $3\frac{3}{8}$ in.
Maker's mark of Augustin-André Héguin (working 1785-about 1806)
Paris mark of 1794-after 1797
Paris, about 1805
The Calvin Bullock Collection
- 34. Oval snuffbox**. Gold, deep blue enamel, cover with painted miniature of Napoleon. L. $2\frac{7}{8}$ in.
Maker's mark of Victoire Boisot, widow of Joseph-Etienne Blerzy (recorded 1809-1810)
Paris marks of 1791-after 1797 and 1809-1819
Paris, about 1810
Bequest of Mrs. Eleanor Strong, 1903
03.26.5
- 35. Laureate head of Napoleon in left profile**. Sardonyx cameo mounted in gold. H. $1\frac{1}{8}$ in.
Signed: *PESTRINI*, for Pietro Pestrini
Italian, early 19th century
The Milton Weil Collection, Gift of Mrs. Ethel Weil Worgelt, 1940
40.20.46

36. Laureate head of Napoleon in left profile. Lead medallion, gilt metal frame. Diam. 3¼ in.

Bertrand Andrieu (1761-1822)
Paris, about 1805

This and the companion Josephine (cat. no. 55) bear the labels from Andrieu's shop in the rue Saint-Louis. The softness of the lead permitted extreme precision of details.

Lent by Russell Barnett Aitken

37. Napoleon, Marie-Louise and Francis II in left profile. Brass medallion. Diam. 3¼ in.

French, 1810

The medallion is a souvenir of the marriage of Napoleon to Marie-Louise, the daughter of Francis II of Austria.

Bequest of Mary Martin, 1938
38.145.226

38. Portrait of Napoleon in cut velvet, *chiné*. H. 8¾ in.

Manufactory of Gaspard Grégoire (1751-1846)
Aix-en-Provence, early 19th century

The portrait was painted on the pile of warps and then woven as cut velvet. The likeness stems from the same Gérard portrait as cat. no. 1, and is precisely executed in golden and crimson colors on a (faded) purplish gray ground.

Rogers Fund, 1938
38.182.9

39. Faceplate for a door lock. Gilt bronze, capital N between palmettes on the handle, set in acanthus ornament; eagle resting on a spray of laurel crossed with a plume and a scrolling ribbon. W. 8¾ in.

French, 1804-1814

This powerfully composed object is said to have ornamented the door of Napoleon's office in the Palais des Tuileries.

Lent by Russell Barnett Aitken

40. Galloon. N's repeated in green, white and red. Wool, uncut velvet on linen. L. 11 in.

French, 1804-1814

This trimming presumably belonged to the Emperor's personal liveries, which were forest green.

Rogers Fund, 1908
08.103.466

41. The imperial coat of arms. Brass plaque with black inlay. H. 12½ in.

Inscribed: *HAMEL JNE FECIT*

French, 1804-1814

This plaque probably ornamented the door of an imperial coach.

Lent by Irving Moskowitz

Other rulers and dignitaries

Artists sought in the features of contemporary rulers and Napoleonic satellites the noble simplicity that they found in the Emperor's features. Cameo-carvers and medallists strove to make his princely relatives resemble him as closely as possible. Portraits of Czar Alexander of Russia, Napoleon's fascinated adversary, have an exalted, benevolent air appropriate to the man who saw himself as the peacemaker of Europe.

42. Bust of Jerome Bonaparte. Carrara marble. 21½ in.

After a model by François-Joseph Bosio (1769-1845)
Italian (Carrara), 1810-1812

Jerome, Napoleon's brother who was King of Westphalia from 1807 to 1813, ordered no fewer than fifty-four busts of this model from the bank controlled by their sister Elisa, Grand Duchess of Tuscany. This one belonged to a mistress of his, Diana van Pappenheim, at Cologne.

Bequest of Julie Braun-Vogelstein, in memory of
Ludwig Vogelstein, 1971
1971.113

43. Bust of Alexander I of Russia. Bronze. H. 8½ in.

Inscribed on the back: *THOMIRE A PARIS*
Manufactory of Pierre-Philippe Thomire (1751-1843)
French, about 1815

Lent by the Audrey B. Love Foundation

44. Alexander I of Russia. Biscuit porcelain relief enclosed in glass medallion with cut edges, gilt bronze ring and mount. Diam. 3¾ in.

After Bertrand Andrieu (1761-1822)
Manufactory of Desprez, Paris, after 1814

The biscuit has been copied from an Andrieu medal of 1814, when the Czar visited Paris after the first abdication.

Bequest of Mary Martin, 1938
38.145.157

45. Alexander I of Russia. Onyx cameo. H. 1½ in.

Probably Italian, early 19th century

The laureate profile appears to be loosely adapted from the same Andrieu model as cat. no. 44.

The Milton Weil Collection, Gift of Mrs. Ethel Weil
Worgelt, 1940
40.20.25

46. Head of Cardinal Fesch. Pencil drawing. 6⅞ x 5⅛ in.

Jacques-Louis David (1748-1825)
French, 1804-1805

Joseph Fesch was the stepbrother of Napoleon's mother (*Madame Mère*). He was a peacemaker in the family and a discriminating art collector. In 1803 he was made cardinal and, in 1804, French ambassador to Rome; he persuaded Pius VII to go to Paris and attend the coronation in Notre-Dame. This drawing was used for his portrait in David's famous painting of the coronation, where the cardinal appears just below Pope Pius.

Lent by Mrs. Walter C. Baker

- 47. Joseph Bonaparte, King of Naples and afterwards of Spain, shown as a general of France**
48. Cambacérès, Arch-Chancellor of France
49. Alexander I, Czar of Russia

Three drawings. Brush, gray-brown ink and wash. Each approximately $6\frac{3}{4} \times 4\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Jean-François Bosio (1764-1827)
 Milan, about 1815

These are preparatory studies for a Milanese publication on famous men (*Serie di vite e ritratti de' famosi personaggi degli ultimi tempi*), the first volume of which appeared in 1815. Bosio was the brother of the sculptor François-Joseph Bosio.

Elisha Whittelsey Collection, Elisha Whittelsey Fund,
 1949
 49.19.94, 97, 102

- 50. Eugène de Beauharnais, Viceroy of Italy.** Engraving.
 $18\frac{1}{4} \times 22\frac{7}{8}$ in.

Paolo Caronni, after Giuseppe Longhi (1766-1831)
 Milan, dated 1810

Harry G. Friedman Bequest, 1967
 67.539.268

- 51. Elisa and Felix Baciocchi.** Portrait medallions, pink wax on glass painted dark blue. Diam. $4\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Giovanni Antonio Santarelli (1758-1826)
 Florence, about 1809

The subjects are Napoleon's sister, created Grand Duchess of Tuscany in 1809, and her consort. Printed labels on the backs bear the name of the gem-carver and medalist Santarelli and the incomplete date 18—.

Bequest of Mary Martin, 1938
 38.145.39

- 52. Joseph Poniatowski.** Onyx cameo. H. $2\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Italian, early 19th century

Poniatowski, a Polish prince and marshal of France, died heroically while covering the French retreat from Leipzig in 1813.

The Milton Weil Collection, Gift of Mrs. Ethel Weil Worgelt, 1940
 40.20.22

Josephine

She was born Marie-Joseph-Rose de Tascher de la Pagerie on Martinique in 1763. Widow of the guillotined Vicomte de Beauharnais, Josephine was six years older than the rising General Bonaparte whom she married in 1796. As a fashionable Directoire figure, she had already acquired luxurious tastes. Despite all grumblings about expense, Napoleon adored her and her two children, and her expansiveness and personal elegance were the very qualities that won the hearts of Parisians. Napoleon brought himself to divorce her only after much soul-searching and in order to secure an heir. She died at her estate of Malmaison, which she had filled with exotic plants and animals, in 1814. Napoleon himself neatly summarized Josephine's attitude toward life: "She wanted to have everything!"

- 53. Josephine in her coronation robes.** Engraving by P. Audouin from Charles Percier and P.-F.-L. Fontaine, *Le Sacre de S. M. l'Empereur Napoléon*, Paris, after 1804 (mid-19th-century Chalcographie du Louvre edition)

Josephine's robes were designed by the painter Isabey and executed by the leading couturier, Leroy.

Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1930
 30.22 (35)

- 54. Snuffbox.** Matte and polished varicolored gold, with a portrait miniature of the Empress Josephine signed by Daniel Saint (1778-1847). L. $3\frac{3}{8}$ in.

Maker's mark of Léger-Alexandre-Fortuné Ricart (working from 1808)

Paris marks of 1794-after 1797 and 1798-1809
 Paris, about 1808

Engraved inside the cover is the inscription *Donné par Sa Majesté l'Impératrice Joséphine à Mr Ballouhey le 21 Octobre 1810*. Jean-Claud Ballouhey was the administrator of the *cassette*, the Empress's personal fund, allotted annually, for her charities and gifts.

The Calvin Bullock Collection

- 55. Josephine in court dress, right profile bust.** Lead medallion, gilt metal frame. Diam. $3\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Bertrand Andrieu (1761-1822)
 French, about 1805

Companion to cat. no. 36.

Lent by Russell Barnett Aitken

Court dress

By imposing standards for court attire, which had to be of French-made cloth, Napoleon greatly augmented the trade of silk manufacturers and designers. Within these standards, there were sumptuary regulations: At one point it was decreed that the border of a lady's train could not exceed four inches. The graceful lines must have altered considerably when ladies had to bundle their trains and run after the Emperor, who walked very fast in processions.

- 56. Coat and waistcoat** of a gentleman's court costume. Purple brocaded velvet heavily embroidered in gold and silver threads and sequins, edged in narrow gilt braid, embroidered buttons. L. of coat 41 in. L. of waistcoat, 22 in.
French, about 1804-1814
The evolution from *ancien régime* men's court costume is less dramatic than in women's dress, but there are important differences, notably in the high collars and slimmer, straighter lines of the coattails.
Rogers Fund, 1923
23.170.3a,b
- 57. Gown and court train.** Gown of cream satin bordered with fronds of silver sequins, belt in same material and trimming, train of light green velvet, bordered with fronds of silver sequins. L. 144 in.
French, about 1804
The costume was worn at Napoleon's court by Mrs. Peter R. Livingston, sister of the diplomat Robert Livingston. Her husband was a distant relative. She arrived in Paris with another sister whose husband was General John Armstrong. The general presented his credentials as American Minister to France, replacing Robert Livingston, in 1804.
Gift in memory of Mrs. James A. Glover, 1942, by her daughters
42.24.1, 2
- 58. Court train.** Light green velvet with border of leaf and tulip motifs in matte and polished silver tinsel, applied metallic cord on edge, lined with white satin. L. 95 in. (Shown over a gown restored from existing fabric of white starched mull embroidered with leaf motifs and border of peacock feathers and wheat in silver and green tinted silver tinsel.)
French, 1810-1811
The train was said by the donors to have been worn at the court of Napoleon by the wife of Jonathan Russell, American *chargé d'affaires* at Paris in the years 1810-1811.
Gift of Miss Geraldine Shields and Dr. Ida Russell Shields, 1948
CI 48.14.1

- 59. Court train.** Red velvet, embroidered with border of scrolling leaf ornament in matte and polished gold tinsel. L. 92½ in. (Shown over a gown of white bobbin and needlepoint lace with vertical bands of laurel, floral border. French, early 19th century. Gift of Mrs. George Nichols, 1938.38.19.27)

French, about 1810

The train, of a vivid *coquelicot* (field-poppy) color, was acquired from a descendant of the Princesse de Léon and said to have been worn by her at Napoleon's marriage to Marie-Louise in 1810. The lady in question was Armandine-Marie-Georgine de Sérent, born in 1791. In 1808 she married the Prince de Léon, Chamberlain to the Emperor and later Duc de Rohan. She died from burns suffered in a fire in 1815, at the age of twenty-four.

Rogers Fund, 1932
32.35.10

An elegant middle class

Portrait drawings by Ingres and random surviving objects of daily use tell us that ideals of the official Empire style penetrated deeply into domestic life. Designers working with inexpensive materials, from straw to pottery, had to keep in mind an increasingly discriminating public that demanded practical objects of grace and beauty to harmonize with simple, dignified surroundings.

- 60. Portrait drawing.** Mme. Guillaume Guillon Lethière with her son Lucien. Pencil. 9½ x 7¾ in.
Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780-1867)
French, signed and dated 1808
The wife and son of the director of the French Academy in Rome, training ground for so many French artists, are shown standing in front of the Villa Medici, seat of the Academy. The graceful Empire line did not automatically impart slimness.
Bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929
29.100.191
- 61. Portrait drawing.** Mme. Alexandre Lethière with her daughter Letizia. Pencil. 11¾ x 8¾ in.
Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780-1867)
French, about 1815
Guillon Lethière's daughter-in-law wears a plaid dress with ruff and long sleeves in a generic "medieval" mode known as the *style troubadour*, which greatly influenced late Empire fashion. It has been suggested that the child, Letizia, was named after Napoleon's mother.
Bequest of Grace Rainey Rogers, 1943
43.85.7
- 62. Portrait miniature.** Lady at a dressing table, on ivory. Diam. 2¾ in.
French, 1795-1800
Gift of Margaret Crane Hurlbut, 1933
33.136.12

- 63. Portrait miniature.** Gabriel V. Ludlow (1768-1825) in a rich interior, on ivory. Oval, h. $2\frac{13}{16}$ in.
Signed and dated: *Carbonara 1808*
Italian school
Bequest of Maria P. James, 1911
11.60.123
- 64. Portrait miniature.** A young man with tousled hair, on ivory. Diam. $2\frac{3}{8}$ in.
Signed and dated: *Reinhalte 1807*
Bequest of Mary Anna Palmer Draper, 1915
15.43.289
- 65. Miniature portrait drawing.** The composer Grétry. Charcoal, stumped and heightened with white chalk, inscription in brown ink. $5\frac{1}{4} \times 3\frac{3}{8}$ in.
François Dumont (1751-1831)
French, signed and dated 1808
Grétry was an honored operatic composer who had retired around 1798 to the Hermitage of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and become a country philosopher. Hence the odd attribute of the hunting rifle in this drawing.
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Selden, 1972
1972.227
- 66. Toilet-box.** Straw marquetry on wood, gilt bronze. H. $9\frac{1}{2}$ in.
French, 1804-1814
It is almost with a start that one sees the profile of Napoleon (copied from a medal by Droz) amid the rococo decoration of this box. The Empire style did not necessarily sweep all before it, and a medium such as straw marquetry could remain charmingly conservative in design.
Gift of Howard H. Brown, 1930
30.64
- 67. Pair of slippers.** Green glazed kid, trimmed with pleated green ribbons. L. $9\frac{3}{4}$ in.
French, early 19th century
Although slippers of the period were interchangeable, these two are labeled *droite* and *gauche*.
Gift of Sarah Tomerlin Lee, 1951
51.20a,b
- 68. Long-sleeved dress.** Olive silk taffeta pin-striped in yellow with a horizontal shadow-stripe of teal blue, bodice gathered by draw-threads and lined with linen. L. of skirt 45 in.
American, fabric probably French, about 1805-1810
Gift of Mr. Ted Reynolds, 1958
58.60
- 69. Coffee service** of purple lustreware (nine pieces shown). H. of pitcher $7\frac{7}{8}$ in.
French (Sarreguemines), early 19th century
This porphyry-toned service was made in successful imitation of English lustreware (prohibited as a result of Napoleon's policy against English imports), but the French shapes are more rigorously neoclassical.
Gift of Sidney H. and Helen M. Witty, 1964
64.173.55-75

Designers and decorators

Antiquity was a fertile source for designers, increasingly since the discoveries at Pompeii and Herculaneum in the mid-eighteenth century. Students of antiquity learned "simple lines, pure contours, correct forms." These are the words of the foremost Empire stylists, the team of Percier and Fontaine (*Recueil de décorations intérieures*). Line, contour and form were not fixed and immobile in their hands, but acquired a variety of supple combinations. Percier and Fontaine saw three reasons for the power of fashion: One was moral, the second social, the third commercial and "linked to the interest all workers have in making luxurious objects appear aged, so that they can go on renewing their products and increasing their sales."

- 70. Scrapbook** of sketches in pencil and pen and ink, mounted in a parchment-covered album from the stationer Renault
Charles Percier (1764-1838)
French, about 1800-1815
The album, open at folio 19, contains drawings for every conceivable kind of furniture and architecture. On this page are mounted rough pencil sketches for a capital and a bed, a study of an antique altar, a more finished pen-and-ink mantelpiece facing, and one larger annotated sheet with an armchair and a Victory candelabrum believed to have been designed about 1801-1804 for Josephine's bedroom at Saint-Cloud, and having shapes closely resembling those of objects in the exhibition (cat. nos. 2, 92).
Elisha Whittelsey Collection, Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1963
63.535
- 71. Two armchairs.** Pencil drawing. $4\frac{1}{8} \times 7\frac{5}{8}$ in.
Inscribed: *Percier*
Manner of Charles Percier (1764-1838)
French, early 19th century
Elisha Whittelsey Collection, Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1953
53.521.11
- 72. Imaginary view of an "early Christian" basilica.** Engraving in Charles Percier and P.-F.-L. Fontaine, *Palais, maisons, et autres édifices modernes, dessinés à Rome*, Paris, 1798, plate 92
This plate from an early Percier-Fontaine book shows the broad eclecticism that lay behind Empire style: Early Christian, Romanesque and Renaissance monuments are mixed and subordinated to a rigorous but majestically harmonious neoclassical whole.
Rogers Fund, 1952
52.519.121
- 73. The throne in the Tuileries.** Engraving in Charles Percier and P.-F.-L. Fontaine, *Recueil de décorations intérieures comprenant tout ce qui a rapport à l'ameublement . . .*, Paris, edition of 1812, plate 48
One of the designers' grandest effects. The composition keeps the eye in constant motion by virtue of the extremely graceful curvilinear details.
Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1928
28.40.1

74. Designs for various furnishings. Engraving in Charles Normand, *Nouveau recueil en divers genres d'ornemens* . . . , Paris, 1803, no. If

The plate includes a handsome Egyptian cabinet and a daybed fairly close to ours by Jacob-Desmalter (cat. no. 17).

Elisha Whittelsey Collection, Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1953
53.670.1

75. Engravings of beds. Two plates from La Mésangère, *Collection de meubles et objets du goût*, Paris, 1802-1830

The colored engravings were issued serially. Of the numerous designs for beds, the two exhibited, the sturdy "Etruscan" model and one with yellow hangings fixed by an arrow, appeared in 1805 and 1807.

Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1930
30.80

76. Drawing for a bed (*lit riche*). Pen and ink, watercolor heightened with gilt. $8\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{7}{8}$ in.

French, about 1807

A preparatory study for La Mésangère, plate 265 (cat. no. 75), issued in 1807.

Elisha Whittelsey Collection, Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1953
53.513.1

77. Studies for canopied twin beds. Pen and ink, gray wash, watercolor. $8\frac{3}{8} \times 14\frac{1}{8}$ in.

French, 1804-1814

Purchase, Frederick P. Huntley Bequest, 1967
67.785

78. Drawing for an arched alcove. Pen and gray ink, watercolor. $9\frac{3}{8} \times 11\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Inscribed lower left: *Senard*
French, about 1804-1810

The "Pompeiiian" scheme, in yellows, blues and reds with swans figuring prominently, recalls decorations carried out for Eugène de Beauharnais in the house, now the German embassy, which Napoleon bought for him in 1803. The cost of redoing it amounted to a million and a half francs by 1806, to his stepfather's fury.

Elisha Whittelsey Collection, Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1970
1970.710.1

79-84. Tradesmen's bills:

Billhead of the goldsmith Biennais, period of the Empire

Billhead of the goldsmith Odiot, dated 1807

Billhead of the bronze founder Ravrio, dated 1826

Billhead of the gunsmith LePage, period of the Consulate

Billhead of the gunsmith Fatou, dated 1811

Billhead of the manufacturer of uniforms Charles Leclerc, period of the Empire

Bella C. Landauer Collection

85. Drawing for a candelabrum. Pen and ink, gray wash. $25 \times 19\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Henry Auguste (working 1785-1806)
Paris, about 1790-1800

This and the following are part of a group of ten finely shaded drawings that come from the collection of J.-B.-C. Odiot's firm. Odiot bought them in order to relieve the debt-ridden Auguste. Much admired for his neoclassical ornament in the *ancien régime*, Auguste in these drawings prefigures the eventual shapes and motifs of the full-blown Empire style in silver.

Purchase, 1978

86. Drawing for a covered dish. Pen and ink, gray wash. $10\frac{1}{4} \times 16\frac{1}{8}$ in.

Henry Auguste (working 1785-1806)
Paris, about 1800

Purchase, 1978

87. Drawing for a silver tureen. Pen and ink. $10\frac{1}{4} \times 16$ in.

French, about 1810-1815

The designer offers alternative suggestions for the handles, formed of variant female heads crowned with wheat.

Elisha Whittelsey Collection, Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1977
1977.658

Empire furniture

The furniture of the Empire may express better than anything else the confidence of the age. For the most important commissions, leading artists such as Percier and Fontaine, David, Isabey and Prudhon were called upon for designs. The busiest furniture manufactory was that of Jacob-Desmalter, who employed as many as 350 craftsmen in 1807, capable of interpreting plans into reality by a superbly calculated balance of lines, planes and masses.

88. Secretary. Amboyna wood fall front, cabinet below, diamond-shaped mounts enclosing alternating female masks of two kinds, two of which serve as keyhole covers, corner columns wreathed in laurel leaves. H. $68\frac{1}{4}$ in.

French, 1804-1814

The spirited, *staccato* gilt bronze decoration is ingeniously ranged so as to imitate a chest of drawers. Tradition has it that this secretary was presented by Napoleon to Marshal Lannes, Duc de Montebello (died 1809).

Rogers Fund, 1923
23.147.1