

Medal Collection on Display at the Philadelphia Museum of Art

A group of portrait medals from the Benjamin Weiss Collection of Historical and Commemorative Medals is now on display at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. This medal collection is part of a new gallery titled **Art and Wonder: A Cabinet of Collections** ([Figure 1](#)).

The new Gallery is described by Jack Hinton, Associate Curator of European Decorative Arts & Sculpture, as follows: “The desire to collect extraordinary objects and works of art is explored in a new installation at the Museum titled *Art and Wonder: A Cabinet of Collections*. Featuring around 100 finely wrought and fascinating items, the display examines the formation of encyclopedic collections in Europe between the 1500s and early 1700s, often described at the time as cabinets of curiosities or a “Kunstammer” (art room in German.)

“The ideal Kunstammer contained works of nature and human invention in exceptional and varied forms, to create a microcosm of the known universe. This interest reflects the perception-changing discoveries in geography, astronomy and science that took place in the period. With objects ranging from paintings and sculptures to tools, keys, game boards and shells, the installation explores the phenomenon of collectors’ cabinets and the varied categories of works gathered within them.

“Highlights include a painting by Jan Brueghel the younger (acc. cat. 656) depicting an imaginary collection of the time, a princely chiseled steel powder flask given to Augustus the First, Prince Elector of Saxony and founder of his own courtly Kunstammer (acc. 1991-9-3,) and a rare ebony and ivory game board from the workshop of Ulrich Baumgartner, master curiosity-cabinet maker of Augsburg (acc. 1964-91-17.) A significant group of portrait medals lent by collector Benjamin Weiss ([Figure 2](#)), including Muller’s silver *Medal of Admiral Maarten Tromp* ([Figure 3](#)), Dadler’s *Medal of The Battle of Breitenfeld* ([Figure 4](#)) and one of Soldani-Benzi’s medals of *Queen Christina of Sweden* ([Figure 5](#)), reveal the importance of these objects

for collectors to demonstrate their connections to and interests in historical and present-day individuals and events.

“These complex objects are displayed in lively juxtaposition with each other and subdivided by theme, and are presented to visitors via interactive technologies that allow substantive encounters with each work. This technology also allows visitors the possibility to make connections between objects and broader historical and cultural themes. Heightening the effect of the objects is the intimate gallery space itself, which is composed of 16th century French wood paneling from a destroyed monastery in Le Puy, France (acc. 1928-70-1,) and is carved with virtuoso renderings of imaginary architectural views.”

Other 17th century portrait medals on display from the Weiss Collection include: Giovanni Vismara’s *Marriage of Charles II of Spain to Maria Anna of Pfalz-Neuberg* ([Figure 6](#)), Guillaume Dupre’s *Portrait Medal of Louis XIII and Anne of Austria* ([Figure 7](#)), Giovanni Hamerani’s *Medal of Henri de la Tour D’Auvergne, Vicomte de Turenne* ([Figure 8](#)), and Pieter van Abeele’s *Embarkation of Charles II and his Court at Scheveningen on his Restoration to England* ([Figure 9](#)).

The Art and Wonder cabinets can be found at the Museum in Gallery 257, Main Building, 2nd Floor. All are invited to visit this interesting display.

LEGENDS TO FIGURES

Figure 1. Gallery at Philadelphia Museum of Art: **Art and Wonder: A Cabinet of Collections**

Figure 2. Ben Weiss with his medal collection in PMA Gallery. **Art and Wonder: A Cabinet of Collections**

Figure 3. **DEATH OF ADMIRAL MAARTEN HARPERTZOOM TROMP**

By O. (Wouter) MÜLLER, The Netherlands, 1653, Silver medal, 75 mm

Obv: Bust of Admiral Tromp, three quarters facing, in very high relief, wearing a collar with the Order of St. Michael, surrounded by naval emblems, under crown held by two Putti of Fame blowing trumpets. At the sides, naval trophies. Underneath two cannons, one on either side of a ribbon inscribed in script: **Myn hert en handt was voor het Landt.** (My Heart and Hand Were for the Fatherland.)

Rev: A naval engagement, with two men-of-war at close range, an English ship sinking in the foreground, all within pearled inner border. **Waarom doet muller Tromp door kunst van gout en silver leeven: om dat hy'd yzer eew door krygsdeugd heeft verdreven. obÿt den. 10 aug: 1653** (in script) (Why Does the Art of Müller Make Tromp Live in Gold and Silver? Because His Valor Has Removed from Us the Age of Iron. Died on 10 August 1653)

Two embossed plates, chased, and soldered together, with a ring for suspension.

Ref: Van Loon II 364 (var.); M.I., i, 403/34; Hall, 194; Salton 145; Eimer 45/186; Scher (Dutch Medals) 37/24 (var.)

Maarten Harpertzoon Tromp (1597-1653), was Lieutenant-Admiral of the Dutch fleet and was chiefly responsible for the Netherlands' naval victories during the 17th century. Tromp's destruction of the Spanish armada at the Battle of the Downs in 1639 effectively ended Spanish sea power.

Depicted on the reverse of this medal is the Battle of Texel (also known as the Battle of Scheveningen or the Battle of Ter Heijde), the naval battle between the Dutch and English forces, in which the Dutch were trying to break an English blockade off the Dutch coast. This was the final naval battle of the First Anglo-Dutch War. It took place on 8–10 August 1653 between the fleets of the Commonwealth of England and the United Provinces. In this battle,

both countries incurred heavy losses, with Tromp being mortally wounded and dying August 10, 1653.

Figure 4. VICTORY ON THE BATTLE OF BREITENFELD

By Sebastian Dadler, Sweden, 1631, Silver medal, 65 mm

Obv: Battlefield scene with angel carrying sword in clouds above; **AVXILIANTE DEO PRESSIS**

VICTORIA VENIT AN:[no] MDCXXXI VII SEPT:[embris] (With God's Help Victory Came to the Besieged, Sept. 7, 1631)

Rev: Justice with a sword; Courage with a helmet; Piety with olive branch, all around crowned Peace column; "Jehovah" (in Hebrew) in a radiant halo above, next to hand of divine

providence; view of Leipzig in background. **IVSTITIA ET PIETAS CONSTANS ANIMVSQVE**

TRIUMPHANT (Justice and Steadfast Piety and Courage are Victorious) **GOTT MIT**

UNS (God [be] with Us) (below column)

Ref: Wiecek 72; Dominag II, 476; Hildebrand, 117 (28); Schultze 38; Dass. 726; Europese Penningen # 1072; Maué 28

This medal was struck for the Saxon Elector [John George I](#) to commemorate the victory of the allied Swedish and Saxon troops over the imperial army, led by the great Bavarian general, Count Johann Tilly (1559-1632), at Breitenfeld, near Leipzig on September 17, 1631. In the Battle of Breitenfeld, the Saxons were forced to retreat, and Count Tilly moved his imperial infantry forces to a position in order to attack the exposed Swedish flank. However, a brilliant counter maneuver was executed by the Swedish King [Gustavus II Adolphus](#), cutting Tilly off from his communications at Leipzig and separating him from his artillery. The result was the complete defeat of the imperial army. Tilly died shortly thereafter, in 1632, while trying to

prevent the Swedish army from crossing over into Bavaria.

The Battle of Breitenfeld was the Protestant's first major victory of the Thirty Years' War.

Figure 5. **QUEEN CHRISTINA OF SWEDEN**

By Massimiliano Soldani-Benzi (*), Sweden, ca.1680, Bronze medal, 61 mm

Obv: Bust of Christina (r) **REGINA CHRISTINA**

Rev: Soldier seated with war materials **POSSIS.NIHIL.VRBE ROMA.VISERE.MAIVS** (May You Never See Any City Greater Than Rome)

Ref: Hildebrand, I, 302/88;303/88b; see Vannel and Toderi, 22

Christina (1626–1689), was the daughter of [Gustavus Adolphus II](#) and Marie-Eleonore of Brandenburg. She inherited the throne when she was only six years old when her father was killed at [Lutzen](#) (1632). At the age of 18, in 1644 she took the throne. Intellectually sharp and skilled in politics, one of her greatest achievements was in the agreement of the [Peace of Westphalia](#) in 1648, which ended the Thirty Years' War. Her reign was cut short because of the increasing discontent with her arbitrary and wasteful ways and by her desire to become a Catholic; she was forced to abdicate in 1654 after only ten years, because Catholicism was banned in her own country. Pope Alexander VII invited her to Rome, where Christina arrived to great fanfare in 1655. She still behaved as a queen, involving herself in attempts to gain a new kingdom.

Christina was a very colorful personality in seventeenth-century Rome, as a patron of the arts (she encouraged the sculptor Bernini and the composer Alessandro Scarlatti) and player on the political stage; she was a close friend of [Decio Azzolino](#), later created cardinal in 1654 by Pope Innocent X.

Christina had a large collection of ancient coins and gems and commissioned a remarkable thirty-seven medals of herself in her lifetime. She intended the Florentine medal maker Massimiliano Soldani-Benzi (1656-1740) to make over one hundred medals for her, as a 'medallic history' of her life. Despite being scarred by smallpox and having a deformed shoulder, Soldani shows her as a classical beauty, crowned with laurel, like a muse. According to the British Museum, the reverse of this medal celebrates the great love Christina had for the city of Rome.

*This piece may have been struck, the dies perhaps executed by Guglielmada after the cast medal of Soldani.

Figure 6. **MARRIAGE OF CHARLES II OF SPAIN TO MARIA ANNA OF PFALZ-NEUBURG**

By Giovanni Vismara, Spain, ca.1689, Bronze medal, 70 mm

Obv: Bust of Charles II (r) **CAROLVS II HISP. REX**

Rev: Bust of Maria Anna **MARIA ANNA VXOR. II** (Maria Anna, Second Wife).

Ref: Ex. Samml Fallot, #193; Europese Penningen # 999

Charles II (1661-1700), King of Spain from 1665, was the second son of Philip IV of Spain (1605-1665) and Maria Anna, the daughter of the Emperor Ferdinand III. In 1679, Charles married Maria Louisa of Orleans. On her death, in 1689 Charles married Maria Anna von Pfalz-Neuburg, daughter of Philipp Wilhelm von Pfalz-Neuburg, the event commemorated by this medal. Under pressure from the cardinal archbishop of Toledo, Portocarrero, Charles bequeathed his dominions to Philip, Duke of Anjou, grandson of Louis XIV. This led to the War of the Spanish Succession and ended the inglorious line of the Spanish Habsburgs.

Figure 7. **LOUIS XIII AND ANNE OF AUSTRIA**

By Guillaume Dupre, France, 1620/1623, Bronze (cast) medal, 60 mm

Obv: Bust of Louis XIII (r) wearing armor, ruff and sash **LVDOVIC. XIII D.G. FRANCOR. ET NAVARAE REX** (Louis XIII, by the Grace of God, King of France and Navarre)

Rev: Bust of Anne of Austria (r). **ANNA AVGVS GALLIAE ET NAVARAE REGINA** (Anne, August Queen of France and Navarre)

Signed: **G DUPRE 1623/G.DVPRE.F. 1620**

With ornate hanging loop for suspension

Ref: cf. *Obv*, Jones 58, Kress 566: *Rev*. Jones 52

Louis XIII (The Just) (1601-1643), King of France (1610-1643), was the son of [Henry IV and Marie de Medici](#). He became king at the age of nine on his father's assassination in 1610, with his mother assuming full powers of regent. One of Marie de Medici's major objectives at that juncture was to bring France into an alliance with Spain and Austria. She decided, therefore, that Louis was to marry [Anne of Austria](#), the daughter of the Spanish king, Philip III, and they were, in fact, married in 1615. The relationship between the young king and his mother, however, was often hostile, as was his relationship with [Cardinal Richelieu](#), his wife Anne's principal advisor. Richelieu, nevertheless, became the most important member of the king's council, and was in large measure responsible of directing France's policy. This policy, which was often openly hostile to non-Catholic members of the community, brought Louis into unremitting conflict with the Protestants. Through Richelieu's influence, Huguenot strongholds were captured, Italy was invaded and France entered the Thirty Year's war (1618-1649) against Habsburg Spain. Despite several attempts to reduce his power, Richelieu continued to retain his ascendancy over the king until the cardinal's death in 1642. Louis and Anne had a child, [the future Louis XIV](#).

Anne of Austria (1601-1666) was the daughter of Philip III of Spain (of the house of Austria, i.e., of the Habsburg dynasty). Her marriage to Louis XIII was not a happy one as Louis was cold in his attitude towards her and the Franco-Spanish hostilities in the Thirty Years' War cut her off from close relations with her family in Spain. In addition, the omnipotent minister Cardinal Richelieu prevented her from exercising any rival influence over her husband. She also suffered great humiliation in the "affair of Val-de-Grace" when the chancellor Pierre Seguier was sent to search her person and to interrogate her on the ground that she was frequenting the convent of Val-de-Grace in order to conceal a treasonable correspondence with the Spaniards. Her husband died in 1643, at which time she ruled France as regent in close alliance with [Cardinal Mazarin](#), Richelieu's successor. Anne's regency ended in 1651 when [Louis XIV](#) was proclaimed of age to rule.

Figure 8. **HENRY DE LA TOUR D'AUVERGNE, VICOMTE DE TURENNE**

By Giovanni Hamerani, France, ca.1675, Bronze medal, 51 mm

Obv: Bust (l) **PR. HENR. A. TVR ARV. VIC. TVREN**

Rev: Peace standing between Mars and Justice **VIRTVS HONOS AEQVATAS** (Virtue, Honor and Equality)

Signed: **HAMERANVS**

Ref: Toderi & Vannel, 35

Henri de La Tour of Auvergne, Prince Viscount of Turenne (1611-1675), was Marshall of France and one of the greatest French commanders. The second son of Henri, duc de Bouillon, and his second wife Elizabeth, he was brought up as a Protestant, but late in his life (1668) was converted to Roman Catholicism. He began his military career in the Dutch army, serving in the Dutch war of independence (1625-1630) but soon entered French service, participating in The

Thirty Years War. The Thirty Years War was a complex series of conflicts fought mainly in Germany, arising out of the aspiration of Catholic and Protestant factions and developing into a wider, dynastic struggle for power in Europe. At its end Ferdinand and the Habsburgs lost control of Germany, Sweden was established as the dominant state in northern Europe while France replaced Spain as the greatest European power.

Figure 9. **EMBARKATION OF CHARLES II AND HIS COURT AT SCHEVENINGEN ON HIS RESTORATION TO ENGLAND**

By Pieter van Abeele, England, 1660, Silver medal, 70 mm

Obv: Bust of Charles II (r) **CAROLUS. II. D[ei].G[ratia]. MAGNAE BRIT[anniae]. FRA[nciae]. ET. HIB[erniae]. REX.** (Charles II, by the Grace of God, King of Great Britain, France and Ireland)

Rev: Fleet under sail; above, Fame with a trumpet and scroll inscribed, **SOLI DEO GLORIA** (To God Alone the Glory). Below, a shell inscribed, **S[yne]. M[ajesteyt]. is uit Hollant van Scheveling agfevaren naer fyn Coninryken A[nn]. 1660 Juni 2.** (His Majesty Departed from Holland by Scheveningen to His Own Kingdom, in the year 1660, 2 June). Legend: **IN NOMINE MEO EXALTABITUR CORNU EIUS. PSAL[mo]. 89** (In My Name Shall His Horn Be Exalted; *Psalms 89:240*)

Signed: **PVA** (in monogram on rim) **F.**

Two embossed plates, chased and united by a broad rim.

Ref: Med III, i, 455/44; Van Loon II 462; Eimer 48/210; Scher (1997), 33/20

Charles II (1630-1685) was King of England, Scotland and Ireland from 1660 to 1685. After the execution of his father, [Charles I](#), he fled to France but in 1650 was invited to Scotland and crowned king in 1651. Charles' attempted invasion of England was repulsed at the Battle of

Worcester by [Oliver Cromwell](#), and he was forced back into exile. In 1660 Charles issued the Declaration of Breda, in which he promised religious toleration and amnesty for his enemies. Parliament agreed to the Declaration, and Charles left Holland on June 2, 1660 and was crowned king in May 1660, ushering in the Restoration. Charles attempted to preserve royal power, accepting secret subsidies from [Louis XIV](#) of France in exchange for promoting Roman Catholicism. Charles' support of Louis led to the Dutch Wars (1672-74). Conflict was further fueled by strong anti-Catholic feeling, manifested in the "Popish Plot" rumor and the Exclusion Crisis (1679-81) when attempts were made to exclude Charles' brother, the Catholic Duke of York (later [James II](#)), from the succession.

This medal commemorates the event which on June 2, 1660, Charles II and his court embarked at Scheveningen following his restoration to the English throne. The King sailed on board the Naseby, which as a result of this journey was renamed the Royal Charles.
