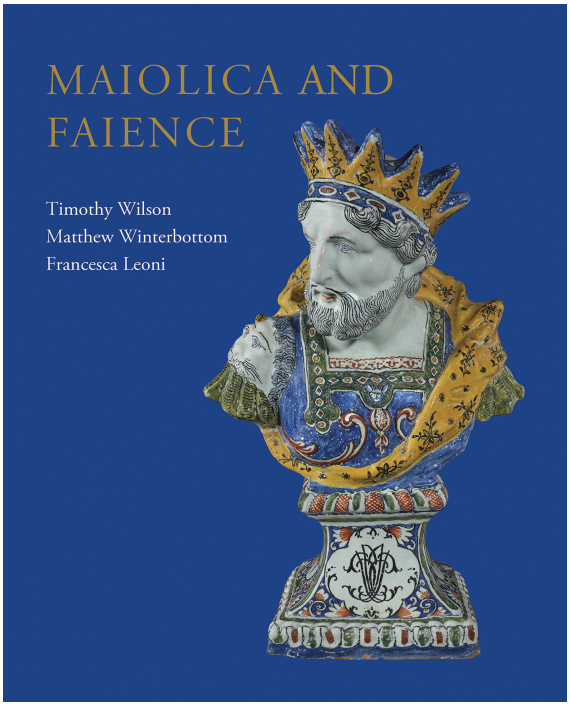
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Maiolica and Faience

Acquisitions of European tin-glaze and related pottery for the Ashmolean Museum, 2017–25

Timothy Wilson

Matthew Winterbottom

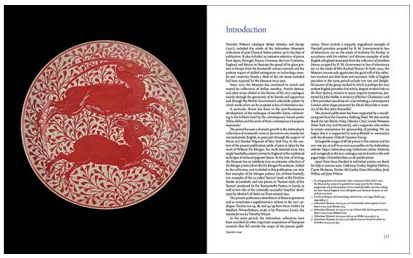
Francesca Leoni

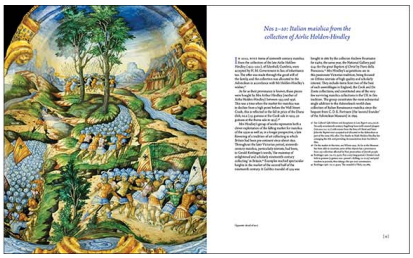
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- One of the world's most important and inclusive collections of Italian Maiolica
- Written by the world's foremost expert, Timothy Wilson

The Ashmolean Museum catalog *Italian Maiolica and Europe* (2017) included a range of works from Spain, France, the Netherlands, Germany, England, and Mexico, as well as Italy, to illustrate the rich history of European tin-glazed pottery. Since then, the Ashmolean has expanded its holdings of tin-glazed and related earthenwares to consolidate its position as one of the world's most important and wide-ranging collections. Among the acquisitions described here is the only known piece of Italian maiolica made for a Tudor Englishman, a plate made for Humphrey Dethick, who caused a nationwide stir in 1602 by an apparent attempt to assassinate King James VI of Scotland. The bequest from Sidney Knafel of New York has transformed the Museum's holdings of French faience; while important 16th-century maiolica comes from the collection of the late Airlie Holden-Hindley. Among the lustrewares included are *fin-de-siècle* pieces by Clément Massier and work by some of the world's supreme contemporary masters of the technique.

Timothy Wilson was Keeper of Western Art in the Ashmolean Museum from 1990 and Professor of the Arts of the Renaissance in the University of Oxford. From 2013 to 2017 he was Barrie and Deedee Research Keeper in the Ashmolean. He is a specialist in the decorative arts of the European Renaissance, especially ceramics. His publications on Italian maiolica include catalogues of the collections in the British Museum (2009, with Dora Thornton), the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne (2015), and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2016). **Matthew Winterbottom** is Assistant Keeper and Curator of Decorative Arts and Sculpture in the Ashmolean Museum's Department of Western Art. He has over 30 years of experience of working in museums, including the Victoria and Albert Museum, Royal Collection, and Holburne Museum, Bath. He has a wide knowledge of European decorative arts from the late 15th century to the present day, including ceramics, metalwork, glass, furniture, and textiles. He is a Supernumerary Fellow of St John's College, Oxford. **Francesca Leoni** has been curator of Islamic art at the Ashmolean Museum since 2011, following curatorial and research roles at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (2008–2011), Rice University (2008–2010), and the Metropolitan Museum of Art (2007–2008). Her recent books include the co-edited volume *Islamicate Occult Sciences in Theory and Practice* (Leiden, 2020), *Aegean Legacies: Greek Island Embroideries from the Ashmolean Museum* (London, 2021) and the forthcoming exhibition catalogue *In Bloom: How Plants Shaped Our World* (Oxford, 2026).







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