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Dr. med. Siegfried Ducret

zum 60. Geburtstag

am 5. August 1961



Liebespaar, Modell von Simon Feilner, Fürstenberg um 1754. Slg. Dr. Ducret.

Diese Gruppe wird vom Jubilar besonders geschätzt, denn er ist der Entdecker der frühesten Plastiken von Feilner in Fürstenberg. Sie wurden bis heute fälschlicherweise Höxter, Ansbach oder Thüringer zugewiesen. Er hat in verschiedenen Fachschriften auf diese prächtigen Fürstenberger Gruppen der Frühzeit hingewiesen. (Unbekannte Porzellane, Weltkunst, Cahiers de la Ceramique-Paris, Alte und Neue Kunst usw.) Diese neuen Zuschreibungen werden heute allgemein anerkannt, da sie wissenschaftlich einwandfrei belegt sind.

I. Geburtstagsadressen an Dr. Ducret

Unter Hinweis auf die nachfolgende, vornehme Freundes-Geste des Herrn Dr. Syz aus Amerika grüsst auch der Vorstand der Keramikfreunde der Schweiz *Dr. Siegfried Ducret* zum 60. Geburtstag, einen der aktivsten Mitbegründer der Gesellschaft, der als Fachmann und Kenner des Porzellans weit über die Grenzen des Landes hinaus wissenschaftliches Ansehen geniesst. Seiner besonderen Verdienste um die Gesellschaft der Schweizer Keramikfreunde gedachten wir neulich schon bei Anlass seines Rücktrittes aus der Redaktion, so dass sich eine abermalige Würdigung und Aufzählung erübrigt. Wir wünschen dem Jubilaren im Namen des ganzen Vereins weiterhin eine reiche Tätigkeit, erfolgreiches Forschen und ein gleichermassen beglückendes wie erregendes Sammlerschicksal und nie erlahmende Initiative für die Repatriierung schweizerischen, vorab zürcherischen Kunstgutes. — Wir gedenken aber auch unserer verehrten Frau Dr. Ducret — uns persönlich schon bekannt aus der Assistententätigkeit als die Tochter des hochangesehenen Wallenstädter Arztes Dr. Kappeler —, welche an des Gatten keramischem Wirken nicht nur vielfachen Anteil besitzt, sondern ihn vielleicht sogar mit ihrem feinen diagnostischen Kunstsinn öfters inspiriert und sein Porzellan-Interesse ursprünglich geweckt hat. Der Verein gratuliert darum auch ihr zum Festtage und wünscht ihr und auch den beiden Kindern, der Tochter und dem Medizinstudenten, die uns von den Exkursionen her nicht nur sympathisch, sondern geradezu lieb geworden sind, von Herzen Glück!

Für die Keramikfreunde der Schweiz

Die Vizepräsidentin:

Dr. med. Maria Felchlin

It is a special pleasure to join Dr. Ducret's many friends in expressing to him my heartiest congratulations and good wishes on his sixtieth birthday anniversary. On this happy occasion we may look back over Dr. Ducret's many significant accomplishments in the field of ceramic research, and we may look forward with him to further creative undertakings. Though he has been fully occupied all along

as a practicing physician, he has attained a most remarkable position as a collector, scientific expert, and author on the ceramic arts. It has been my great privilege to be in touch with him for the last fifteen years and, with many other ceramic enthusiasts, I am deeply indebted to him for having made available to us his immense knowledge and insight in the special area of our interests.

I did not know Dr. Ducret in earlier years and my first contact with him was through his book *Zürcher Porzellan 18. Jahrhundert* (1944). This first summarizing work about the Zurich factory impressed me not only because it gives such a comprehensive account of the history, artists and products of the Schooren manufactory, but also because these data are presented in relation to the contemporary economic and cultural life. Ducret's comparative approach, with his frequent references to graphic material and to the ceramics of other workshops, is characteristic of all his writings and makes this first monograph especially vivid and meaningful.

Thus it was a real pleasure to meet Siegfried Ducret in 1947 when a visit to my home town Zurich was again possible after the disruptions of the last world war. From then on during my visits abroad I frequently spent some time with him and his charming wife, whose active interest in her husband's ceramic projects must have been a great encouragement to him. The larger part of our contact, however, has been through correspondence. We have exchanged views on many problems, and I am grateful for his always ready response to my many questions from his astonishingly broad and scholarly background.

Perhaps I may add a few comments regarding Dr. Ducret's later publications, especially as some of these may be less familiar to his friends in the English-speaking countries. I don't know whether he wrote much before his first book on Zurich porcelain, but in the ensuing years he discussed many additional aspects of that factory in articles which appeared in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* and in the *Zeitschrift für Schweizerische Archaeologie und Kunstgeschichte*. An important contribution was his monograph on *Die Lenzburger Fayencen und Öfen des 18. und 19.*

Jahrhunderts (1950). In this book he describes the history and products of the main potters of this small Swiss country town, namely the factory of Klug-Hünerwadel (1762—1767), for which the pieces with hunting scenes in green were perhaps most characteristic, and the workshops of Johann Jacob Frey (1775—1796), and of his nephew Andreas Frey (1794—1856). It is very touching to read the account of Joh. Jacob Frey's tragic life. This potter made desperate efforts to earn a living for himself and his large family, but could never make a go of things. In the second half of the 18th century the manufacture of faience was a highly competitive business, and though Frey invented new materials and painted in a fresh style and with beautifully bright colors, he finally had to give up his craft, ending his life in poverty.

Ducret's two volumes on the *Die Zürcher Porzellanmanufaktur*, which appeared in 1958 and 1959, are an outstanding achievement. This definitive work is, in its thoroughness and in its inclusion of the socio-cultural background, unexcelled in ceramic literature. Here again, we find much emphasis on the interrelation of Zurich with other factories. In the first volume the various forms and decorations of vessels are described and illustrated, and in the second volume a complete survey of all known Zurich figures is given. At the Zurich factory most of the figures were conceived as pairs, and out of the 387 known figures, in 98 cases Ducret was able to determine and publish both partners. It is especially noteworthy that many old molds of figures (256) and vessels (153) are still in existence, and through the cooperation of the *Schweizerisches Landesmuseum* recasts of these could be shown in Ducret's book where the original models in porcelain were not available.

However, Ducret's writings are concerned with many other phases of European ceramic art, and he reported on significant findings in many periodicals, to mention only *Faenza*, *Keramische Zeitschrift*, *Keramos*, *Weltkunst*, *Connoisseur*. He wrote on Du Paquier and Vezzi, on Augsburger Hausmaler, on gold chinoiserie, on J. G. Höroldt and C.F. Herold, on comparative Asiatic ceramics, and many other topics. Recently Ducret reported documentary evidence that a Höxter factory did actually exist, and again that there is no evidence of soft paste ever having been made in Germany. His interest in clarifying vexing problems found an especially valuable expression in his *Unknown Porcelain of the 18th Century* (1956), which appeared simultaneously in German and in English translation. There we find significant information on little known factories such as Würzburg and Ellwangen, on the Löwenfinck problem, and on a series of models which had been ascribed to the Höxter factory but which he could

identify as early Fürstenberg figures created by Simon Feilner. Another of his publications is the delightful little Hallweg booklet on *Meissner Porzellan* (1952) in which the author illustrates and describes in a succinct manner a number of typical productions of that factory.

Ducret's latest comprehensive monograph is *Die Landgräfliche Porzellanmanufaktur Kassel*, (1960) about which there had been so far only scant information. This volume again is based on an exhaustive study of documents found in various archives. Based on this material, of which many items are reproduced in facsimile, the author describes with great thoroughness the beginnings and the development of the Kassel factory and its relation to other ceramic centers. The many excellent photographs of porcelains in this book give for the first time a rounded presentation of the productions at Kassel in the 22 years of its existence (1766—1788).

It is hardly necessary to mention here the many well documented articles which Dr. Ducret contributed to the *Mitteilungsblatt* of the Keramik-Freunde of Switzerland. Appreciation of his editorship of the Swiss periodical, which to large extent has been his own creation, has been fittingly expressed by others on various occasions. It is evident that an immense amount of devoted work has gone into editing this journal, as well as in organizing and developing the Swiss ceramic society itself. For his friends abroad it has been perhaps especially valuable that in addition to choosing sound and significant articles, Dr. Ducret informed his readers in his editorial notes about a variety of happenings in the ceramic field, and kept us abreast of the literature by his reviews and comments on current articles and books. I have always been amazed at his tremendous capacity for work and for combining successfully his many interests. His organizational skill has been an outstanding asset. His cordiality and gracious sharing of his experience and knowledge with friends and experts has meant a great deal to all who have been in touch with him. It was a well deserved tribute when his untiring efforts were recognized by his election as Honorary President of the Ceramics Friends of Switzerland at its Tenth Anniversary celebration in 1955. Naturally, we all deeply regret that Dr. Ducret has now given up his position as editor, though I can certainly sympathize with his need for reducing the load of his work. I sincerely hope, however, that his counsel and cooperation may in some way be further enlisted and may help to maintain the high standards which the *Mitteilungsblatt* has reached under his guidance. May Siegfried Ducret be given good health and continued vigor for many fruitful years of further creative activities and pursuits.

Dr. Hans Syz