

## **Special Exhibition:**

### **After The Fire: London Furniture 1666-1714**

**13 November 2001 to 3 March 2002**

This exhibition traces an extraordinary period in the history of English furniture. The restoration of the monarchy, the rebuilding of London after the Great Fire and the development of trade with America, the West Indies and the Far East all combined to create an expanding economy. The rise of a prosperous middle class in London created increasing demand for high-quality goods in the latest styles, not least in furniture.

*After the Fire* is the result of recent research into both the furniture of the period and the economic context of the London furniture trade. Displays will include themes such as the rise of the Cabinet Maker, the role of upholsterers and cane-chair makers, and oriental influences. Hands-on samples will explain the techniques of joints, veneers and japanning. Exhibits will include colourful and extremely beautiful pieces, many of which have been selected from National Trust houses and private collections, and will be seen together for the first time.

The need to rebuild London after the Great Fire accelerated changes in the design of town houses, their interior arrangement and the nature and style of furniture. The exhibition will show how London's economic growth attracted protestant immigrants from the Continent, encouraging the spread of continental skills and fashions in furniture, and how exotic imports from the Far East introduced new ideas in furniture, interiors and decoration. By the end of Queen Anne's reign in 1714, London's furniture makers could supply the needs of the richest and most fashion-conscious clients, and the Joiners' Company was able to boast that their work had 'arrived at so great a perfection as exceeds all *Europe*'.

The exhibition has been guest curated by Dr Adam Bowett, whose book *English Furniture from Charles II to Queen Anne, 1660-1714* will be published in early 2002.

**Related Activities and Events/...**

## Related Activities and Events

### **Introduction to Lacquer: Hands-On Study Day (\*FULLY BOOKED\*)**

Learn how the secret of Chinese and Japanese Lacquer was discovered and translated into the techniques used by northern European japanners. Led by Margaret Ballardie.

*Saturday 19 January, 10.30am to 4.00pm*

*Tickets £15.00 including materials but not lunch.*

### **London Furniture: Study Day**

London in the late-17<sup>th</sup> and early-18<sup>th</sup> centuries was a mecca for skilled European and English craftsmen and a hub of international trade. The increasing prosperity of London's merchants and professionals created a demand for the new styles and innovations in consumer goods, not least in furniture. Recent scholarship and views on this dynamic period will be presented by historian Hazel Forsyth, furniture experts Dr Adam Bowett and Dr Tessa Murdoch, lacquer expert Margaret Ballardie and the Geffrye's director, David Dewing.

*Saturday 16 February 10.30am to 4.30pm*

*Tickets £35 in advance (morning coffee and sandwich lunch)*

### **Evening Lectures**

London after the fire was a fascinating city in many ways, not only in terms of its furniture making and trade but in all spheres of the home and domestic life. This series of lectures will explore Restoration London, its housing, interiors and furniture.

#### **London Interiors**

David Dewing, director of the Geffrye Museum

*Tuesday 15 January*

#### **The Rise of the Cabinet Maker: London Furniture After the Fire**

Dr Adam Bowett, historian and author

*Tuesday 29 January*

#### **Exploring the Remains of Restoration London**

Bridget Cherry, architectural historian and editor of the *Pevsner Architectural Guides*

*Tuesday 12 February*

*Lectures 7.00 - 8.00pm. Museum and restaurant open from 6.15pm.*

*Tickets £4.00 in advance or £5.00 at the door (please check availability on the day).*

*\*SPECIAL OFFER! Book all three lectures in advance and receive a free glass of wine or cappuccino in the restaurant\*.*

### **Introduction to Gilding: Craft Workshop (\*FULLY BOOKED\*)**

A one-day course for adults during which participants will learn the techniques of gilding and make a small picture or mirror frame to take home. Led by Jane McSloy.

*Saturday 9 March 10.30am to 4.30pm*

*Tickets £30.00 including materials but not lunch*

