

# MFA **H** *The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston*



Plate 419, *Silver-plating* in *L'Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire Raisonné des Sciences, des Arts et des Métiers* by Denis Diderot.

For more information,  
go to [mfah.org/rienzisymposium](http://mfah.org/rienzisymposium).

*Education programs at Rienzi receive generous funding from the Sterling-Turner Foundation; Alkek and Williams Foundation; Carroll Sterling and Harris Masterson III Endowment; and the Caroline Wiess Law Endowment for Rienzi.*

All presentations will be given Saturday, November 6, 2021, virtually via Zoom webinar organized by the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. The symposium will be held in conjunction with the exhibition *Hidden Hands: Invisible Workers in Industrial England*, on view at Rienzi from September 1, 2021 to January 3, 2022.

## **RIENZI'S BIENNIAL SYMPOSIUM HIDDEN HANDS: UNTOLD STORIES OF THE OBJECT**

Saturday, November 6, 2021

**Call for Papers Deadline: September 1, 2021**

Rienzi, the house museum for European decorative arts of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, presents the virtual symposium, *Hidden Hands: Untold Stories of the Object*.

Geographic exploration and colonial expansion led to the introduction of new materials and technological innovation in the early modern period. These developments created an increased demand for goods made of ceramics, glass, exotic woods, textiles, and metals. The refining of raw materials and the production of these goods depended upon a diverse labor force made up of men, women, and children from across the globe. Despite the integral roles played by these workers in all of these varied enterprises, their names and contributions have often been lost to history. Who were these people? How did they interact and engage with these new materials and goods? What social, political, and economic forces contributed to the exclusion of their narratives? The symposium invites scholars to reconsider established ideas of craftsmanship and artistic authorship through the telling of these "hidden" stories.

## **CALL FOR PAPERS**

Graduate students as well as entry-level and mid-career professionals are invited to submit a 400-word abstract outlining a 20-minute presentation, along with a CV, by September 1, 2021, to [rienzisymposium@mfah.org](mailto:rienzisymposium@mfah.org). Selected participants will be notified by September 15, 2021, and offered a \$250 honorarium. All presentations will be given Saturday, November 6, 2021, virtually via Zoom webinar organized by the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

Possible themes for investigation may include, but are not limited to:

- Transatlantic trade
- Gender
- Race
- Economics
- Labor
- Workshop traditions
- Empire and colonialism
- Technology
- Class