



Winterthur

Jay E. Cantor

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Winterthur, the great country estate near Wilmington, DE, was the private residence of Henry Francis du Pont from 1880 to 1969. Transformed into a distinguished museum, Winterthur now houses what is believed to be the largest and richest collection of American decorative arts in the world. This book is the first to take in the full sweep of the museum's exquisite holdings. Treasure after treasure spills from its pages as hundreds of stunning photographs, including one hundred in full color, show the finest American antique furniture and textiles, silver and pewter, porcelain and earthenware, paintings and prints in graceful and intimate period rooms. Also pictured are the celebrated informal gardens -- from exotic specimen plantings to brilliant masses of azaleas -- surrounding the house, which is located on 963 acres of meadows and woodlands. Du Pont was the visionary collector who created the renowned assemblage. His collection spans two centuries of productivity in American decorative arts -- from 1640 to 1840 -- and comprises more than 70,000 objects in 200 rooms and display areas. Jay E. Cantor, head of American paintings at Christie's International, offers an informed and engaging view of du Pont and his activities in the evolving collecting climate of the day. He tells how Winterthur was built and rebuilt, how it flourished, how the gardens were painstakingly created and maintained. There is a fascinating portrait of Winterthur during its heyday as a grand country manor that was a home with every possible amenity as well as a center for sophisticated and lavish entertaining. The text is peppered with vintage quotes from du Pont's correspondence that reveal his collecting methods, ideas, and concerns. Together, Cantor's words and the splendid photos taken by Lizzie Himmel provide an enchanting overview of American decorative arts and enable the reader to savor the beauty of Du Pont's creation. 200 illustrations, including 100 plates in full color.

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