

A close-up photograph of a blue and white porcelain plate. The central motif features two herons standing on a stylized branch. The heron on the left is facing left, holding a bundle of reeds in its long beak. The heron on the right is facing right, also holding a bundle of reeds. The herons are rendered in a detailed, linear style with fine lines for feathers. The background of the plate is decorated with a repeating pattern of stylized flowers and leaves. The text is overlaid on the upper and lower portions of the image.

Portraits and Dining Services from the Grill Family

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Daniel Seghers (1590–1661) and Erasmus Quellinus the Younger (1607–1678), *Flower Garland with the Standing Virgin and Child*, c. 1645–50. Oil on copper, 85.5 x 61.5 cm. Purchase: Wiros Fund. Nationalmuseum, NM 7505.

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Portraits and Dining Services from the Grill Family

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In 2018, the Nationalmuseum acquired two works in pastels by Gustaf Lundberg (1695–1786), showing the couple Anna Johanna the Elder (1720–1778) and Claes Grill (1705–1767). The portraits had formerly hung in the Chinese Room at Godegård, Östergötland, where they were surrounded by eight Chinese paintings on rice paper, depicting landscapes and buildings, as well as a few smaller paintings, also with Chinese subjects. Godegård manor and works were owned by the couple's nephew Johan Abraham Grill (1736–1792) from 1775.¹

The Grill family had Dutch roots and played an important role in Swedish trade and industry in the 17th and 18th centuries.² Claes Grill's father, Abraham (1674–1725), and Abraham's brother Carlos (1681–1736), founded the Grill trading company in Stockholm. This was where Claes was trained, eventually taking over the business, which mainly exported iron, copper and wood products. Grill owned ironworks and shares in mines, as well as docks and vessels. Imports among others consisted of colonial goods. The founding of the Svenska Ostindiska Kompaniet [Swedish East India Company] in 1731³ caught the attention of the Grill family. Claes and his two brothers, as well as his nephew Johan Abraham, were eventually made directors. The latter also participated in journeys to China as supercargo. The Chinese Room at Godegård was not simply an expression of 18th-century *chinoiserie*,



Figs. 1–2 Unknown designer, *Tureen with the Grill family's coat of arms*. Porcelain, decor in underglaze blue, 10.7 x 27.5 cm (h x l) [tureen], 9 x 23.5 cm (h x diam) [lid], 3.8 x 31.7 cm (h x diam) [plate]. Purchase: Axel Hirsch Fund. Nationalmuseum, NMK 4/2019.



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Fig. 3 Unknown designer, *Punchbowl with the Grill family's coat of arms*. Porcelain, decor in underglaze blue, 14.5 x 38.7 cm (h x l) [bowl], 3 x 40 cm (h x diam) [lid]. Purchase: Axel Hirsch Fund. Nationalmuseum, NMK 5/2019.

but also carried a personal meaning for its owner.

Naturally, the Grill family ordered porcelain via Ostindiska kompaniet, a total of six dinner services with coats of arms and two with monograms.⁴ The Nationalmuseum has acquired a tureen with a lid and plate (Figs. 1–2) and a lidded punchbowl (Fig 3). The Grill heraldic animals, a pair of entwined cranes with crickets (*grillo* in Italian) in their beaks, are shown on a white base with blue underglaze. Other ornamentation consists of flower garlands, palmettos and shells. The pattern has been hypothetically ascribed to Jean Eric Rehn (1717–1793). A single crane stands at the centre of the Grill escutcheon; the unusual image with two entwined birds probably means that this dining service celebrates the alliance between spouses. Two pairs of cousins have been named as possible commissioners: Claes and Anna Johanna

the Elder, who married in 1737, or their son Adolf Ulric (1752–1797) and Anna Johanna the Youngest (1753–1809), who married in 1778.⁵

In addition to trade, the family was also active in the applied arts. For example, Anthoni Grill (1639–1703) and Baltzar Grill (d. 1697) were goldsmiths, with the latter also being director of Kungsholms glasbruk. Later generations continued the interest in high quality art and applied arts. For example, Claes Grill ordered one of the foremost examples of Swedish Rococo silver, a ewer and basin produced by Johan Collin (d. 1779) in 1745, probably after a model by Christian Precht (1706–1779). It is likely they were intended for Anna Johanna's dressing table. When these silver objects were donated to the Dutch Reformed Church in Stockholm they were given a new function as christening basin (acquired by the Nationalmu-

seum in 2006, NMK 110a-b/2006).⁶ Claes Grill also owned one of his time's foremost art collections in Sweden, with both older Dutch and contemporary Swedish works.⁷

The artists that Claes and Anna Johanna Grill were in close contact with included Gustaf Lundberg,⁸ who dominated Swedish pastels in the mid-18th century. Lundberg had dedicated himself to this technique during his time in Paris, where he arrived in 1717. A few years later, the Venetian artist Rosalba Carriera (1675–1757) also arrived in Paris. She was far from the first person to produce portraits in pastels, but was significant in increasing the popularity of this medium and influenced a number of contemporaneous artists. However, according to Merit Laine, Gustaf Lundberg was the only one who as good as abandoned oil painting for pastels during Carriera's time in Paris, 1720–21. More and more artists in France followed the same path in the fol-



Fig. 4 Gustaf Lundberg (1695–1786), *Anna Johanna Grill (1720–1778)*. Pastel on paper, mounted on panel, 48 x 39 cm. Purchase: Hedda and N. D. Qvist Fund. Nationalmuseum, NMB 2741.



Fig. 5 Gustaf Lundberg (1695–1786), *Claes Grill (1705–1767)*. Pastel on paper, mounted on panel, 48 x 39 cm. Purchase: Hedda and N. D. Qvist Fund. Nationalmuseum, NMB 2740.

lowing decades.⁹ This greater competition meant that Lundberg left Paris in 1745 and returned to Sweden.

Lundberg's pastels of the Grills are undated. Because portraits are always staged and more or less idealised, the ages of those depicted are difficult to assess. Their half-length portraits are probably the first examples.¹⁰ After these, copies were executed in pastels, oils and engravings, probably produced in Lundberg's environs.¹¹ The portraits are not composed as pendants – the wife is seen almost *en face* (Fig. 4), while the husband is shown in profile (Fig. 5). Anna Johanna is wearing a white bonnet with a pink ribbon tied in a bow beneath her chin. A thin fabric rests

on her shoulders; it is lifted by a breeze, giving a sense of airiness. Similar compositions are also found in other portraits of women by Lundberg, although these women are generally depicted in half-length and *en savoyarde*, carrying a small box in which a genuine Savoyarde would be expected to keep a marmot for display.¹² Anna Johanna Grill's portrait lacks these elements of role play. The focus is on the face and on her gaze, which is directed straight at the observer. In the profile portrait of her husband too, this outward gaze is clear in the only visible eye. Strict profile is unusual, not only for Lundberg, but generally in portrait painting. Both these pastels are high quality and representative

examples of Gustaf Lundberg's work. The artist has succeeded in creating an illusion of immediacy, a visual contact between model and observer.

Alexander Roslin (1718–1793) was also in the Grill family's circle. In 1775, he executed a group portrait of Anna Johanna the Elder with her children, Anna Johanna the Younger and Adolf Ulric. The deceased father of the family is present as a portrait in the portrait; on the wall in the background, Roslin has copied Lundberg's pastel portrait of Claes Grill.¹³ Just over a decade later, Roslin painted a self-portrait in which his wife, the artist Marie Suzanne Giroust (1734–1772), is depicted working with a pastel that shows Henrik Wilhelm

Peill (1730–1797) (NM 7141). In the left of the painting there is a small gold box with two barely visible portraits, probably Peill's future wife and mother-in-law, Anna Johanna the Younger and the Elder.¹⁴

Notes:

1. Ernst Malmberg, "Godegård", in *Svenska slott och herresäten. Nysamling. Östergötland. I. Olivehult och Godegård*, vol. 16, Stockholm 1933, p. 32; Åke Nisbeth, "Godegård", in Åke Nisbeth & Gösta Selling, *Slott och herresäten i Sverige. Östergötland. Första bandet. Adelsnäs – Ljung*, Malmö 1971, pp. 220 ff.

2. For the Grill family, see articles in *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon. Band 17*, Stockholm 1967–69, pp. 276–288; for example Bengt Hildebrand and Staffan Högberg, "Claes Grill", p. 281.

3. Much has been written about Svenska Ostindiska Kompaniet. One overview with bibliographical references is Jan Wirgin, *Från Kina till Europa. Kinesiska konstföremål från de ostindiska kompaniernas tid* (exh. cat.), Östasiatiska Museet no. 53, Stockholm 1998.

4. For general information about East India armorial porcelain produced for Swedish commissions, see Wirgin 1998, pp. 117–145. For the Grill services, see Bo Lagercrantz, "Släkten Grills vapenporcelain", in *Fataburen. Nordiska Museets och Skansens årsbok 1951*, Erik André (ed.), Stockholm 1951, pp. 87–110; Erik André, "Claes Grills porcelaine", in *Fataburen. Nordiska Museets och Skansens årsbok 1965*, Marshall Lagerquist (ed.), Stockholm 1965, pp. 167–180; Wirgin 1998, pp. 126ff., 138–141, cat. nos. 142f., 145–148.

5. Bo Lagercrantz has dated the service to the 1780s, attributes the model to Jean Eric Rehn and links the commission to Adolf Ulric and Anna Johanna the Youngest in Lagercrantz 1951, pp. 102–106. On stylistic grounds, Jan Wirgin dates the service to c. 1755–60. He also names Rehn as the probable creator of the model, but links the service to Claes and Anna Johanna the Elder in Wirgin 1998, p. 141, cat. no. 148.

6. Bengt Bengtsson, "Den grillska dopskålen", in *Fataburen. Nordiska Museets och Skansens årsbok 1949*, Erik André (ed.), Stockholm 1949, pp. 73–82; Barbro Hovstadius, *Svenskt silver från renässans till rokokko*, Årsbok för Statens konstmuseer 36, Stockholm 1990, pp. 103 f.; Micael Erntstell, "A Silver Ewer and Basin", in *Art Bulletin of Nationalmuseum*, vol. 13, 2006, Stockholm 2007, pp. 25 f.; Lisa Skogh and Sofia Rudling Silfverstolpe, *Svenskt silver 1500–1850 Nationalmuseum/Swedish Silver 1500–1850*, Nationalmuseums katalog över konsthantverk och design nr 1, Micael Erntstell, Louise Hadorph, Ingrid Lindell, Karin Sidén, Sofia Rudling Silfverstolpe and Lisa Skogh (eds.), Stockholm 2009, pp. 180 f.

7. Olof Granberg, *Svenska konstsamlingarnas historia från Gustav Vasas tid till våra dagar. II. Karl X Gustav – Adolf Fredrik*, Stockholm 1930, pp. 127f.; Lars Sjöberg & Claes P.A. Tamm, *Gyllene tider. Österbysamlingen* (exh. cat.), Österbybruk, publ. by Nationalmuseum, Stockholm 1981; Claes Tamm, *Österbysamlingen. "en rätt artig samling af målningar"*, Mjölby 2008.

8. Merit Laine and Carolina Brown, *Gustaf Lundberg 1695–1786. En porträttmålare och hans tid*, Nationalmusei skriftserie N.S. 19, Stockholm 2006, pp. 99 f., 148.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 56 f.

10. Sixten Strömbom, Evald E:son Uggla & Carl Johan Lamm, *Index över svenska porträtt 1500–1850 i Svenska porträttarkivets samlingar. Band I*, publ. by Nationalmuseum, Stockholm 1935, pp. 319, 321, nos. 1935:24–25.

11. *Ibid.* A copy in oil after Claes Grill's portrait, executed by an unknown artist, belongs to in the Swedish National Portrait Gallery, inv.no. NMGrh 1056. Two oval copies pastel hung at Godegård, see Malmberg 1933, p. 38, ill. p. 37; Nisbeth 1971, p. 224, ill. p. 225.

12. Laine & Brown 2006, pp. 150–165, pl. 19, ills. 32 f., 48.

13. The painting belongs to the Gothenburg Museum of Art, inv. no. GKM 1027.

14. Magnus Olausson, "Roslin's Self-Portrait with his Wife Marie Suzanne Giroust Painting a Portrait of Henrik Wilhelm Peill", in *Art Bulletin of Nationalmuseum Stockholm*, vol. 20, 2013, Stockholm 2014, pp. 17 f.