



**Media only:** Laura Baptiste (202) 633-8494  
**Media website:** [americanart.si.edu/pr](http://americanart.si.edu/pr)  
**Media preview:** Tuesday, Sept. 27; 3 – 5 p.m.

Sept. 1, 2011

## Fact Sheet

### “Something of Splendor”: Decorative Arts from the White House”

#### Exhibition

“Something of Splendor”: Decorative Arts from the White House”  
Oct. 1 – May 6, 2012

#### Where

Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum  
Pennsylvania Avenue at 17th Street N.W.

#### Description

The White House has been the official residence of the President of the United States for more than 200 years. It embodies the story of how the presidents and their families live, work and entertain within its historic walls and among its historic furnishings. This exhibition, organized in honor of the 50th anniversary of the White House Historical Association, allows visitors to explore the history of the decorative arts in the nation’s foremost home. It features 95 objects from the permanent collection of the White House, including furniture, ceramics, metals, glass and textiles. Many of these objects were made by the most celebrated craftsmen of their time and some have never been seen outside of the White House. Objects in the exhibition range from a box lined with wallpaper used in the White House prior to its burning in 1814 to a gilded Herter Brothers armchair from 1875 to a coverlet embroidered by First Lady Grace Coolidge between 1925 and 1927 to a service plate from the 1982 Reagan state china. The exhibition and its related publication include archival images of the interiors to help the visitor envision life in the President’s official residence. William G. Allman, curator of the White House, and Melissa C. Naulin, assistant curator of the White House, selected the works included in the exhibition.

#### Film

The museum, in collaboration with the White House Historical Association, produced a film in which first families offer their personal recollections and memories about living in America’s most famous home. *At Home in the White House* is produced by Northern Light Productions in Boston, and will be available for sale in the museum store. It will be shown continuously in the exhibition galleries in a special screening room.

#### Publication

An illustrated catalog, written by Allman and Naulin and published by the White House Historical Association, accompanies the exhibition (softcover, \$14.95).

#### Credit

“Something of Splendor”: Decorative Arts from the White House” is co-organized by the White House Office of the Curator, the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum and the White House Historical Association.

The Renwick Gallery is open from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily, except Dec. 25. Admission is free. Metro stations: Farragut North and Farragut West. Museum information (recorded): (202) 633-7970. Smithsonian Information: (202) 633-1000; (202) 633-5285 (TTY). Website: [americanart.si.edu](http://americanart.si.edu).

###