



LES AMIS

“CIVILIZING GOODS: CONSUMER AGENCY AND CREOLE DESIRE IN COLONIAL LOUISIANA”

Presented by PHILIPPE HALBERT

Doctoral Candidate, History of Art, Yale University

Missouri Athletic Club

Art Lounge, First Floor
405 Washington Avenue | St. Louis, MO 63102

Tuesday, June 11, 2019 at 5:30 PM

Followed by a reception
Free parking available in MAC lot

In June of 1738, Françoise Gallard died in New Orleans. Among her personal effects was a lavish *toilette*, or dressing set, of black “Chinese” lacquer. Combining utilitarian function with exotic luxury, the sleek lacquer surfaces of Gallard’s *toilette* reflected her sophisticated taste and the increasingly active role that Louisiana’s capital was beginning to play in a trans-Atlantic, intercontinental, and truly global marketplace. The *toilette*’s contents — whitening powders for the hair and skin, black patches, and likely the rouge and pomades favored by creole men and women alike — also helped her in crafting an image commensurate with her rank as the wife of a noble officer. Gallard was no ordinary Frenchwoman, however. Born off the coast of Alabama in 1713, Gallard came of age in New Orleans and spent two years living at the Arkansas Post, inhabiting a world peopled by Europeans, native people, and enslaved Africans. The various lacquer boxes and the cosmetics that she used at her dressing table were a way for Gallard to fulfill bids for agency, distinction, and supremacy. Philippe treats this assemblage of material goods as a touchstone for a discussion on consumption, identity, and the formation of racial and social hierarchies in early Louisiana. A local Illinois Country connection also exists as Gallard’s husband was posted to Fort de Chartres and her daughter’s first husband was a *voyageur* with family in Kaskaskia.



Laura Plantation (1805), Vacherie, Louisiana

Philippe Halbert, a graduate of the College of William and Mary and the Winterthur program in American Material Culture, entered the doctoral program in the History of Art Department at Yale University in 2015. He is presently working on a dissertation that positions French settlements along the Gulf Coast within a larger framework of global artistry, cross-cultural exchange, and early modern self-fashioning. Philippe also serves as a contributing editor at *The Junto*, <http://earlyamericanists.com>, a group blog administered by junior early Americanist scholars and faculty. With Professors Ryan Brasseaux, Ned Cooke and Jay Gitlin, he co-founded Yale’s French North American Working Group in 2016 (see their Facebook page).

RESERVATIONS ARE \$25/PERSON. CHECKS SHOULD BE MADE PAYABLE AND MAILED TO:

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