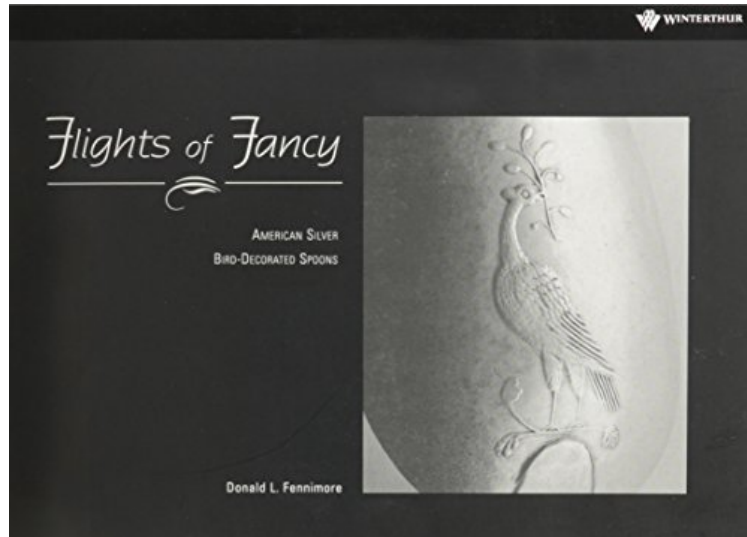


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Flights of Fancy: American Silver Bird-Decorated Spoons

Donald Fennimore

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Donald Fennimore : Flights of Fancy: American Silver Bird-Decorated Spoons before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Flights of Fancy: American Silver Bird-Decorated Spoons:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Authoritative study of a rather special form By Frederic This is essentially a well-illustrated essay produced as a slim booklet -- but don't let that put you off! Bird-backed spoons have always intrigued collectors (although they've gotten pretty scarce in the market these days), and between the Winterthur's collections and Fennimore's expertise it's hard to imagine a better source for such a work. He also draws on private collections to supplement the Winterthur's. The essay is enjoyably readable as well as informative, covering the general history and production techniques of spoons and examining specific forms of bird-backs -- including suggestions for possible makers of some of the designs. It's particularly nice to see some of the swages that were used to produce these designs, and the appendix of silversmiths known to have produced bird-backed spoons is handy. For the quantity of text it's not cheap, but for the quality (including excellent photographs), it's not unreasonable.

This small but lavishly illustrated catalogue is the first in-depth study ever on silver bird-decorated spoons. Author Donald L. Fennimore, Winterthur's senior curator of metals, narrates the fascinating social, technical, and artistic tale of American silver spoons whose bowls were struck with bird images: from the dove and olive branch to the bald eagle. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, these rare and highly collectible objects of true beauty proved to be a significant vehicle for expressing not only creativity but also a new national identity. Fennimore's lucid and well-researched volume, which accompanies an exhibition of the same name at Winterthur, includes a comprehensive list of East Coast silversmiths who produced these charming objects between 1750 and 1830. Flights of Fancy surely will serve as a single point of reference for all future study of these uniquely American pieces.

From the Publisher 10 x 7 trim. 33 duotones. 2 figs. LC 00-063245 About the Author DONALD L. FENNIMORE is

curator emeritus of metals at Winterthur.