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Unidentified artist, Italian, 18th century
for Naples Royal Porcelain Manufactory (Real Fabbrica
Ferdinandea), Italian, 1771 – 1806

Figure Portrait of the Chevalier d'Eon, c. 1790

soft-paste porcelain

Gift of Richard D. Pardue, 2020.33.3

About the Art

- A standing figure holds an ostrich feather muff and wears a black jacket with frilled white collar over an orange dotted chemise, a long, flowing yellow skirt, purple-brown shoes, and a wide brimmed hat.
- The identification of this figure is that of Charles-Geneviève-Louis-Auguste-André-Timothée d'Eon de Beaumont (1728-1810), a French diplomat, spy, and soldier more commonly known as the Chevalier d'Eon.
- Beginning in 1777 at age 49, d'Eon dressed as a woman and identified as female. The Chevalier was charismatic and talented and drew public interest, inspiring the production of paintings and printed images that contributed to D'Eon's celebrity status throughout Europe.
- Porcelain portraits such as the Ackland's were often produced to represent personalities in the public sphere, like actors and politicians, and were aimed at a wealthy clientele.