The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin Fall 2008

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

A Selection: 2007–2008

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

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On the cover: Mangaaka Power Figure (*Nikisi N'kondi*) (detail). Democratic Republic of the Congo or Angola, Ciloango River Region, Kongo; second half of 19th century. Wood, metal, resin, ceramic, paint (see p. 40). On p. 5: Double Page from "The Nurse's Qur'an" (detail). Probably Qairawan, Tunisia, ca. 1019–20. Ink, colors, and gold on parchment (see p. 12)

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Director's Note

In this, my last introduction to the Recent Acquisitions *Bulletin*, I take pride in noting that notwithstanding the vagaries of the market, the escalating cost of works of art, and the Museum's self-imposed restrictions in the acquisition of ancient art, over the past year we have once again made a number of notable additions to the collection.

The first work in this *Bulletin*, the imposing and sculpturally striking horned demon, is one of the Ancient Near East Department's most important acquisitions in several years. Also transformative to our holdings is the superb Jaharis Byzantine Lectionary acquired with the support of Mary and Michael Jaharis. Made at the height of the Byzantine Empire, the lectionary was probably used in its greatest church, Hagia Sophia in Constantinople.

Our fast-growing Italian Baroque collection, late in starting, I might add, saw the addition of two beautifully preserved pictures: a moving *Lamentation* by the young Domenichino that dates to 1603 and, shown across the page from it, a *Madonna and Child with Saints* that Ludovico Carracci painted just a few years later, in 1607. The Carracci, whose grand conception belies its small size, is a gift of Mr. and Mrs. Mark Fisch.

In stark contrast to these highly polished and lyrical Italian pictures is the formidable Mangaaka power figure from the Congo that now stands at the entrance to the Michael C. Rockefeller Wing. The small reproduction here gives but a hint of the figure's arresting physical presence.

I take special pleasure in noting the enchanting painting by Eugène Delacroix, *Ovid among the Scythians*, that was so kindly given to the Museum in my honor by Jayne Wrightsman, who remains one of our most enlightened and generous benefactors.

A museum is never finished, a collection never fully formed, and I have every reason to believe that our acquisitions in the years ahead will continue to enrich this great institution, not least because of the keen eye of our curators and the generosity of our many friends. We thank all those who over the past year have donated either works of art or funds that enable us to continue not only to enhance our collections but also to educate and intrigue our visitors. Donors who have not been mentioned in the pages of this *Bulletin* are acknowledged on gallery labels and in the Annual Report.

Philippe de Montebello
Director

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RECENT ACQUISITIONS

A Selection: 2007–2008

Striding Horned Demon

Mesopotamia or Iran, ca. 3000 B.C.
Arsenical copper, h. 6⅞ in. (17.5 cm)
Provenance: Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, 1950–2007.
Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift, 2007 (2007.280)

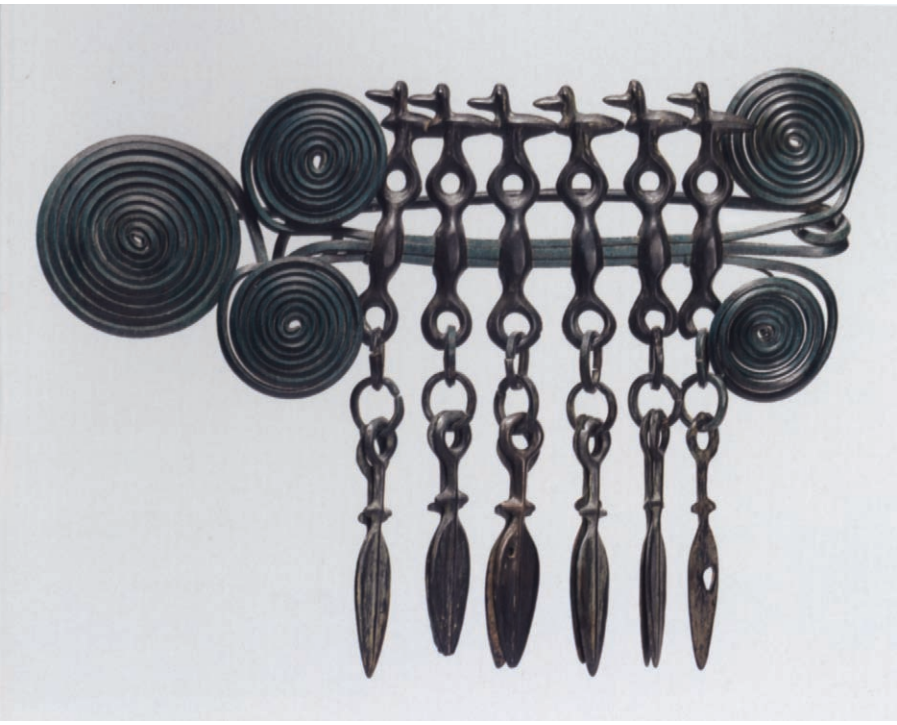
This figure is one of a pair of nearly identical solid-cast images of a striding male wearing the upturned boots associated with mountainous regions, his power enhanced by the mighty horns of the ibex on his head and the body and wings of a bird of prey draped around his shoulders. It is contemporary with the period of great urbanization in ancient Sumer, when a new worldview conceived of human figures in realistic terms, expressed here in the accurate proportions and highly modeled forms. Although the clenched fists with the thumbs resting on top, the thick-banded cap and wide belt, and the artificial-looking beard also evoke the royal iconography of Sumer, the blending of human and animal qualities is characteristic instead of the arts of the greater Mesopotamian highlands, which run from the Khuzistan plain of western Iran across the Jazira and onto the eastern Anatolian plateau. The seamless blend of highland iconography and urban style is a striking manifestation of two distinct but contemporary cultures. JME

Amarna-style Vizier's Image

Egyptian, reign of Akhenaten, ca. 1349–36 B.C.
Indurated limestone, h. 10 in. (25.4 cm)
Provenance: Nahman collection; sale, Hôtel Drouot, June 3, 1953, lot 6; [Charles Ede Limited, London].
Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift; Gift of Henry Walters, by exchange; and Anne and John V. Hansen Egyptian Purchase Fund, 2007 (2007.363)

The cord around the neck, its ends held in a sliding clasp at the back, identifies this fragment as from a statue of a vizier, a combination of prime minister and chief justice who was the highest official after the pharaoh in ancient Egypt. As is typical on such figures, the vizier's seal suspended from the cord is hidden beneath the man's garment. Both body and clothing are depicted with exceptional subtlety and naturalism: the shoulders and arms are softly rounded, the left arm is bent just enough to gracefully flex the forearm muscles, and the short fringe along the upper edge of the wrapped garment is interrupted where a corner of the cloth was tucked under to hold it in place.

The text written in the then newly introduced New Kingdom vernacular on the front and back of the statue is a hymn to King Akhenaten as mediator between humans and the solar god Aten, the sole deity of Amarna. No name is preserved on the piece, so it could represent any one of the three known viziers of Akhenaten's reign: Ramose, Nakht, and Aper-El (probably a Semitic name). Statues of nonroyal individuals from the Amarna period are extremely rare. DA



Fibula

Central Europe, Late Bronze Age, 1100–1000 B.C.
Copper alloy, 11⅛ x 7⅝ x 1¾ in. (28.2 x 19.5 x 4.3 cm)
Provenance: [Lischka-Antiquitaeten, Regensburg], 1968; Josef Hatzenbuehler, Germany and Houston, Texas, 1968–2007.
Gift of Josef and Brigitte Hatzenbuehler, 2007 (2007.498.1a,b)

This fibula, known as a "passementerie" type because of its resemblance to the ornamental trim on nineteenth-century women's clothing, is one of the largest and most complex to survive from Late Bronze Age Europe. The elaborate brooch reflects the sophisticated metallurgical production in central and eastern Europe in the eleventh century B.C. Three long thick copper-alloy wires, square in section, were hammered to form the five dynamic spirals. From the straight section of wire between the spirals hang six composite elements, each with a bird surmounting a horse bit with rings and pairs of spear heads or dagger blades. Similar jewelry has been found in hoards and, less often because burial was mainly by cremation, in gravesites excavated in central and eastern Europe. Apparently these prestigious objects functioned as offerings to the gods, and thus the abstracted forms on our fibula and their number may have had religious significance.

The fibula is one of a group of eleven objects (seven other brooches and two bracelets) given to the Museum by Josef and Brigitte Hatzenbuehler. CTL

Head of a Veiled Goddess

Greek, Classical, Attic, ca. 425 B.C.
Marble, h. 6⅞ in. (17.5 cm)
Provenance: Private collection, Paris, ca. 1910; [Mathias Komor, New York], 1953–54; sold to George L. Hern Jr.; presented as a gift to Mr. and Mrs. William Henry Told Jr., January 23, 1999.
Ex coll.: George L. Hern Jr., Gift of Mr. and Mrs. William Henry Told Jr., on the occasion of the reinstallation of the Greek and Roman galleries, 2007 (2007.328)

The presence of both a diadem and a himation (cloak) drawn over the hair suggests that this small, exquisitely carved head represents a female divinity such as Hera or Demeter. It may have belonged to a figure that was part of a high relief or the pediment of a small building. The neck and an inner fold of the himation curve quite strongly, suggesting that the figure was depicted moving rapidly to her left. Every fragment of original Greek sculpture from the High Classical period is precious; this particularly fresh and well-preserved head must have been carved at approximately the same time as the frieze of the Parthenon in Athens. EJM

Marble Head of the Athena Medici Type

Roman, Antonine period, ca. A.D. 138–92
Copy of a Greek statue of ca. 440–30 B.C. attributed to Pheidias
Marble, h. 7¾ in. (19.7 cm)
Provenance: Paul Hartwig (1859–1919), Rome; Hamilton Easter Field, New York, by 1922; Robert Laurent, Bloomington, Indiana, by 1954; Otto J. Brendel (1901–1973), New York; by descent to his daughter, Cornelia Foss, New York.
Purchase, Rogers Fund, 2007 (2007.293)

This youthful helmeted head is of a famous fifth-century B.C. Greek sculptural type attested by more than two dozen Roman copies and adaptations: the so-called *Athena Medici*, named after a monumental draped torso in the Louvre. The original Greek creation, which has not survived, has traditionally been attributed to Pheidias, the most famous Greek artist of his generation and the maker of the colossal cult statue of Athena inside the Parthenon on the Athenian Akropolis.

The top and back of the head are worked smooth, with shallow point marks and a deep channel, a technique employed specifically for the joining of wood elements to stone. The helmet was originally completed in gilt wood, and the figure's hollow eyes were inlaid separately in another material. This technique is called akrolithic. It combines stone for the flesh surfaces with gilt wood elements, imitating the appearance of gold and ivory statues such as the *Athena Parthenos* by Pheidias. CAP

Standard Bearer(?)

Mexico (Colima), 200 B.C.–A.D. 300
Ceramic, h. 15⅜ in. (39.1 cm)
Provenance: Miles J. Lourie, New York, 1960s; private collection, California; [Ancient Art of the New World, New York]; Andrall E. Pearson Family Collection, Greenwich, Connecticut.
Gift of Joanne P. Pearson, in memory of Andrall E. Pearson, 2007 (2007.345.7)

In the centuries on either side of the first millennium, much three-dimensional ceramic sculpture was made in the western Mexican region that now corresponds to the modern states of Colima, Nayarit, and Jalisco. The three states have given their names to the styles of three groups of ancient ceramics that have been identified within their borders. The Colima style, today the most popular of the three, is generally known for its contained volumes, simplified detail, and almost monochrome surfaces, which are most frequently a rich red-brown that at its best is brilliant in appearance.

Substantial numbers of Colima ceramic sculptures like this one have been discovered in burials, where they were placed as funerary offerings. Some large, probably family tombs held dozens of them. The specific meaning of many of the depictions can only be conjectured. Warriors, for instance, are identified by the slings they carry and their pugnacious attitudes. This example may be a standard bearer. The raised right arm and empty fist that could well have supported a staff with a banner suggest that it might be. Standard bearers are more common in later Mexican sculpture, when they are frequently depicted in stone. JJ

Enthroned Jina, Probably Shantinatha

India (Gujarat, Akota),
ca. 7th century
Copper alloy, h. 13¾ in. (34.9 cm)
Provenance: [Spink and Son, London, 1982]; Jina Collection, United States; exhibited, Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Washington, D.C., 1996–2000.
Purchase, several members of The Chairman's Council Gifts and Josephine Jackson Foundation Gift, 2008 (2008.279a,b)

This is one of the finest Jain bronzes to survive from first-millennium India, and as such represents a critical moment in devotional Jain art. It depicts an enthroned Jain savior, deep in meditation, seated in yogic posture on a jeweled cushion set upon a two-tiered lion-supported throne. The presence of the two kneeling deer supporting the wheel of law (*dharma-cakra*) suggests that the savior is Shantinatha, the sixteenth in the lineage of twenty-four historical Jinas identified by Jainism. This is one of the earliest images in which this cognitive mark, the deer, is present as a secure identifier of the Jina. The yaksha Gomedha and the yakshi Ambika, here seated in royal ease on projecting lotus supports, are a feature of Jina icons made before the tenth century.

On the reverse of the bronze is a donor inscription in seventh-century script. Judging by the dedicatory inscription and the piece's relatively large size, this enthroned savior was designed to function as a meditative icon in a Jain temple. Such images were routinely placed before larger stone icons, and they were adorned and processed at appropriate times in the temple's ritual calendar. JG

Dancing Ganesha

India (Madhya Pradesh),
10th century
Mottled red sandstone,
h. 36 in. (91.4 cm)
Provenance: Sung Chuk Chai,
Hong Kong, 1988.
Gift of Florence and Herbert Irving,
2007 (2007.480.2)

Of the forms of the Hindu god Ganesha most enjoyed by devotees, the dancing Ganesha is the most celebrated. This animated and engaging sculpture represents the elephant-headed son of Shiva and Paravati with ten arms in a dancing posture that has distinctly martial overtones. In his hands he holds a bowl of sweetmeats (*modakapatra*), the broken end of his tusk, a rosary (*aksamala*), and the handles of two (now lost) weapons, one probably an ax (*parasu*). In his raised arms he clasps an outstretched snake to demonstrate his power over the natural world, a gesture that emulates his divine father Shiva slaying the elephant-demon Gajasura. Ganesha wears another snake to denote his sacred thread (*yajnaopavita*) and an array of fine jewelry. His obese body alludes to his probable origins as a yaksha, a nature-spirit divinity, a role he retained as the lord of the *ganas*, Shiva's dwarf attendants.

The complex iconography of the dancing Ganesha appeared only in about the eighth century, as part of his elevation into the newly emerging temple schemas. His placement at the beginning of a temple's circumambulation path affirms Ganesha's role as the Remover of Obstacles, the lord who can ensure success for a devotee's ventures. JG

Banner with a Bodhisattva, Possibly Mahamayuri

China (Dunhuang area), 9th–10th century
Ink and pigment on silk, 22½ x 11 in. (57 x 28 cm)
Provenance: Fred H. Andrews (1864–1957), England; his nephew, George Arliss Andrews; his great niece.
Purchase, The Vincent Astor Foundation Gift, 2007 (2007.294a,b)

Distinguished by the brilliance of the pigments, this banner represents a type of painting produced in the renowned Buddhist cave sanctuaries at Mogao in northwest China. Such banners are standard accoutrements in China and Japan, and examples are preserved from as early as the seventh century. Depictions of Buddhist deities rather than geometric and floral patterns typify banners produced after the eighth century.

An image of a seated Buddha fills the triangular upper section. Painted on the rectangular banner is a standing bodhisattva wearing gold jewelry that includes a crown with fluttering ribbons, a heavy necklace, earrings, armlets, a bracelet, and anklets. The frontal position and rugged proportions of the bodhisattva are typical of Chinese representations of these divinities in the ninth and tenth centuries. Moreover, the peacock feather in the right hand raises the intriguing possibility that the bodhisattva represents Mahamayuri, who often carries this attribute as well as a vessel for holding water. An important deity in later esoteric traditions, Mahamayuri is usually shown as female in Indian and Tibetan art. Male renderings are, however, preserved in ninth-century Japanese mandalas, and it is possible that this painting is one of the earliest renderings of the deity. DPL

Pendant

Probably Iran, 11th–12th century
Gold sheet, wire, granulation, and filigree; diam. 2⅜ in. (5.9 cm)
Provenance: Sale, Bonhams, London, April 19, 2007, lot 124.
Purchase, Shamina Talyarkhan Gift, 2007 (2007.340)

This pendant belongs to the same set as a pair of earrings the Museum acquired in 2006. It is constructed of gold sheet, wire, and filigree; the details of the decoration, including the two confronted birds joined by their beaks, were achieved with openwork filigree and fine granulation. A number of mushroom-shaped prongs decorated with granulation protrude from the pendant. The stem of each prong is pierced, suggesting that strings of tiny pearls once decorated this jewel. This beautifully constructed object has an immediate, strong aesthetic appeal. On the one hand, the best technical and aesthetic comparisons for it and the earrings can be found in the Greater Iranian region. On the other, the iconography of the confronted birds, the box construction, and, especially, strings of pearls were popular in Fatimid Syria and Egypt. That the prongs, a prominent feature of both the pendant and the matching earrings, appear to be unique makes a firm attribution even more difficult.

The earrings had been in a private collection in England since 1950; the pendant was acquired at a London auction in 2007 but most likely made its way to Europe at the same time as the earrings. SC

Double Page from "The Nurse's Qur'an"

Probably Qairawan, Tunisia,
ca. 1019–20
Ink, colors, and gold on parchment,
17½ x 23⅝ in. (44.5 x 60 cm)
Provenance: [Sam Fogg, London].
Purchase, James and Diane Burke Gift, in honor of Dr. Marilyn Jenkins-Madina, 2007 (2007.191)

Calligraphy is the most significant form of art in the Islamic world. Much of its aura derives from the need to copy and disseminate the Qur'an in the early years of Islam. No complete copy of an early Qur'anic manuscript has survived, but the Metropolitan Museum owns an impressive collection of individual pages written in early scripts. The latest addition, this monumental bifolium from the *Mashaf al-hadina*, or "The Nurse's Qur'an," written in distinctive "broken cursive," adds another splendid feather to the collection's cap. The sobriquet comes from an annotation on another surviving page of the manuscript that states that the nurse of the Zirid prince al-Muʿizz ibn Badis (r. 1016–62) endowed it to the Great Mosque of Qairawan in the month of Ramadan of the year A.H. 410 (December 30, 1019–January 28, 1020). The Zirid dynasty was a Berber family that ruled over North Africa between 972 and 1152. A second annotation reveals that the entire manuscript, from its calligraphy to its binding, was produced by ʿAli ibn Ahmad al-Warraq (the Papermaker or the Bookseller). The exceptional amount of information we have about the manuscript helps place it among the most important examples of medieval Islamic calligraphy known today. SC

Cameo of the Virgin and Child

Byzantine (probably Constantinople), ca. 1050–1100, mounted in Paris ca. 1800 in a gold frame by Adrien Jean Maximillian Vachette (1753–1839)
Agate; 3 x 2⅛ x ¼ in. (7.7 x 5.4 x .7 cm), without frame 2⅜ x 1⅝ in. (6 x 4 cm)
Provenance: Probably J-J Régis Cambacérès, second consul under Napoleon (1753–1824); sold by his descendants, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, June 24–25, 1985; Heneage collection, 1985–98; [Sam Fogg, London], 1998; John C. Weber, New York, 1998–2007.
Gift of John C. Weber, in honor of Mary and Michael Jaharis, 2007 (2007.445)

The delicately carved cameo displays a popular medieval Byzantine image of the Virgin and Child. Making subtle use of the agate's colors, the artist placed the image of the Virgin with her hands upraised in the orant, or prayer pose, on a bluish layer suggestive of the heavens. A large medallion on her breast contains a bust of the youthful Christ Emmanuel, symbolic of the preexistent word of God. Flanking the Virgin's head are abbreviations in Greek (MP/ΘY) identifying her as the Theotokos, Mother of God. This icon type, which became popular in the eleventh century, is often called the Virgin Blachernitissa after the Blachernai Monastery in the imperial Byzantine capital Constantinople (now Istanbul), which is thought to have housed a similar image. Byzantine hardstone carvings were a widely admired luxury good during the medieval period. Similarly exquisite carving is found on a Byzantine cameo thought to have come from the Royal Treasury of the Kings of France that is now in the Cabinet des Médailles of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. The elaborate gold frame on the Metropolitan's cameo, with tiny bird-head clasps anchoring the stone, attests that in France admiration for such fine works continued into the Napoleonic era. HCE

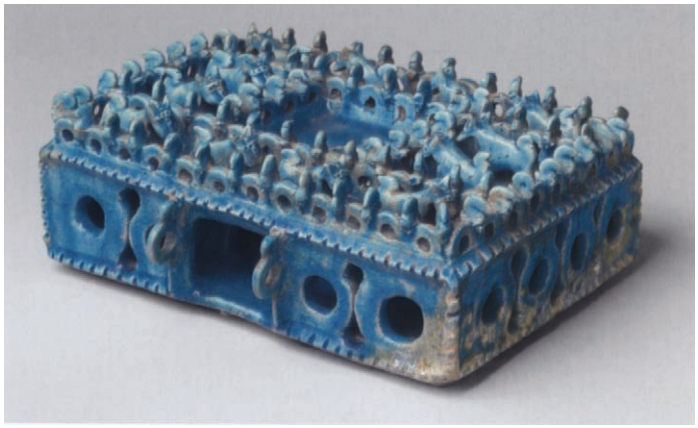
(folios 42 verso–43 recto)

Jaharis Byzantine Lectionary

Constantinople, ca. 1100
Tempera, ink, and gold leaf on parchment, leather binding; 14½ x 11⅝ x 4⅞ in. (36.8 x 29.6 x 12.4 cm)
Provenance: Chrysanthos Notaras, patriarch of Jerusalem (1707–31), 1707; possibly monastery of Mount Athos, until 1866; Constantin Erbiceanu (1838–1913), Athens, Paris, and Romania, 1866–77; [Claudin, Paris], 1877; Henri Bordier, Châtelaine-Aïre, Switzerland, 1877 until his death in 1888; Baron Fernand de Schickler; to Société Biblique Protestante (now Alliance Biblique Française), by 1898–2006; [Jörn Günther Antiquariat, Hamburg], 2006–7.
Purchase, Mary and Michael Jaharis Gift and Lila Acheson Wallace Gift, 2007 (2007.286)

(detail of folio 109 recto)

The Jaharis Lectionary, one of the greatest manuscripts from the height of the Byzantine Empire, provides the Museum with an exceptional representation of a tradition the Byzantines considered one of their greatest art forms. The lectionary was last displayed in public in 1958 at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. Lectionaries in which the gospels are arranged in order of their reading during the liturgical year were especially popular during the Middle Byzantine era. Written in handsome "Perlschrift" Greek, the Jaharis Lectionary's 313 folios include the gospel lections (readings), the Easter liturgy, the church calendar, and a menologion (lives of the saints). The calendar has been identified as being for use in Hagia Sophia, the greatest church of Constantinople, or one of its dependencies. The four evangelist portraits that decorate the lectionary represent the apogee of late eleventh- to early twelfth-century Constantinopolitan art. The delicately detailed portraits are framed by elaborate borders reminiscent of cloisonné enamel. Exquisitely detailed historiated initials in the text include images of Christ and John the Forerunner (John the Baptist). Colophons, or inscriptions in the text, show that in the first years of the eighteenth century the work belonged to Chrysanthos Notaras, patriarch of Jerusalem and one of the important early members of the "Greek Enlightenment." HCE



House Model

Iran, 12th–13th century
Glazed fritware, 3½ x 9 x 7½ in. (9 x 23 x 19 cm)
Provenance: [Hadji Baba Gallery, London], early 1990s; [Phoenix Ancient Art, New York], 1994.
Purchase, Goldman Sachs Gift, 2007 (2007.354)

One of the finest examples of medieval Iranian ceramic "house models," this rectangular object with openwork sides, covered in a vibrant pale blue glaze, is decorated with small birds sitting along the upper perimeter and rows of domestic animals symmetrically lined up on the top. A few dozen house models have survived in public and private collections (four other less spectacular ones are in the Metropolitan Museum). The purpose of these peculiar objects is unknown, although it has been suggested that they were related to the marriage ceremony or were presented as gifts at the Persian Nowruz, or New Year festival. This model may have functioned as a perfume burner; the incense would have been placed inside a drawer and inserted into the front opening. Most of these house models display human figures in scenes illustrating some kind of ceremony or festive occasion, such as a wedding or a banquet. The boxes that include animals may have been inspired either by Tang-period farm models or by the figures found on tall Chinese porcelain burial vases from the thirteenth century. SC

Aquamanile in the Form of a Ram

England (probably Scarborough), late 13th–early 14th century
Glazed earthenware, 9 7/16 x 11½ x 5¼ in. (23.9 x 29.2 x 13.3 cm)
Provenance: [Armetal, Paris]; [Sam Fogg, London].
The Cloisters Collection, 2007 (2007.142)

Derived from the Latin words for water (*aqua*) and hand (*manus*), an aquamanile is an animal- or human-shaped vessel for pouring water over the hands. Most surviving medieval European examples are cast in copper alloy and date from the twelfth through the fifteenth century. Pottery examples like this one in the form of a ram were inspired by the more prestigious metal aquamanilia. Due to the fragility of earthenware, though, they are significantly rarer.

The ram is a work of considerable charm, and although it has lost its horns and much of its dark green glaze, it is among the finest and most intact pottery aquamanilia to survive from the Middle Ages. The main body of the vessel was skillfully thrown on a potter's wheel before the addition of the feet, handle, and head. A funnel-shaped opening that served to fill the vessel with water projects vertically from the shoulders, and the opening in the mouth served as a spout. The work can be dated to about 1300 (confirmed by thermoluminescence analysis), and stylistic comparisons with excavated earthenware vessels suggest that it was made in the prolific kilns of Scarborough, on the east coast of England. PB

Portrait of Shun'oku Myōha

Japan, Nanbokuchō period (1336–92), ca. 1383
Hanging scroll: ink, color, and gold on silk; 45 x 20½ in. (114.3 x 52.1 cm)
Inscribed at top by Shun'oku Myōha
Provenance: Henri Vever, Paris; sale, Sotheby's, London, June 16–17, 1994, lot 17; [London Gallery Ltd., Tokyo].
Gift of Sylvan Barnet and William Burto, 2007 (2007.329)

This formal portrait depicts Shun'oku Myōha (1311–1388), nephew and disciple of the preeminent master Musō Soseki (1275–1351) and a prominent figure in the history of Japanese Zen Buddhism. The severely damaged and faded inscription composed and inscribed by Shun'oku himself starts with an enigmatic Zen poem and ends with a statement that the portrait was made for a ritual at the subtemple

Muryōjuin. Muryōjuin has recently been identified as a subtemple of Kenninji Temple in Kyoto that was built by Musō Soseki for his master, Kōhō Kennichi (1241–1316).

The portrait of Shun'oku, who is seated in a Chinese-style chair, belongs to a genre of painting called *chinsō*. In China *chinsō* were originally intended for funerals and memorial services, but in Japan the term came to signify paintings and sculptures made to preserve the likenesses of Zen masters. In Japan *chinsō* were used not only for ritual commemorative ceremonies but also most likely to certify the transmission of Dharma (Buddhist Law) from masters to their disciples. When Buddhist monks used *chinsō* to transmit a particular Zen lineage, their purpose was to maintain and increase their political power in the Zen community. MW

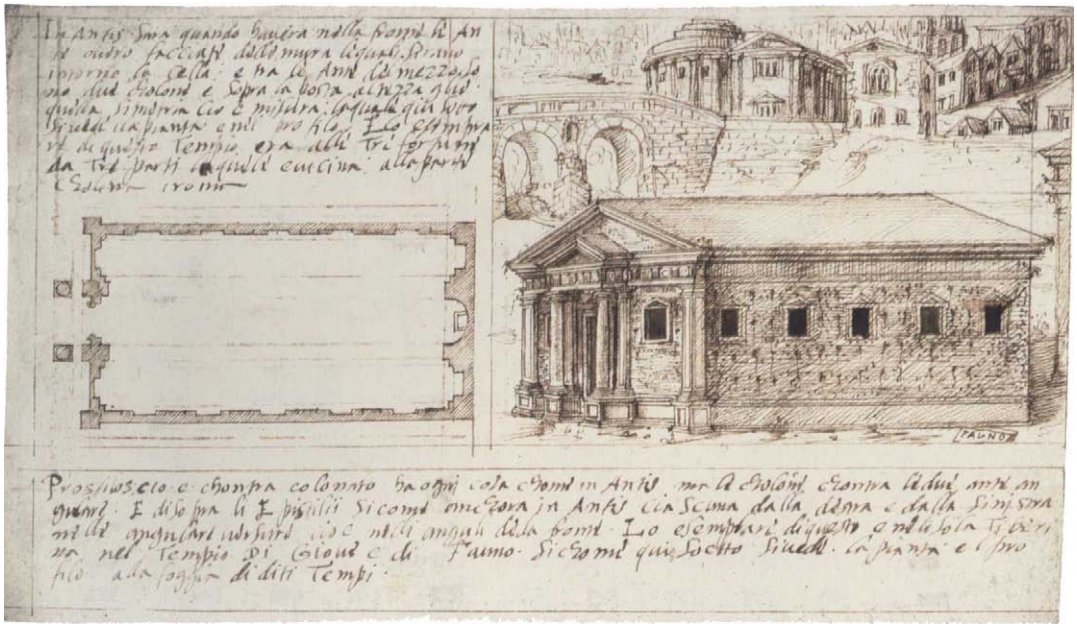
Niccolò di Giacomo da Bologna
Italian, active ca. 1330–1403

The Martyrdom of Saint Stephen in an Initial E

Ca. 1394–1402
Tempera and gold on parchment,
7 ½ x 6 ⅞ in. (19 x 17.6 cm)
Provenance: Certosa di Farneta, near Lucca; James Dennistoun (1803–1855), Dennistoun, Scotland, 1838; Isabella Dennistoun Henson (1869–1949); Kenneth Clark, Lord of Saltwood, England, ca. 1930; sale, Sotheby's, London, June 18, 1962, lot 125 (no. 8 of 18 miniatures); [H. P. Kraus, New York], 1986; [Jörn Günther Antiquariat, Hamburg], by 1997; private collection, Europe; [Jörn Günther Antiquariat, Hamburg], 2007.
Purchase, Gift of George Blumenthal, by exchange, Elaine Rosenberg and Austin B. Chinn Gifts, and Bequest of Fannie F. Einstein, in memory of Emanuel Einstein, by exchange, 2007 (2007.236)

Cut from a gradual, or choir book for the Mass, this image of the stoning of Stephen is set within the confines of a letter E, the opening letter of a hymn in honor of the first Christian martyr. The crossbar of the E effectively separates good and evil—the kneeling deacon in prayer on one side and King Herod, perhaps with Saul beside him, and his henchmen on the other.

Niccolò da Bologna was a prolific and highly compensated illuminator whose commissions included liturgical, secular, and civic manuscripts. In the late 1380s he was named official illuminator of Bologna. His work and that of his atelier are represented in most every significant collection of manuscripts in Europe and the United States. Niccolò di Lazzaro Guinigi, whose arms appear on one of the sister miniatures, commissioned the choir books from which this cutting came during his first tenure as archbishop of Lucca (1394–1402) for the Certosa di Farneta, a Carthusian house dedicated to the Holy Spirit. Born into a family that served as bankers to the pope in Rome from 1377 to 1392, Guinigi rose from cleric to archbishop in a single year. This sumptuously decorated miniature reflects the taste of the archbishop more than that of the community, traditionally known for its austerity. BDB



Attributed to the Sangallo family

Temple Types: *In Antis* and Prostyle

Florence, ca. 1530–50
Pen and brown ink, 6 x 10 ½ in. (15.3 x 26.6 cm)
Provenance: Sale, Mallams Fine Art Auctioneer, Oxford, June 8, 2007, lot 143.
Purchase, Bequest of W. Gedney Beatty, by exchange, 2008 (2008.105.2)

A recent discovery, this sheet and seven others comprised a manuscript draft for an Italian edition of the sole surviving architectural treatise of Roman antiquity, *Ten Books on Architecture* by Marcus Pollius Vitruvius (late first century B.C.). Had the project been completed, it would have ranked among the brilliantly imaginative works of Renaissance interpretative architectural theory. The text at the upper left describes the temple *in antis* (in which the side walls protrude to flank the columns on the porch in front) and refers to the Temple of the Three Fortunes near the Colline Gate in Rome. The text at the bottom describes prostyle temples (buildings with a row of columns, or portico, at the front only) and considers the Temples of Jove and Faunus on the Isola Tiberina. The Temple of Faunus is illustrated at the left in plan and at the center right in a perspectival three-quarter view. The cityscape portrays the Isola Tiberina.

The author of this manuscript was Florentine, given his style of orthography, and he wrote in a rapid cursive script (*alla mercantesca*) datable to the 1530s or 1540s. The drawings are stylistically related to those by Bastiano "Aristotile" da Sangallo in the marginalia of a 1486 edition of Vitruvius that was reworked in the 1530s. The Sangallo family had been deeply interested in Vitruvius's treatise for two generations. CCB

Sarasa Trade Cloth with Eleven Female Musicians

India (Gujarat), late 16th or 17th century
Block-printed plain-weave cotton (mordant- and resist-dyed), 37 ½ x 220 in. (95.3 x 558.8 cm)
Provenance: Formerly in the collections of Franz Lakner and Thomas Murray.
Purchase, 2006 Benefit Fund, Steven and Cynthia Brill Gift, and funds from various donors, 2007 (2007.358)

This ornately decorated painted cloth is a rare example of a ceremonial textile hanging produced in western India for the Indonesian market. It depicts a parade of eleven women dressed in saris, bodices, and shawls, each carrying a long-necked stringed instrument (*vina*-type) in her right hand and a parrot perched on her left. The mordant-dyed pattern of each figure was applied with a single printed block, the registration voids between the blocks being clearly discernible. The women's faces and hands are painted red, suggesting henna decoration, and their diadems and large ear ornaments are adorned with a sacred goose (*hamsa*) motif. The composition can be traced back to fifteenth-century western Indian manuscript paintings, although "Jain-style" conventions such as the profile head with a projecting second eye persisted in painted textiles long after they disappeared from manuscript paintings. Based in part on the border designs, this cloth can be dated to the late sixteenth or seventeenth century. The subject of the scene remains enigmatic. These finely dressed and bejeweled women are clearly musicians. The parrots (which have amorous associations) suggest they may be courtesans, but they may also have a more specific identification, as the celestial *apsaras* who occupy Indra's heaven, the most elevated of the heavens in Jain cosmology. JG

Gathering of Scholars

Korean, Chosŏn period (1392–1910), ca. 1551
Hanging scroll: ink and light color on silk, 51 x 26¾ in.
(129.5 x 67.9 cm)
Provenance: Private collection, Japan, late 1800s–1980s;
private collection, Tokyo, 1980s–2008; [Christie's, New York].
Purchase, Acquisitions Fund, and The Vincent Astor Foundation and Hahn Kwang Ho Gifts, 2008 (2008.55)

This elegant sixteenth-century scroll is a rare and well-preserved example of Korean secular painting before 1600. Belonging to a type known as a "scholars' gathering picture," it commemorates a reunion of near-septuagenarian scholar-officials who entered the government about the same time, having earned similar civil service degrees. In addition to identifying the event, the poetic inscription advises the participants "to set aside serious matters and focus only on poetry and drinking." It was written in 1551 by Chŏng Sa-ryong (1491–1570), a government official and noted literatus, poet, and calligrapher who may have commissioned the work.

The meticulously rendered figures gathered under tall pine trees at the bottom right are set against an impressive landscape of rocky mountains and, in the center, a winding stream. Nature, the setting for the event, dominates the pictorial surface, reflecting the emergence of landscape as the most important genre of Korean painting in the early Chosŏn period. This is the work of a highly sophisticated sixteenth-century court painter who has successfully re-created enduring pictorial paradigms of the past—distant and immediate, foreign and native—in a distinctive and eloquent style. SL

Pair of Stirrups

Japan, late 16th–early 17th century
Iron, lacquer, and mother-of-pearl;
h. 10⅜ in. (26.3 cm), w. 4⅞ in. (12.5 cm),
l. 11¾ in. (29.8 cm)
Provenance: [Shuzando Co. Ltd., Tokyo].
Purchase, Tom and Lenore Firman Gift, in honor of George and Ruth Kosaka, 2008 (2008.120.1, 2008.120.2)

This pair of stirrups is made in the traditional form that is unique to Japan. The form is known as *hato mune* (pigeon breast) and cradles the foot in an open tray curved up at the front and terminating at the top in a rectangular arm topped by a large buckle. Here the arm is pierced just below the buckle with a stylized dragonfly design. The stirrups are made of iron, which is covered entirely in lacquer and profusely inlaid with mother-of-pearl. Stirrups decorated with mother-of-pearl are rare, and this pair is perhaps the finest surviving example. The outer edges of the stirrups are embellished with a repeating coin or treasure motif known as *shipōtsunagimon*. Prominently placed on the front of each stirrup is a *mon* (heraldic emblem) consisting of three hollyhock leaves in a circle that signifies ownership by the Tokugawa family, which held the office of *shogun* (supreme military commander of Japan) from 1603 to 1867. At the time these stirrups were made, luxurious objects displaying the Tokugawa *mon* so prominently would have been appropriate only for Ieyasu Tokugawa, his son Hidetada Tokugawa (the first and second *shogun*, respectively), or one of their closest relatives. MO

Joris Hoefnagel
Netherlandish, 1542–1601

Still Life with Flowers, a Snail, and Insects

1589
Watercolor and gouache on vellum, framed with a line in gold; 4⅜ x 3⅝ in. (11.7 × 9.3 cm)
Signed and inscribed in cartouche: *AMORIS MONUMENTV[M] MATRI CHARISS[IMAE] / GEORGIVS HOEFNAGLIVS. D. Ao 89*
Provenance: Given by the artist to his mother, Elisabeth Veselaer Hoefnagel (died after 1589); possibly by descent to her daughter, Susanna Hoefnagel-Huygens (1561–1633), The Hague; possibly by descent within the Huygens family; private collection, the Netherlands; Nicolaas Teeuwisse, Berlin.

Purchase, Anonymous Gift, Jean A. Bonna and Charles and Jessie Price Gifts and The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 2008 (2008.110)

Dated 1589, this drawing is among the first known independent still lifes by a Netherlandish artist. As the dedication attests, it is also a touching monument to the artist's love for his mother and was possibly presented to her on the occasion of her seventieth birthday. The drawing was made during the years Joris Hoefnagel worked in Munich, where his great skills as a miniature painter (which belie the fact that he received no formal education as an artist) gained him an appointment at the ducal court.

Hoefnagel's miniatures are known for their painstaking execution and subtle observation. That he based them on separate plant studies can be inferred by the reoccurrence of certain flowers and insects. He used the rose in the center of this drawing, for instance, to illuminate a manuscript now in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, and the globe flower at the upper right reappears in a print by his son Jacob. By combining the appearance of drawn model sheets with the learned emblematic tradition of the Renaissance, Hoefnagel exerted a lasting influence on still life painting, one of the most innovative genres of Dutch seventeenth-century art. SA

Karel van Mander
Netherlandish, 1548–1606

The Challenge of the Pierides

Ca. 1600(?)
Pen and brown ink, brown wash; 6⅝ × 9 in. (16.7 × 22.7 cm)
Provenance: John McGowan (died 1803), Edinburgh; probably his sale, London, Th. Philipe, January 26–February 2, 1804; sale, Christie's, New York, January 25, 2007, lot 57 (as circle of Hendrick Goltzius); to [Katrin Bellinger Kunsthandel, Munich].
Purchase, 2004 Acquisitions Benefit Fund and Dodge Fund, 2007 (2007.406)

Like his Italian predecessor Giorgio Vasari, Karel van Mander is best known as an author, in his case of the first collection of biographies of Netherlandish artists, but he was also a highly skilled and wonderfully imaginative draftsman. This drawing depicts a story told in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (5.294–678) in which the nine Pierides, daughters of King Pierus of Emathia, are turned into magpies after losing the singing contest to which they challenged the nine Muses. The scene is set at one of the sacred sources on Mount Helicon or Mount

Parnassus. Probably following the example of a print after Rosso Fiorentino, Van Mander seems to have cast Apollo as the final judge. This drawing and two similar sheets by Van Mander at the Uffizi, Florence, may have been meant as the continuation of an elaborate but aborted series of print illustrations of the *Metamorphoses* by Van Mander's great contemporary and friend Hendrick Goltzius. Goltzius in turn must have been incited to work on the series by Van Mander's interest in Ovid's book, on which he published a commentary in 1604. SA

Miniature Tunic (*Uncu*)

Bolivia (Potosí), 17th–18th century
Cotton, camelid hair, silk, metal; 14½ x 11 in. (36.8 x 27.9 cm)
Provenance: Sale, Sotheby's, New York, May 12–13, 1983, lot 318; Richard Levine and Penny Righthand, Emeryville, California.
Gift of Penny Righthand, in memory of Richard Levine, 2007 (2007.470)

For several thousand years a tunic-like shirt known as an *uncu* was the traditional male garment in the central Andes. Rectangular in shape with seams at the sides and openings at the neck and shoulders, *uncus* exist in countless versions, from rudimentary to luxurious. Miniature *uncus* had an equally long history in Peru/Bolivia, where they were sacred and adorned statues and significant natural features such as sacred rocks, called *haucas*. During Inka times, in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the miniatures were included in ritual offerings. After Spanish rule was established in Peru/Bolivia later in the sixteenth century, *uncus* continued to be made and worn. Miniature *uncus* played religious roles such as clothing images of the Christ Child, which would have been the purpose of this example. This small *uncu* incorporates both native Inka and colonial-era Christian features. The bright colors and floral images suggest that it was used for spring or harvest festivals, and the basic purple color associates it with Inka royalty, as do the central double rows of simplified *topapu*. *Topapu* are individually conceived geometric designs worked in linear groups that were frequently used on Inka works of art, from textiles to ritual drinking vessels. Their meaning has yet to be deciphered. JJ and EP

Ludovico Carracci
Italian, 1555–1619

Madonna and Child with Saints

1607
Oil on copper, 11¾ x 9⅞ in. (29.8 x 25.1 cm)
Inscribed on the verso: *LUDOVICUS CARRATIUS / BONONIEN FACIEBAT / ANNO DNI 1607*
Provenance: Cardinal Benedetto Giustiniani, Bologna and Rome, 1607 until his death in 1621; his brother, Marchese Vincenzo Giustiniani, Rome, 1621 until his death in 1637; Andrea Giustiniani, from 1644 principe di Bassano, Rome, 1637 until his death in 1667; Giustiniani family, Rome, 1667–ca. 1790s; Sir William Hamilton, Palazzo Sessa, Naples, from ca. 1790s; his nephew, Hon. Charles Francis Greville, London, by 1803 until his death in 1809; sale, Christie's, London, March 31, 1810, lot 90; Henry Petty-FitzMaurice, 3rd Marquess of Lansdowne, Bowood, Calne, Wiltshire, 1810 until his death in 1863); Marquesses of Lansdowne, Bowood, 1863–ca. 2001; [Simon Dickinson, London], until 2001; to Mark Fisch, Livingston, New Jersey, 2001–7.
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Mark Fisch, 2007 (2007.330)

This exquisite and well-preserved picture was painted for Cardinal Benedetto Giustiniani in 1607, during his term as papal legate to Bologna. It is unquestionably among the most beautiful small-scale works by Ludovico Carracci, who, together with his cousin Annibale, was one of the towering figures of early Baroque painting. Although small in size, its conception is anything but miniature-like. The Virgin's statuesque pose recalls Michelangelo's heroic sibyls on the Sistine Ceiling, but she is rendered with the elegance and refinement of Parmigianino's beautiful female figures. (Ludovico championed Parmigianino as one of the glories of northern Italian painting.)

The Virgin's gaze is lowered modestly, and she extends her prayer book over a brick ledge on which have been placed some stalks of wheat, forming a sort of improvised altar. Next to her sits the infant Christ, who places one hand over his mother's womb and in the other holds wheat ears, symbol of the Eucharist. On the right, their heads arranged in a descending diagonal that defines the space of the picture, are Saints Bernard, Peter (wearing a cope and holding a key), Andrew (with his cross), Paul (holding a sword), and Catherine of Alexandria (wearing a crown and kneeling behind a broken wheel, her emblem of martyrdom) and a virgin saint (holding a palm branch).

KC

Domenichino (Domenico Zampieri)
Italian, 1581–1641

The Lamentation

1603
Oil on copper, 20⅞ x 14¾ in. (53 x 37.5 cm)
Provenance: George Aufrere, London, by 1775; his widow, Arabella (Bate) Aufrere, London, 1801; her son-in-law, Charles Anderson-Pelham, 1st Baron Yarborough, London, 1804; Charles Anderson-Pelham, 1st Earl of Yarborough, London, 1823; Earls of Yarborough, London, 1846; Charles Alfred Worsley Anderson-Pelham, 4th Earl of Yarborough, London,1875; sale, Christie's, London, July 12, 1929, lot 18; [Percy Moore Turner, London]; [Colnaghi, London]; Marcus Herbert Pelham, 6th Earl of Yarborough, Brocklesby Hall, Habrough, Lincolnshire; John Edward Pelham, 7th Earl of Yarborough, Brocklesby Hall, 1966; Charles John Pelham, 8th Earl of Yarborough, Brocklesby Hall, 1991; sale, Christie's, London, July 5, 2007, lot 40; [Otto Naumann, New York], 2007–8.
Purchase, Walter and Leonore Annenberg Acquisitions Endowment Fund, European Paintings Funds and funds from various donors; Mr. and Mrs. Mark Fisch and The Reed Foundation Gifts; Gwynne Andrews Fund; Elaine Rosenberg Gift; The Edward Joseph Gallagher III Memorial Collection, Edward J. Gallagher Jr. Bequest; Marquand Fund; Museum Purchase Fund; Peter Tcherepnine Gift; The Camille M. Lownds Fund; Stephenson Family Foundation Gift; Ruth and Victoria Blumka Fund; Earl Kiely Bequest; and The Morse G. Dial Foundation, 2005 CINOA Prize and Diane Carol Brandt Gifts, 2008 (2008.72)

An esteemed exponent of the early Baroque classical style, the twenty-two-year-old Domenichino painted this cabinet picture the year after he moved from his native Bologna to Rome to help Annibale Carracci decorate the new Farnese palace. The composition is a reprise of that of Annibale's large altarpiece for the church of San Francesco a Ripa, Rome (now Musée du Louvre, Paris). Although Domenichino took some liberties with Annibale's design, making it more compact and substituting Joseph of Arimathaea for a kneeling figure of Saint Francis, he so successfully captured the poignant drama of the altarpiece that the picture was thought until recently to be Annibale's work. Executed on a copper plate, the paint surface is almost perfectly preserved. EF

Kanewaka, also known as Takahira

Japanese, active 1609–26

Sword Blade (*Katana*)

Edo period (1615–1868), dated June 1622
Steel; l. 36½ in. (92.8 cm), edge 28⅛ in. (71.5 cm)
Signed and dated: *Echu no kami Fujiwara no Takahira / Gen'na hachi nen rokugatsu hi*
Provenance: Frederick M. Pederson; Henry Iijima; by descent to Etsuko Morris.
Gift of Etsuko O. Morris and John H. Morris Jr., in memory of Dr. Frederick M. Pederson, 2007 (2007.478.2a, b)

Kanewaka was the most famous swordsmith of Kaga (now in Ishikawa Prefecture) during the shinto (new sword) period, which spanned two hundred years, from the late sixteenth to the late eighteenth century. Sometime between making a sword dated September 18, 1619, and his next recorded sword, dated January 1621, Kanewaka began signing his blades with the name Takahira and including two important titles granted him by the emperor. This is seen in the signature on the Museum's sword: *Echu no kami Fujiwara no Takahira* (Takahira, Honorary Governor of Echu, Honorary Member of the Fujiwara Family).

In forging the surface texture of blades he signed *Kanewaka*, the swordsmith favored a mixture of two patterns: *itame* (wood grain) and *masame* (straight grain). His later blades signed Takahira, of which this is among the most beautiful, show a change to the *koitame* pattern, a small, finely patterned wood-grain effect. The pattern of the temper line along the edge of the blade is also a key stylistic feature. Here Takahira chose an oblique clove-shaped pattern with mixed zigzag lines influenced by blades from the Mino and Aoe schools of the mid-fourteenth century to create a temper line that is one of the most attractive on his known works. MO

Jacques Callot

French, 1592–1635

May Day Celebrations at Xeuilley

Ca. 1621–23
Pen and brown ink, brush and brown wash, over black chalk underdrawing, incised; 7 x 13⅛ in. (17.8 x 33.2 cm)
Provenance: Jean de Jullienne (1686–1766), Paris; sale, Paris, March 30–May 22, 1767, lot 695 (to Dumassol); Édouard Meaume; sale, Paris, February 10–12, 1887, lot 273; Hon. Thurstan Holland-Hibbert, Melksham, by 1932; Knutsford collection; sale, Sotheby's, London, April 11, 1935, lot 100; through [Colnaghi, London] to Tobias Christ, Basel (died 1952); by descent in his family; sale, Sotheby's, London, July 4, 2007, lot 77; [Katrin Bellinger Kunsthandel, Munich].
Purchase, Rogers Fund and several members of The Chairman's Council Gifts, 2008 (2008.74)

Born in the Duchy of Lorraine, Jacques Callot spent his formative years at the Medici court in Florence, where he recorded elaborate court pageants and festivals in an elegant Mannerist style. Following the death of Cosimo de' Medici in 1621, Callot returned to Nancy and embarked on a successful career as a printmaker, treating a wide range of subjects, from the court to the countryside, from military battles to biblical scenes.

This boldly worked sheet is a study for an etching depicting a May Day celebration in a village recently identified as Xeuilley, a small town in Lorraine where Callot's family owned property. A massive oak tree dominates the village green, providing shade for the dancing villagers and seating for the musicians. The subject gave Callot the opportunity to mix country folk with more elegantly dressed observers in an expansive sun-washed space reminiscent of a theatrical set. Albeit on a smaller scale, the scene echoes the panoramic ambitions of the etching *The Fair at Impruneta*, the masterpiece of Callot's Florentine period, which he had recently completed when he made this drawing. PS

Powder Flask

German, late 17th century
Ivory, silver-gilt, steel; h. 5¾ in. (14.5 cm), diam. 4¼ in. (10.8 cm)
Provenance: Sale, Christie's, London, September 20, 1989, lot 72; Peter Finer, Ilmington, England; Bernice and Jerome Zwanger.
Gift of Bernice and Jerome Zwanger, 2007 (2007.479.2)

Powder flasks were used as portable containers for loose gunpowder until the widespread adoption of cartridge ammunition in the mid-nineteenth century. In material and craftsmanship such flasks frequently matched the firearms they accompanied, including the richly decorated weapons carried by the aristocracy. In central Europe in the seventeenth century ivory was particularly prized for hunting equipment, and elaborately carved ivory flasks achieved a status as independent works of art.

The Museum's flask, the first European example in ivory to enter its collection, complements a number of ivory-embellished arms among our holdings, most importantly two hunting guns signed by the renowned sculptor Johann Michael Maucher (1645–1701) of Schwäbisch-Gmünd. Unlike most other German Baroque powder flasks, which are typically carved in robust high relief with dense compositions of fighting animals, this unusual and particularly distinguished specimen is carved in low relief with tiny figural compositions that are more pictorial than sculptural. Its face displays four oval frames enclosing three scenes of equestrian figures in wooded landscapes and one of target-shooting, all set around a circular frame enclosing three conjoined figures of huntsmen arranged in a spiral. The silver-gilt nozzle and its blued-steel spring provide colorful accents to the warm tone of the ivory. SWP

Tray for a Pan Box

India (Karimnagar, Deccan), 18th century
Cast silver with engraved decoration and filigree work, diam. 9 in. (22.9 cm)
Inscribed: *mohsin bama'i*[?] *bin tayyi*[*i*?] *bin al-din sahib*
Provenance: A. C. Ardeshir, Windsor, England, ca. 1939; by descent in the Ardeshir family; [Terrence McInerney, New York].
Purchase, Friends of Islamic Art Gifts, 2007 (2007.288)

The Deccan center of Karimnagar became well known in the eighteenth century for its production of fine silver ware with filigree. This round tray with a scalloped rim and alternating plain and pierced floral bands was probably once accompanied by a matching container for betel nut (*pan dan*). The central engraved rosette and surrounding rings of arabesque and scale ornament with an outer cusped edge represent a classical radiating design seen on Bidri ware and other objects from the region. Also etched on the surface is a Persian inscription that may give the name of a former owner.

Similarities between the silver filigree of Karimnagar and that made in Portugal and Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries have given rise to the speculation that the technique may have been introduced into the subcontinent through Portuguese Goa and subsequently refined. In the case of this tray, the openwork tracery also relates to the tradition of *jali* screens, a powerful aesthetic that connects architecture and the decorative arts of the period. Though Karimnagar is known for producing containers and vessels executed in highly worked silver wire, trays using this particular style of openwork and pierced technique remain relatively rare. NHH

Ancestor Figure (*Ekpu*)

Nigeria (Calabar Province), Ibibio peoples, Oron group, 18th–19th century
Wood, h. 27½ in. (69.9 cm)
Provenance: Jacques Kerchache, Paris.
Purchase, Acquisitions Benefit Fund 2006, and Ross Family Fund and Daniel and Marian Malcolm Gifts, 2007 (2007.173)

In the 1940s Britain's survey of its vast and immensely culturally diverse Nigerian territory brought to light the vestiges of a major figurative tradition produced by Oron sculptors from the southeast. Impressive for its scale and aesthetic refinement, this exceptional work may date back to the eighteenth century and represents the high point of this tradition. In this case, the Oron analytical approach to representation has led to a crystalline atomization of corporeal being. There is a formal purity to the crisp rendering of each bodily unit, and these are gracefully unified as an alternation of concave and convex elements within the overarching composition.

Until the 1930s the creation of figures like this was an essential part of the process whereby esteemed Oron elders were elevated to ancestral status. The figures portray distinguished individuals, with prominent headdresses, beards, and stomachs that allude to their exalted social standing, who were invoked to assure the well-being of their offspring. The eldest member of a clan was the guardian and keeper of a shrine in which as many as fourteen generations of forebears were so honored. Once Oron communities began to convert to Christianity in the nineteenth century, the shrines were gradually abandoned and in many instances destroyed. AL

Giovanni Grancino

Italian, 1637–1709

Violetta

Milan, 1701
Spruce, maple, ebony, ivory;
overall l. 23⅞ in (60.5 cm)
Provenance: [W. E. Hill and Sons, London]; [Wurlitzer-Bruck, New York].
Purchase, Amati Gifts, 2008 (2008.1)

Festoon-shaped bodies are known in viole da gamba but hardly ever in instruments, like this one, of the viola da braccio family. Only four violas with festoon-shaped bodies, sometimes called violettas, are known to survive (the other three are in Milan, London, and Vermillion, South Dakota). All four were built by Giovanni Grancino, the most distinguished Italian violin maker outside Cremona in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

Violettas are rather small violas; ours is not much larger than a violin. Their original function is not clear, but the assumption that they were used on stage as visibly impressive solo instruments, as in Claudio Monteverdi's opera *Orfeo* (1607), is believable. With the rise of the violin-viola-cello family during the seventeenth century the standardized forms won out, and violettas became rare documentations of late Renaissance and Baroque violin making.

HH

Attributed to Giovanni Smorsone
Italian, active 1702–38

Mandolino

Rome, ca. 1710–20
Ebony, ivory, rosewood, mother-of-pearl;
overall l. 21 ⅛ in. (53.5 cm)
Provenance: Sale, Phillips, London, December 12, 1993; to Tony Bingham, London.
Purchase, Amati Gifts, 2008 (2008.2a, b)

This type of Italian mandolino, usually called a *mandolino del vecchio tipo* (mandolin of the old type), was common from the sixteenth to the middle of the eighteenth century, when the larger Milanese, Genovese, and Neapolitan mandolins began to be used. The type is characterized by its small size, sickle-shaped peg box, and four to six double-course strings of gut, which are plucked without a plectrum.

Sometime during the eighteenth century the number of double-course strings in this mandolino was extended from five to six, which made it necessary to widen the neck on the bass side by about 3/16 inch. The rich decoration attests to the high quality of the instrument. The rose displaying the Hapsburg double eagle suggests that a member of the Austrian imperial family commissioned this mandolino, but no hard evidence can be found to support the suggestion. HH

Benedetto Luti
Italian, 1666–1724

Study of a Boy in a Blue Jacket

1717
Pastel and chalk on blue laid paper, 16 x 13 in. (40.6 x 33 cm)
Signed and dated on reverse in black ink: *Roma 1717 / Il Caual[iere] / Benedetto Luti fece*
Provenance: [Hampton and Sons, London]; Elizabeth Coates, San Antonio; by descent to Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Stieren, San Antonio, by 1996–2000; sale, Christie's, London, July 4, 2000, lot 125, with pendant; to [Mark Brady, New York], 2000–2007; sale, Sotheby's, New York, May 27, 2004, lots 9, 10, with pendant (withdrawn).
Gwynne Andrews Fund, 2007 (2007.360)

Benedetto Luti, who was born in Florence, moved in 1690 to Rome, where he became a member, and in 1720 *principe*, of the Accademia di San Luca. Painter, draftsman, and pastelist, he was also a dealer, a collector, and a pioneer of the Roman Rococo style. He was busy and influential, and by some reports a procrastinator, and his work is rare. Luti's fresh, brilliant pastels, which show the influence of Correggio and Barocci, were greatly admired by his contemporaries and are among the earliest works in this medium. His pastels do not often come in pairs, but this one was acquired with its pendant: *Study of a Girl in Red*, which is also signed and dated 1717. The two, which seem always to have been together, display contrasting moods, lighting, and tone. Typically, Luti employed luminous, fused colors strengthened with individual strokes of black, white, and brown.

Luti seems to have given favorite clients studies from the model, usually pastels or small paintings. Two drawings in colored chalks that he presented in 1616 to Viscount Coke, 1st Earl of Leicester, are still at Holkham Hall with Leicester's descendants. Variants of this study that descended in royal or princely families are in the Uffizi, Florence; the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich; and the State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg. KBB

Royal Porcelain Manufactory, Meissen
German, established 1710

Large Dish

Meissen, ca. 1745
Hard-paste porcelain, diam. 13⅝ in. (34.6 cm)
Marks on underside: crossed swords in underglaze blue, impressed *20*, and three slashes on inside of foot rim
Provenance: [Brian Haughton Antiques, London].
Gift of Mercedes Bass, 2007 (2007.243.20)

This large dish and another acquired with it were most likely produced as part of an extensive dinner service, although the service has not yet been identified. Their ornithological decoration suggests a date of manufacture in the mid- to late 1740s. In 1745 the Meissen factory acquired the first volume of Eleazer Albin's *Natural History of Birds*, and the decoration on a number of vases and other wares produced shortly thereafter was based on Albin's prints. The accuracy and specificity of the birds portrayed on these wares set them apart from the much less detailed and more generic birds on porcelain produced in the following decades. The skill of the Meissen painters is also reflected in the rendering of the insects on the molded basketwork pattern executed in low relief on the rim. JM

Mary Roberts
English, active United States, died 1761

The Middleton Cousins

Early 1750s
Watercolor on ivory, each 1½ x 1 in.
(3.8 x 2.5 cm)
Each signed: *MR* (the artist's monogram)
Provenance: Descended in the Middleton family; Shrublands sale, Sotheby's, London, September 19, 2006, lot 950; to Elle Shushan, Philadelphia.
Purchase, Dale T. Johnson Fund and Jan and Warren Adelson Gift, 2007 (2007.61–.65)

The English émigré Mary Roberts was the first known miniaturist in the American colonies. She arrived in Charleston before 1735 with her husband, Bishop, and after his death in 1740 seems to have supported herself by her work. Although Roberts is thought to have been prolific, her works are rare, as most have gone unrecorded. The Museum's group of five miniatures nearly doubles her extant oeuvre. Roberts worked in a diminutive format, and her extremely small and detailed work betrays her English training.

These miniatures, which date from the early 1750s and retain their original gold cases, portray a group of cousins, the children of brothers William (1710–1775) and Henry (1717–1784) Middleton. The figures sit high in the tiny picture plane. The two girls, Henrietta (1750–1792) and Hester (1754–1789), and the youngest boy, Thomas (1753–1779), wear white gowns; the two eldest boys, William (1748–1774) and William (1752–1758), wear rich red suits embellished with touches of gold and silver. Henry and his family lived primarily at Middleton Place, their plantation home in Charleston, South Carolina, while William resided at Crowfield and Shrublands, the family estates in Suffolk, England. The miniatures were discovered at Shrublands, the contents of which were sold in 2006. CRB

Ignaz Günther
German, 1725–1775

Bozetto* for *The Female Saint of Starnberg

Munich, ca.1755
Linden wood with pencil marks, h. 8⅛ in.
(20.6 cm)
Provenance: By descent to Dr. Richard von Kühlmann (1873–1949); sale 403, Auctionhouse Nagel, Stuttgart, March 21–22, 2007, lot 1073; [Blumka Gallery, New York].
Purchase, European Sculpture and Decorative Arts Fund, 2008 (2008.28)

The celebrated eighteenth-century Munich court sculptor Ignaz Günther carved this mesmerizing statuette. It is a *bozetto*, or working model, for the nearly lifesize sculpture of the so-called *Female Saint of Starnberg*, whose haunting composition was widely considered to be one of the artist's most innovative and poignant figural inventions. Günther captured the principal forms and volumes and the essential elements of the composition in his *bozetto* in the same way a painter would use a sketch. Though the model's surface is still angular and the detailing is uneven, its elegance and courtly gesture presage its transformation into a large figure. The seductive twisting of the saint's body, her theatrically animated costume rippling in an imaginary breeze, and the play of light and shadow contrast dramatically with the aura of restrained ecstasy. Whimsical sculptural accents such as the coiffure reflect Günther's superior command of the medium. He has transformed the wood material into a précis of heavenly lightness more befitting a ballerina than a female saint. His naturalistic rendering reflects the spirit of South German Rococo at its very best. WK

Nove Factory

Italian, established 1727

Covered Bowl and Stand

Nove, ca. 1765
Hard-paste porcelain; w. of bowl 6¼ in. (16 cm), diam. of stand: 8¾ in. (22.1 cm)
Marks: stylized *N*(?) and *o* incised on underside of bowl
Provenance: Sale, Bonham's, London, November 15, 2006, lot 161; [E and H Manners, London].
Purchase, The Isak and Rose Weinman Foundation Inc. Gift, 2007 (2007.254.1a,b, 2007.254.2)

That the Metropolitan Museum's holdings of eighteenth-century Italian porcelain are noted for both their quality and their depth makes the acquisition of this covered bowl and stand particularly appropriate. They were made at the factory of Nove, near Bassano in the north of Italy. A ceramic factory that produced faience (tin-glazed earthenware) was established in Nove in 1727, and porcelain was first manufactured there in about 1762. On stylistic grounds this covered bowl and stand appear to date from the early years of porcelain production at Nove, yet the decoration, both painted and molded, is remarkably sophisticated. The scrolling leaf and floral motifs executed in low relief reflect a thorough understanding of Rococo designs, as do the scrolling asymmetrical handles and the finial on the cover. Many of the painted reserves, however, include classical settings and motifs that indicate the growing influence of Neoclassicism. This bowl and stand thus embody a transitional moment in the decorative arts. They are among the most ambitious of the wares produced at Nove and reflect the factory's production during its most interesting period. JM

Ike Taiga

Japanese, 1723–1776

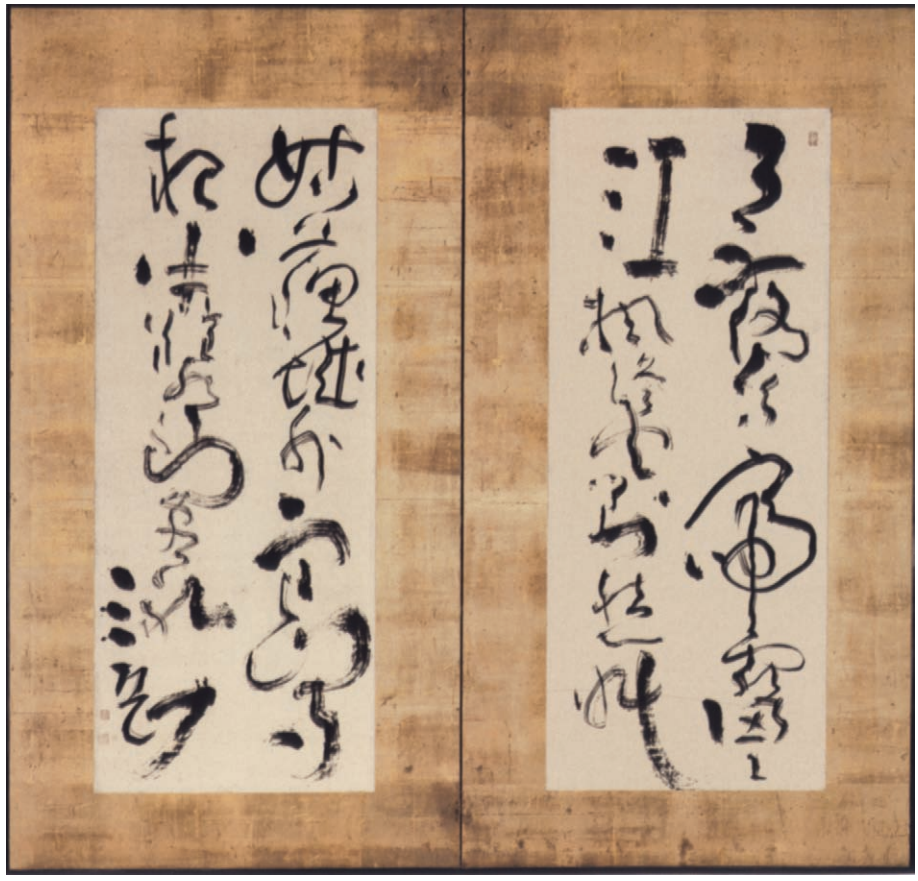
Calligraphy of "Maple Bridge Night Mooring" by Zhang Zhi

Edo period (1615–1868), ca. 1770
Two-panel folding screen: ink on paper, 68¾ x 72¾ in. (174.6 x 184.8 cm)
Signed *Sangaku* and bearing three seals: *Zenshin Sōma Hō Kyūkō, Ike Mumei in,* and *Nigaku Dōja*
Provenance: [James Freeman, Kyoto].
Purchase, Friends of Asian Art Gifts, 2008 (2008.66)

Onto two sheets of paper that were then pasted to the gilt panels of a folding screen, Ike Taiga, one of Japan's most prolific literati artists, inscribed a famous Tang poem, "Maple Bridge Night Mooring," a quatrain of seven-character lines that was composed by the eighth-century Chinese poet Zhang Zhi. In translation the poem reads:

> The moon sets, crows sing, and frost fills the sky.
> Maple trees along the river and fires in fishing boats face me, sleepless with lament.
> The bell of Cold Mountain Temple (Hanshan-si), outside Suzhou, tolls;
> At midnight, the sound reaches this boat.

Taiga's calligraphy is flamboyant and diverse, with a sophisticated compositional scheme. The characters are large and small, the ink is wet and dry, and the lines are thick and thin. The work has a powerful spiritual tension that is communicated in its fluctuating verticality. It is probably among Taiga's best in Chinese-style calligraphy (*karayō*). MW



Franz Anton Maulbertsch
Austrian, 1724–1796

The Glorification of the Royal Hungarian Saints

Ca. 1772
Oil on canvas, 27 ½ x 19 ⅞ in. (70 x 50.5 cm)
Provenance: Private collection, Austria, 1960s–2006; sale, Sotheby's, London, December 7, 2006, lot 237; to [Katrin Bellinger Kunsthandel, Munich].
Purchase, Friends of European Paintings Gifts, 2007 (2007.28)

In March 1772 Franz Anton Maulbertsch, who dominated painting in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, was commissioned to decorate the cathedral of Györ (or Raab) in northern Hungary. This grisaille oil sketch, unknown prior to its appearance at Sotheby's in 2006, is preparatory to the monumental fresco on the ceiling of the presbytery. Another sketch, in color but much rougher and done at an earlier moment in the ceiling's conception, is in the Gemäldegalerie, Berlin. In both sketches the artist concentrated on the figures massed toward the center of the composition, where saints spiral upward on a bank of clouds, some of them gazing at the figure of Christ in the aureole above them. Characteristic of Maulbertsch's finest work, the sketch is at once energetic and luminous—a tour de force of abstract design, dazzling light effects, and dramatic plunges into depth. It is a fitting complement to the Museum's unsurpassed collection of oil sketches by the Venetian Giambattista Tiepolo. (Maulpertsch studied in Vienna under Paul Troger, who had had direct contact with Tiepolo in Venice.) Saint Ladislaus I (1040–1095), king of Hungary, is shown as a triumphant general in the lower left. Above are Saint Stephen, the first king of Hungary, his son Emmerich, and Saint Martin of Tours, who was born in Hungary. KC

Benjamin Halsted
American, 1743–1817

Plateau

New York, 1790–95
Silver, copper, glass; 21 ⅛ x 17 ¼ in. (53.5 x 43.3 cm)
Marked on underside of each foot in script: *Halsted* (in shaped surround)
Provenance: Daniel Crommelin Verplanck (1762–1834) and his wife, Anne Walton (1764–1843); by descent in the Verplanck family; Esther and Samuel Schwartz, New Jersey, by 1961; lent to the Museum in 1989.
Partial and Promised Gift of The Estate of Esther and Samuel Schwartz, Paterson, N.J., 2007 (2007.471.1)

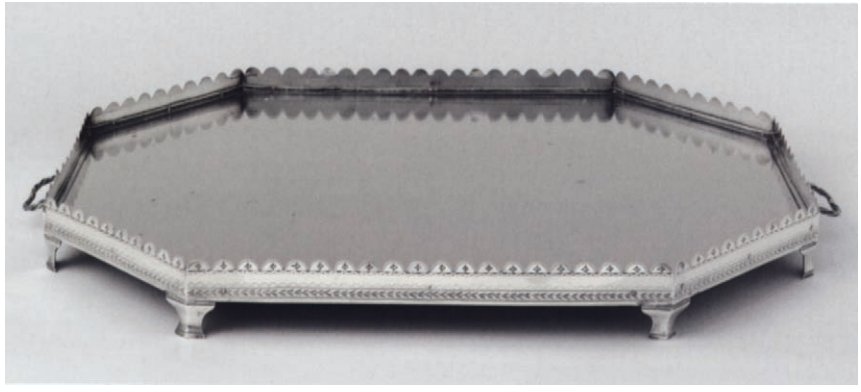


Table centerpieces constructed of silver and mirrored glass were rarely made in America; only three are known today. This octagonal example marked by the New York silversmith Benjamin Halsted displays the clean, spare lines of Neoclassical design. Its eight cast feet are soldered to a sheet copper base, onto which are pinned engraved silver borders and a simple inner molding that secures the mirrored expanse. The twisted wire handles were added later to facilitate lifting and carrying.

Benjamin Halsted is best known for his short-lived partnership with New York silversmith Myer Myers. Halsted's mark, which appears primarily on flatware, is seldom encountered on objects of this scale and sophistication. According to family tradition, the plateau was made for Daniel Crommelin Verplanck, eldest son of Judith Crommelin and Samuel Verplanck, whose household furnishings are exhibited in the Metropolitan Museum's Verplanck Room. A treasured loan to the Metropolitan for many years, the plateau has recently become a promised gift. BCW

Johann Christian Reinhart
German, 1761–1847

Arcadian Landscape with Three Figures at a Lake

Rome, 1792
Black chalk and white gouache on two sheets of brown paper, laid down; 23 x 33 ⅞ in. (58.4 × 86 cm)
Inscribed at center bottom in pen and brown ink: *C Reinhart fec Romae 1792*
Provenance: Private collection, Scandinavia; [Thomas le Claire Kunsthandel, Hamburg].
Rogers Fund, 2007 (2007.264)

According to the inscription, this impressive drawing was made by Johann Christian Reinhart in Rome in 1792, when he and another leading German artist from the period, Joseph Anton Koch, started making so-called heroic landscapes inspired as much by reminiscences of the Roman *campagna* as by their precursors Claude Lorrain, Nicolas Poussin, and Gaspard Dughet. The ambitious nature of this drawing is rare among Reinhart's drawn landscapes in this vein. Although the figures in antique dress seem to hint at a specific, possibly mythological subject, they were probably used merely to indicate the antique setting of the landscape, as were the villa or small city that can be seen in the left background and the two funerary monuments in the center and the right background. The dense composition and the regular hatching are both typical of Reinhart's work throughout his career. The drawing is related to a painting Reinhart made in 1796 (Museum Georg Schäfer, Schweinfurt), but it cannot be said to be preparatory as it differs from the painting in many ways. Fully signed and dated and preserved in what is likely to be its original frame, the drawing was made as an independent work of art. SA

Charles-Honoré Lannuier
French, 1779–1816
Jean-Charles Cochois
French, born 1776

French Bedstead

New York, 1804–8
Yellow poplar and ash veneered with mahogany, gilt brass, gilt gesso, die-stamped brass inlay, silvered stamped brass, iron; 42 ¼ x 92 ½ x 58 in. (108 x 235 x 147.3 cm)
Stamped four times inside the frame, once on each corner block: *H. LANNUIER / NEW-YORK; J. B. COCHOIS*
Provenance: By tradition, Alfred Seton (1793–1859), New York; Mrs. George Sommaripa, New York, until 1978; [Trump and Co., Flourtown, Pennsylvania], 1978–84; Richard and Gloria Manney, Irvington, New York, 1984–98.
Gift of Elizabeth Feld Herzberg and Peter A. Feld, 2007 (2007.475a–i)

Upon his arrival in New York, French cabinetmaker Charles-Honoré Lannuier's main marketing thrust was to set himself apart from his competitors as the city's resident *ébéniste de Paris*. It is not surprising, therefore, that much of his surviving furniture derives from the monumental antique-based forms of the Consulat and Empire periods. As a testament to Lannuier's marketing skills and his leadership role in the trade, six new French-style forms came into standard production in the city during his career there between 1803 and 1819. These are listed in the New York cabinetmakers' price books for 1810 and 1817, where four of them are specifically described as "French": the French press (*armoire*), the French bureau (*commode*), the French sideboard (*desserte*), and the French bedstead (*lit à travers*).

This magnificent French bedstead, perhaps jointly made by Lannuier and his first cousin Jean-Charles Cochois, who was in New York before 1808, was meant to stand parallel to the wall. Typically these beds would be draped in the most sumptuous, elegant manner with yards of the finest French silks, mousselines, or even English printed cottons suspended by means of a variety of ingenious devices, from simple rings in the ceiling to elaborate gilt and bronzed eagles and darts. PMK

Andrei N. Voronikhin (designer)

Russian, 1759–1814

Carl Scheibe (court cabinetmaker), Iwan Naschon (master carver), Carl Focht (court guilder), and Sergej Schaschin (upholsterer)

Settee

Saint Petersburg, March–June 1803
Beech and pine wood, partly gilt with burnished and matte surfaces, later light blue silk show cover; 39 x 72 ¼ x 32 ¼ in. (99.1 x 183.5 x 81.9 cm)
Provenance: Commissioned by Tsar Paul I (1754–1801); after his death paid for by Tsar Alexander I (1777–1825) as part of dowry of his sister Grand Duchess Maria Pavlovna (1786–1859); transferred to Weimar Palace, Germany, 1804; by descent to a North German noble family; private collection, Hesse, Germany, 1960s; [Vera Roeser, Bad Nauheim].
Purchase, Walter and Leonore Annenberg and The Annenberg Foundation Fund, 2007 (2007.368)

This settee is one of the most significant pieces of documented Imperial Russian furniture to appear in recent decades. A court order of 1799 stipulated that all objects in an Imperial dowry had to be "worthy" of a Russian grand duchess and reflect "the indigenous local splendor as an emblem of courtly life and stately prestige." In March 1803 Russia's foremost designer and architect, Andrei Voronikhin, set a time frame of three months for the court artisans to create a genuinely Russian bedroom suite for the sister of Tsar Alexander I, Grand Duchess Maria Pavlovna, who was to marry hereditary prince Carl Friedrich of Sachsen-Weimar-Eisenach in 1804. To meet the challenge innovative techniques such as prefabricated carvings were applied, yet typically Russian features like the dual-tone matte finish and polished gilding were not sacrificed. The carved armrests on the settee represent the double-headed eagle of the Romanov arms. After her wedding the highly sophisticated Maria Pavlovna moved to Weimar, where she cultivated a weekly salon that included the poets Goethe and Schiller. Her ostentatious suite—two settees (the other is still in Weimar), a richly carved canopy bed, a fire screen, eight armchairs, two tabourets, and other pieces—was installed in the Weimar Palace. Documents and illustrations from December 1804 reveal that a sky-blue silk velvet was used for the upholstery. WK

Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg
Danish, 1783–1853

The Harbor of Copenhagen Seen from the Esplanade, between Langelinie and Toldboden

1809
Graphite, brush and gray ink, gray washes; 13¼ x 18¼ in. (33.7 × 46.2 cm)
Signed and dated at lower right in pen and black ink: *Eckersberg. 1809*
Provenance: Sale, Ellekilde, Copenhagen, June 10, 2006, lot 158; [Thomas le Claire Kunsthandel, Hamburg].
Rogers Fund, 2007 (2007.256)

This early drawing by the "father of Danish painting" prefigures in many ways the interests that were to occupy Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg in his maturity: landscape and topography, marine painting, perspectival drawing (an obsession of his, here noticeable in the exact depiction of the slightly varying positions of the cannons), the almost mathematical principles underlying his masterful compositions, and a pure and elegant drawing style akin to that of his future teacher, Jacques-Louis David. In an almost inconspicuous way, it is also a depiction of the so-called Gunboat War (1807–14), a naval conflict between Denmark and Norway on one side and the British Empire on the other. The cannons in the middle ground and the British ships in the distance, drawn with an admirable attention to detail, undoubtedly refer to this important moment in Danish history. The drawing, which is fully signed and dated, must have been conceived as an independent work. A preparatory drawing for the left portion of the composition, also dated 1809 and in the same technique but more loosely drawn, is in the Bymuseum, Copenhagen. On the verso of the Metropolitan's sheet is a sketch in graphite of a standing man. SA

At the Edge of the Forest

Ca. 1820
Oil on canvas, 10¾ x 12¾ in. (27.3 x 32.4 cm)
Provenance: Private collection, France, ca. 1900–2007; [Daxner and Marshall, Munich], 2007.
Catharine Lorillard Wolfe Collection, Wolfe Fund; and Wolfe Fund and Gift of Frederick Loeser, by exchange, 2008 (2008.6)

August Heinrich looked at landscape, his sole subject matter, with the clear-eyed objectivity of a botanist. His soberness set him apart from—and ahead of—his Romantic contemporaries, who charged their landscapes with allegory and symbolism. Heinrich also cared little for conventionally pretty motifs, as shown in this recently discovered painting. In this non-motif of the edge of a forest, the right side opens toward a view of meadows and distant mountains of the Elbsandsteingebirge, south of Dresden. The artist's close observation and truthfulness, however, turn this modest-seeming image into something poetic and magical, reminiscent of Dürer's nature studies.

Both Caspar David Friedrich and Johan Christian Clausen Dahl admired the younger Heinrich and owned works by him. Friedrich included Heinrich in his famous *Two Men Contemplating the Moon* of 1819 (Galerie Neue Meister, Dresden) and its second version of about 1825–30 (Metropolitan Museum). Heinrich's short life was marked by chronic poverty and ill health that robbed him of the means and

peace of mind required for painting. Only a small percentage of his oeuvre has survived, mainly drawings and watercolors in addition to five small paintings, including this one. SR

Factory of Auguste Dominique Denuelle

French, established 1818

Bust of the Duchess of Berry

Paris, ca. 1820
Hard-paste biscuit and glazed porcelain, bronze;
h. 27½ in. (69.9 cm)
Mark on underside of one arm: *D. DENUELLE A PARIS* beneath a fleur-de-lis
Provenance: Sale, Sotheby's New York, May 24, 2007, lot 436.
Purchase, Mr. and Mrs. Sid R. Bass Gift, in honor of Mrs. Charles Wrightsman, 2007 (2007.298)

This bust appears to be the most ambitious piece of porcelain produced by the Paris factory of Auguste Dominique Denuelle. It is based on a marble bust by the sculptor Henri Joseph Ruxtheil (1775–1837) and depicts Marie-Caroline, the duchess of Berry. A daughter of King Francis I of the Two Sicilies, Marie-Caroline married Charles Ferdinand, the duke of Berry, whose father became Charles X in 1824. Charles Ferdinand was assassinated four years before his father ascended the throne, and Marie-Caroline was forced to flee France when her father-in-law was overthrown in the July Revolution of 1830.

The sitter's hairstyle and her simple, high-waisted dress reflect the austerity of the prevailing Neoclassical style of the period. Marie-Caroline's identity is indicated by her coat of arms, executed in gold in the center of the supporting socle. The bust is a tour de force of porcelain modeling in which the varying textures of the sitter's skin, hair, and loosely draped dress are skillfully depicted. It reflects an impressive technical mastery of the medium. Nevertheless, Denuelle's manufactory seems to have focused on the production of domestic wares, and relatively little is known today about his career. JM

Karl Blechen
German, 1798–1840

Inundated Ruins of a Monastery

Ca. 1824
Pen and black ink, watercolor washes, sgrafitto; 10¼ x 13⅛ in. (26 x 33.3 cm)
Provenance: Private collection; [Thomas le Claire Kunsthandel, Hamburg].
Acquisitions Fund and 2006 Benefit Fund, 2008 (2008.109)

With Caspar David Friedrich and Johan Christian Clausen Dahl, who both exerted a major influence on his art, Karl Blechen can be termed one of the leading landscapists of German Romanticism. A more overtly subjective painter, he transformed his observations of nature and architecture by means of his imagination and technical experiments. The proud medieval building in this drawing—in fact hardly more than a seemingly endless limitless wall supported by a row of arched vaults—has been overgrown by vegetation and worn away by water. The quintessentially Romantic theme of the victory of nature over man is animated by the richness of Blechen's technique: he scraped away ink to add highlights to the water and evoke the scaly surface of the stems of the trees at left. The drawing is directly related to a painting from 1824 that was unfortunately destroyed in a fire in 1931. Its nervous yet careful execution and the differences between it and the painting, in which the inundated wall is seen from within a cavern, suggest that it was intended as an independent work, an inspired repetition on paper of a celebrated canvas. The absence of the arch of the cavern in the foreground places less emphasis on the imaginary character of the subject, making the drawing all the more haunting. SA

Karl Blechen
German, 1798–1840

Pilgrim at the Gate

1827
Lithograph, second state of two; image 11⅞ x 7½ in. (28.4 x 20 cm), sheet 19¼ x 13½ in. (49 x 34.2 cm)
Provenance: Thomas Graf, Berlin; his sale (187), C. G. Boerner, Leipzig, November 23–24, 1934, lot. 40 (to Ronte); sale 155, Karl and Faber, Munich, July 4–5, 1981, lot 421; [C. G. Boerner, Düsseldorf], 1981; private collection, Germany; [C. G. Boerner, Düsseldorf], 1988; private collection, Germany.
Janet Lee Kadesky Ruttenberg Fund, in honor of Colta Ives, 2007 (2007.225)

A pilgrim looks up from his book to gaze into the distance as brilliant sunshine streams into the shadowed structure where he rests. This tranquil scene is the most delicate and subtle of Karl Blechen's prints, an early work by the painter and draftsman whose prolific career lasted only a brief fifteen years. Blechen created some fifty etchings and lithographs during his lifetime, and these are among his rarest works. He produced this lithograph for a portfolio published in 1827 by the artists' group the Berlinischer Künstlerverein. That year he left a job as a designer of stage sets at the Königstadt Theater in Berlin to embark on a career as an independent artist. Given his experience, the

prominence he gave here to the evocative setting seems hardly surprising.

Blechen's imagery is indebted to the Romantic painter Caspar David Friedrich, whom he probably met when he visited Dresden in 1823. Yet except for the crumbling building and the figure looking away from the viewer, this sunny scene is decidedly different in tone from Friedrich's moody, moonlit depictions. The influence of such dark romantic imagery recurs in others of Blechen's works, but here the atmosphere is remarkably bright and uplifting. NMO

Dubois & Couturier

French, active from before 1829 to 1837

Cor Solo

Lyon, 1829
Brass, silver; h. 17⅜ in. (44 cm), diam. of bell 11¼ in. (28.5 cm)
Signed in italics on garland: *Dubois & Couturier à Lyons 1829*
Provenance: [Tony Bingham, London].
Purchase, Robert Alonzo Lehman Bequest, 2008 (2008.136)

Cors solo, a French invention, are horns built specifically for the use of soloists. They not only are extremely carefully crafted but also have a slightly narrower bore than regular orchestral French horns. Only a few shops, most of them in Lyon and Paris, were able to build excellent, easy-speaking cors solo with refined workmanship and balanced sound qualities. This cor solo, dated 1829, is the earliest known instrument made by Dubois & Couturier, a firm that flourished in Lyon in the 1830s. The style of the ferrules and stays between the sections of tubing was very modern for the time and became generally accepted only in the 1850s. Because in the early nineteenth century literally all solo literature for cors solo was composed in the keys of G, F, E, and E-flat, the horns were built with exchangeable loops just for those keys.

This instrument has been used very little. It survives in a form-fitting case covered with leather and lined with chamois. A metal plaque on the case's lid bears the monogram, *MG*, of the musician who owned the instrument. HH

Royal Porcelain Manufactory, Sèvres

French, established 1740

Teapot

Sèvres, 1832–34
Hard-paste porcelain, silver, ivory; h. 7¼ in. (18.4 cm)
Marked on underside: *Sèvres 32* (in blue), *M30av* (in gold), *9.31.12* (incised)
Provenance: Queen Marie-Amélie of France; sale, Perrin Royère Lajeunesse, Versailles, November 10, 1991, lot 60; sale, Étude Tajan, Paris, June 22, 1999; sale, Sotheby's, Paris, March 29, 2007, lot 123; [Dragesco-Cramoisan, Paris].
Purchase, Louis V. Bell Fund and Friends of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts Gifts, 2007 (2007.408a, b)

This teapot is one of the more striking and original creations of the Sèvres manufactory from the first half of the nineteenth century, when the factory's production was marked by constant innovation and a striving for novelty. The decoration reflects the ongoing popularity of chinoiserie, a term used to describe the European fascination with an imagined and exotic Asia. In the eighteenth century objects in the chinoiserie taste were usually decorated with fanciful depictions of life in Asia as Europeans envisioned it. In contrast, this teapot employs and reinterprets motifs perceived to be Asian in origin. The lotus leaves of the handle, the carved ivory grip at the top, the prominent butterfly, and even the yellow ground color are references to Chinese decorative arts, but the manner in which these elements are rendered and combined is entirely European.

The Sèvres archives record that the teapot was made as an individual object rather than as part of a service and that it was sold to the queen of France, Marie-Amélie, who took possession of it in August 1837. JM

Carl Julius von Leypold

German, 1805–1874

Wanderer in the Storm

1835
Oil on canvas, 16¾ x 22¼ in.
(42.5 x 56.5 cm)
Dated at lower left: *1835*
Provenance: Franz Ulrich Apelt, Zittau, early 1900s–2007; [Thomas le Claire Kunsthandel, Hamburg], 2007.
Catharine Lorillard Wolfe Collection, Wolfe Fund, 2008 (2008.7)

A lone man in a fluttering black cape, boots, and blue pants walks through an autumnal, storm-swept landscape. Symbol-laden elements abound: a crumbling brick wall with an abandoned shrine, ancient boulders, a mighty birch tree whose branches and twigs form a fantastic filigree pattern over the magnificent cloudy sky. Blue mountains rise in the far distance. The image is suffused with the melancholy of autumn, both as season in nature and of the cycle of life.

The figure of the lonely wanderer in untamed nature as a personification of restless yearning was beloved by the German Romantics and featured in their paintings, novels, and poems. The composer Franz Schubert immortalized them in his "Wanderer Fantasy" (1816) and his song cycle Die Winterreise (1827). The feelings of man's loneliness and nature's transience expressed in this picture find direct parallels in the work of Caspar David Friedrich, who was a great inspiration to Leypold. Indeed, Leypold's early work, of the mid-1820s, followed Friedrich's virtuosity so closely that a group of these pictures was until recently attributed to him. SR

Alphonse De Launay

French, 1827–1906

Gustave Le Gray

1854
Salted paper print from paper negative, 8¾ x 6½ in. (22.1 x 16.5 cm)
Provenance: Descendants of Alphonse De Launay; [a postcard dealer], ca. 1990; sale, Bailly-Pommery et Voutier Associés, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, June 25, 2007; [Serge Plantureux, Paris]; [Daniel Blau, Munich], 2007.
Purchase, Daniel Blau Gift and 2007 Benefit Fund, 2008 (2008.256)

Remarkable for its candor and spontaneity, this portrait defies expectations for the 1850s. A typical sitter, wedged in an armchair and held immobile by a neck brace, confronted the camera with a stiff pose

and blank expression. If the subject here—seemingly caught mid-boast—exudes confidence, it is because he had spent more time *behind* the camera than almost anyone. This is Gustave Le Gray, the central figure in 1850s French photography, famed for his sylvan studies in Fontainebleau Forest and his dramatic and poetic seascapes.

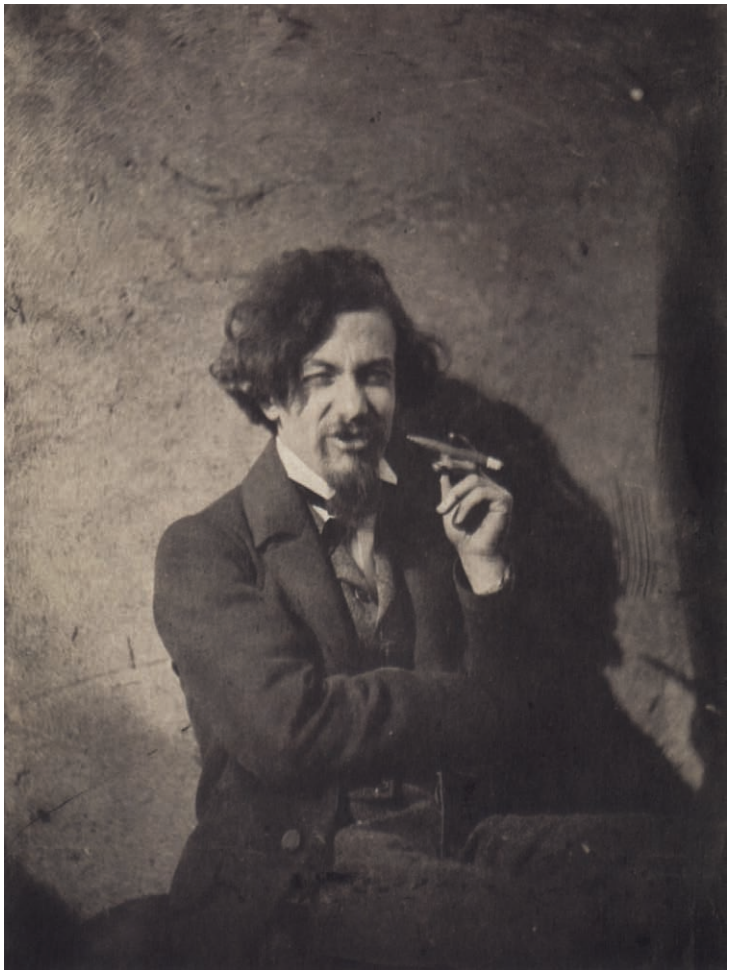
Le Gray was also the teacher of more than fifty photographers, including some now considered part of the pantheon and others, such as Alphonse De Launay, who were nearly lost to history. Here, Le Gray's protégé, working in full sunshine in the studio courtyard, perfectly captured not only the ease of a master enjoying his success but also the cockiness of the man who, six years later, would flee his creditors, abandon his wife and child, sail the Mediterranean with Alexandre Dumas, and end his days in Egypt as tutor to the Pasha's sons. Some credit must also go to Le Gray, whose active participation—perhaps even instructing his pupil—accounts for much of the portrait's success. MD

Edgar Degas
French, 1834–1917

Homme nu couché

Ca. 1855
Oil on canvas, 13¾ x 24¼ in. (34.9 x 61.6 cm)
Provenance: The artist's brother René de Gas, Paris; Maurice Exsteens, Paris; UC San Diego Foundation, until 1976; sale, Sotheby's, Los Angeles, September 20–22, 1976, lot 277; private collection, Los Angeles; [Montgomery Gallery, San Francisco]; Philip Korsant, Greenwich, Connecticut.
Gift of Philip and Catherine Korsant, 2007 (2007.529)

This surprising work is one of only a few studies of a male nude painted by Edgar Degas. It was painted over an earlier study of a nude that was oriented vertically. The date of the work is not known; it might have been made in 1855–56, while Degas was studying with Louis Lamothe at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, or perhaps later in the same decade. The pose would recur, in the guise of a recumbent female nude, throughout Degas's career. A similar figure appears in his disturbing *Scene of War in the Middle Ages* of 1865 (Musée d'Orsay, Paris), and he would later reprise it in his pastels of female bathers in the 1880s and 1890s. And they can all be considered descendants of the nude in the foreground of J. A. D. Ingres's *Romulus Victorious over Acron* of 1812 (Musée Augustin, Toulouse). GT



Eugène Delacroix
French, 1798–1863

Ovid among the Scythians

1862
Oil on paper laid down on wood, 12⅝ x 19¾ in. (32.1 x 50.2 cm)
Provenance: Alfred Mosselman, Paris, until 1863; his sale, Paris, March 5, 1863, lot 13; possibly [Durand-Ruel, Paris], by 1871; [Galerie Petit, Paris], until March 4, 1873; to [Goupil et Cie, Paris], until March 26, 1873; to Schwabacher, from 1873; to [Goupil et Cie, Paris], until January 26, 1875; to [Everand et Cie], from 1875; [E. Leroy et Cie, Paris], in 1885; [Bayer, Paris], until his death; his estate sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, June 26, 1905, lot 14; Jentien; [Georges Petit, Paris], until May 29, 1918; to [Bernheim-Jeune, Paris], 1918–November 23, 1928; to [Galerie Tanner, Zürich], from 1928; private collection, Zürich; Dr. R. G. Bindschedler, Zürich, by 1964; private collection, Bern, by 1986.
Wrightsman Fund, in honor of Philippe de Montebello, 2008 (2008.101)

This is one of a number of late easel pictures in which Eugène Delacroix returned to themes previously elaborated in decorative programs. Delacroix first contemplated the subject of Ovid among the Scythians in about 1835, and his first treatment of it was in a pendentive for his decoration for the Palais Bourbon, Paris. He painted this work in 1862, the year before his death, no doubt to tempt a private collector, at a moment when he was attracting the admiration of the painters who later came to be identified with Impressionism. Its freedom of execution imparts an immediacy of touch and expression more typical of a sketch than a finished painting.

When the largest version of *Ovid among the Scythians* (National Gallery, London) was exhibited at the 1859 Paris Salon, the unusual composition and strange scale of the figures provoked criticism, even among Delacroix's admirers such as Baudelaire and Gautier, although artists like Edgar Degas were deeply impressed. In this variant Delacroix more closely integrated the figures and landscape and rectified the problems of scale.

In A.D. 8 Emperor Augustus banished Ovid from Rome to the Black Sea port of Tomis (present-day Constanta, Romania) in Scythia Minor. The poet found the local custom of drinking mare's milk unusual. Like the French writers Chateaubriand and Baudelaire, Delacroix identified Ovid with the notion of the romantic artist misunderstood by his own people. GT

Isaac H. Bonsall
American, 1833–1909

Lulah Falls, Lookout Mountain, Georgia

1864–65
Albumen silver print from glass negative,
8 3/8 x 10 1/2 in. (21.2 x 26.6 cm)
Provenance: By descent from the artist to Lawrence Gray, Kansas City; [Andrew Smith Gallery, Santa Fe]; [Charles Isaacs Photographs, New York], 2007.
Purchase, Celia Tompkins Hegyi Gift, 2007 (2007.392)

On first glance, this photograph of Lulah Falls appears to be an idyllic landscape of an imposing, rocky waterfall. On closer inspection, however, one notices that the figures—some standing at attention for the photographer, others sprawled casually on the boulders in the foreground—are Union soldiers. Here is a view of the Civil War in striking contrast to the scenes of fortifications, camps, bridges, and destruction so prolifically documented by the camera during that era. The photographer, Isaac H. Bonsall of Cincinnati, served in the Union's Army of the Cumberland as a staff photographer beginning in September 1862. His initial duties were to photograph maps at their headquarters in Cincinnati, but he later traveled with the army to Tennessee, broadening his subject matter to include portraiture and war-related landscape along the way. During the Union's six-month siege of Chattanooga, Tennessee, in 1863, Bonsall spent his time photographing the areas surrounding nearby battle sites such as Lookout Mountain, where the Army of the Cumberland contributed to a Union victory on November 24, 1863. Lulah Falls, situated on the south side of the mountain in northwest Georgia, was, for a moment, worlds away from the war. ED

Mangaaka Power Figure (*Nkisi N'kondi*)

Democratic Republic of the Congo or Angola, Chiloango River Region, Kongo; second half of 19th century
Wood, metal, resin, ceramic, paint; h. 46½ in. (118 cm)
Provenance: Private collection, Germany; Lore Kegel-Konietzko, 1953; by descent to Boris Kegel-Konietzko, Hamburg; [Lance Entwistle, London].
Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace, Laura and James J. Ross, Daniel and Marian Malcolm, Robert T. Wall, Jeffrey B. Soref, Sidney and Bernice Clyman, and Steven M. Kossak Gifts, 2008 (2008.30)

Among the most impressive sculptures from sub-Saharan Africa, this figure was meant to inspire awe, to intimidate, and to evoke a power without bounds. As personifications of power conceived to house specific mystical forces, such figures were the collaborative creations of Kongo sculptors and ritual specialists. This work belongs to the most ambitious class of that tradition. It is one of only twenty such figures more than three feet high that are identified with Mangaaka, the preeminent force of jurisprudence. Given the consistency of certain traits and stylistic features, this corpus has been attributed to the atelier of a master active along the coast of Congo and Angola at the end of the nineteenth century.

The sculptor gave visual expression to an ideal of unrivaled force and authority. The figure wears the distinctive headdress of a chief or priest. He leans forward with his hands on his hips in the aggressive attitude of one who challenges fearlessly. The cavity in his abdomen would have been filled with medicines by a ritual specialist. The various metals embedded in the expansive torso attest to the figure's role as witness to and enforcer of community affairs; they document vows sealed, treaties signed, and efforts to eradicate evil. Ultimately, the sculpture inspired reflection on the consequences of transgressing established codes of social conduct. AL

John Bennett

American, born England, 1840–1907

Charger

1877
White earthenware, diam. 17 in. (43.2 cm)
Provenance: Worthing, England; to Fine Arts Society, London.
Purchase, Barrie A. and Deedee Wigmore Foundation Gift, 2008 (2008.176)

John Bennett was a pivotal figure in the nascent years of the Aesthetic Movement in America. He was trained at Doulton and Co. in Lambeth, England, where he supervised the painted artistic faience department. Bennett first came to America in 1876, when he exhibited at the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia. The following year he settled in New York, where he not only painted artistic vases and plaques but also taught china painting to amateurs and professionals alike and fired their work in his kilns. This charger, dated 1877, was made in Bennett's first year in the United States and so is one of the earliest examples of his work. The composition, two cranes standing amid field grasses, is consistent with the Anglo-Japanese style of pottery characteristic of the Aesthetic Movement. Bennett became known for highly decorative ceramics with painted designs, primarily plant forms, surrounded by dark outlines. The more naturalistic style, bold composition, and novel palette of this charger evince a more sophisticated and refined technique. The piece adds strength to the Museum's significant holdings in late nineteenth-century American decorative arts. ACF

Gorham Manufacturing Company

American, established 1831

Vase

Providence, Rhode Island, ca. 1880
Silver and mixed metals, h. 9 in. (22.9 cm)
Stamped on underside: Gorham's standard trademark (lion, anchor, *G*) / *STERLING / B86 / M*
Provenance: [Margot Johnson, Inc., New York].
Purchase, Judy and John M. Angelo Gift, 2008 (2008.68)

This vase is a classic example of the Anglo-Japanese style, featuring the use of mixed metals and ornamental motifs drawn from the natural world. Two copper medallions inserted into the vase's honeycomb surface depict an owl on its perch beside a crescent moon and a bird in flight. Above the foot, silver and copper foliage springs from a granulated ground, while copper birds and insects are applied around the body as if by chance, in the Japanese fashion.

Inspired by imports of Japanese fine and decorative arts, American designers of the 1870s and 1880s experimented with materials and techniques, striving to incorporate Japanese sensibilities into their own aesthetic visions. Particularly influential were prints by the Japanese artist Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849), a group of which were acquired by the Gorham Manufacturing Company as inspiration for its designers. Innovative British artists such as Christopher Dresser (1834–1904) and firms such as Elkington and Company of Birmingham, England, further excited American interest in the Anglo-Japanese style that characterizes Aesthetic Movement metalwork at its most successful. BCW

Alexandre Falguière
French, 1831–1900

Tarcisius

Ca. 1880
Marble, h. 23 in. (58.4 cm)
Signed in front right corner in script: *A. Falguière*
Provenance: Estate of Madame Falguière; sale organized by Maître Chevallier and Georges Petit, Paris, May 14–15, 1907, lot 8; to Laffon; Henri de Rothschild, Château de La Muette; Duc de Trevise, Château de Sceaux; by descent to the Marquis de Vibraye; [Charles Janoray, LLC, New York].
European Sculpture and Decorative Arts Fund, 2007 (2007.407)

Investigations into early Christianity constantly renourished Roman Catholicism in the nineteenth century. A bestselling novel by the Irish-born cardinal Nicholas Patrick Wiseman, *Fabiola, or the Church of the Catacombs* (1854), widely translated, was Alexandre Falguière's immediate source. In the novel, the teenage acolyte Tarcisius is conveying the Host along the Appian Way when he is confronted by pagan playmates who order him to reveal it. He refuses and they stone him. Here the fallen martyr exhibits a bloodied forehead as well as an expression of beatific rapture as he clutches the holy wafer in his arms, faithful to the end. The fatal paving stones lie at his elbow. A photograph in the Musée Rodin, Paris, shows how Falguière blocked out the pose using a live model, aged about fifteen, covered by massive drapery instead of a tunic and soft boots. The first marble, in the Musée d'Orsay, Paris, is dated 1868. In this second marble Falguière subtly rethought the composition. The stones are brought forward, the boy's brow is broader, there is a less acute rise in his hip, and the overall carving is tenderer. In keeping with the evolution of his later manner, Falguière seems to have defied the marble's hardness to create instead a semblance almost of immateriality. JDD

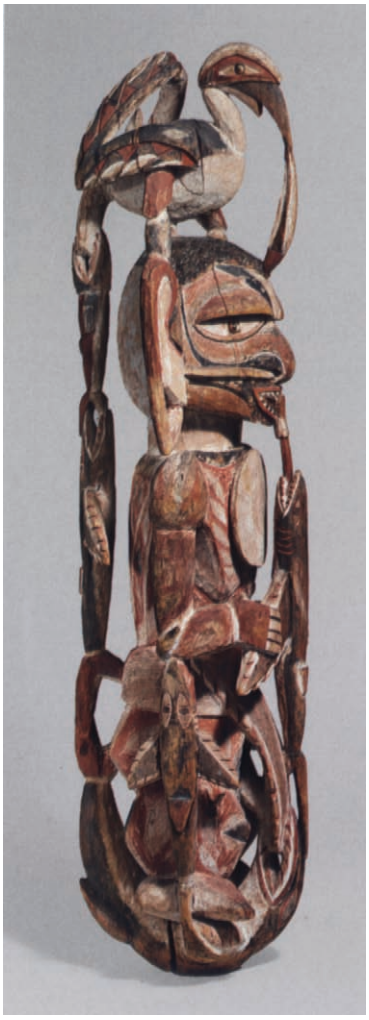
Edgar Degas
French, 1834–1917

Dancer

1880–85
Pastel on paper, laid down on board, 19¼ x 12¾ in. (48.9 x 32.4 cm)
Provenance: Madame Grandjean; [Galerie Durand-Ruel, Paris], 1919; [Durand-Ruel, New York], 1920; Percy Moore Turner, London, 1926; probably his sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, May 29, 1929, lot 26; to Kojanovicz, Zürich; Dr. Fritz Nathan, by 1954; [Sam Salz, Inc., New York]; Mr. and Mrs. Sydney M. Shoenberg, Saint Louis, by 1966; [E. V. Thaw and Co., New York]; private collection, Chicago; [William Beadleston Gallery, New York], 1991; Dr. and Mrs. Robert Nowinski, New York, 1991; [Richard L. Feigen and Co., New York]; Janice H. Levin, New York, 1996; The Philip and Janice Levin Foundation, 2001.
Gift of The Philip and Janice Levin Foundation, 2007 (2007.332.1)

Edgar Degas once confided to the art dealer Ambroise Vollard that he felt misunderstood by critics: "They call me the painter of dancers, not understanding that for me the dance is a pretext for painting pretty costumes and rendering movement." The focus of this pastel is the dancer's foreshortened arm, drawn on a diagonal from the lowered hand to the head. The pose reappears in several of Degas's more finished pictures, most often in scenes with a dancer clutching a bouquet of flowers and bowing at the conclusion of a performance. In this pastel Degas has clearly altered the placement of the hand, and the dark green shading to the left of the ballerina's head most likely camouflages changes there as well. That this dancer is older and clearly not just a generic type has led art historians to suspect that she and Degas were friends.

RAR



Funerary Carving (*Malagan*)

Northern New Ireland, late 19th–early 20th century
Wood, paint, shell, resin; h. 52¼ in. (132.7 cm)
Provenance: Muriel Kallis Newman, Chicago, 1950s–2007.
Gift of Muriel Kallis Newman, 2007 (2007.215.2)

The ephemeral *malagan* carvings of northern New Ireland, the northeasternmost province of Papua New Guinea, are among the most intricate sculptures in Oceania. The term *malagan* refers to a complex series of ceremonies and the visual art forms associated with them. *Malagan* rites mark nearly all important stages of an individual's life. Possession of rights, similar to copyrights, to specific *malagan* images and the rituals associated with them confers status and prestige. Men, in particular, compete to obtain rights to the greatest number of *malagan*.

The most spectacular *malagan* carvings, including the type seen here, are created and displayed during the final memorial ceremony honoring the deceased, which due to the great expense and extensive preparations involved often occurs months or years after a person's death. The carvings constitute a visual résumé of the deceased's achievements in obtaining *malagan* rites. The human and animal images in the *malagan*—here a human figure surrounded by a group of flying fish—depict supernatural beings associated with specific clans. Each of the figures and other elements represents a different manifestation of the single life-giving force that sustains the clan. Performance of the final *malagan* rites frees the living from their obligations to the dead. Afterward, the carvings, having served their purpose, are either destroyed, allowed to rot, or sold to outsiders. EK

Hornbill Figure (*Kenyalang*)

Malaysia (Borneo, Sarawak), Iban people, late 19th–early 20th century
Wood, paint, metal, trade beads, fiber; l. 44 in. (111.8 cm)
Provenance: Collected in Sarawak, Malaysia, early 1970s; private collection, Indonesia, early 1970s–1994; [Thomas Murray, Mill Valley, California], 1994–2007.
Purchase, The Fred and Rita Richman Foundation Gift, 2007 (2007.359)

The largest sculptures of the Iban people of northwestern Borneo are stylized images representing the rhinoceros hornbill (*kenyalang*), a large forest bird whose beak is surmounted by a hornlike projection typically depicted, as here, as a spiral form. In Iban religion hornbills are associated with the upper world, and they were once identified with warfare and headhunting. In Iban cosmology hornbills serve as intermediaries between the powerful deity Singalang Burong and the human world. Hornbill effigies receive offerings during the *gawai kenyalang*, a ceremony that in the past

could only be sponsored by a prominent war leader or his descendants. They are also used in similar rites called *gawai burong*. At the climax of the ceremony the sacred hornbill image, lavishly decorated for the occasion, is elevated atop a tall pole inserted through a hole in its body. Between ceremonies it is preserved in the loft of the communal longhouse. EK

Charles Frederick Worth

French, born England, 1826–1895

Court Gown and Train

Ca. 1888

Pink silk satin with matching silk tulle and lace applied trim, metallic sequin and purple stone embroidery, and applied white ostrich plumes with court train of printed ivory, pink, and olive green devoré silk velvet; l. at center back 84 in. (210.8 cm)

Provenance: Esther Maria (Lili) Lewis Chapin (died 1959); Esther Maria Lewis Chapin estate, 1959–2001; Fundacion Museo de la Moda y Textil, Santiago, Chile; sale, Doyle, New York, May 2–3, 2001, lot 837.
Purchase, Friends of The Costume Institute Gifts, 2007 (2007.385a–m)

The Englishman Charles Frederick Worth is considered the inventor of the modern fashion system, with its seasonal menu of constantly evolving styles. The couture house he founded in the mid-nineteenth century was considered the preeminent Parisian fashion establishment of its day. Its reputation was enhanced in no small way by its association with many of the aristocratic ladies of the French court. The influence of the House of Worth extended to all the royal courts of Europe, as far as Russia. Worth designs were especially favored by privileged American socialites.

This particular gown was worn by Esther Chapin, whose great-great-granduncle was George Washington. Ordered with three bodices, it can be transformed into a dinner dress, a ball gown, and, as here, with the extraordinary train, a court presentation gown. The spectacular voided velvet, woven in Lyon, is distinctive for its Aesthetic Movement palette. The pale, faintly mauve pink satin ground contrasts with the "greenery-yallery" lilies rendered in ciselé, or cut and uncut silk velvet loops. Worth thus incorporated the advanced "artistic" taste of the period into the most formal and sartorially prescriptive dress available to a nonroyal, the court presentation gown, thereby transforming the retardataire into the fashionably avant-garde. HK

Possibly Luigi Podio (micromosaic)

Italian, 1826–1888

Fortunato Pio Castellani (mount)

Brooch with the Head of Medusa

Rome, before 1888

Glass micromosaic and gold, 1 ½ x 2 ¼ in. (3.8 x 5.5 cm)

Signed twice on back with interlaced *C*s for Castellani

Provenance: Judith H. Siegel, New York; sale, Parke-Bernet, New York, December 6, 2006, lot 23.
Gift of Jacqueline Loewe Fowler, 2007 (2007.299.1)

The pale yellow-gold mount is a subtle foil for the head of Medusa, whose grisly coiffure crawling with snakes is no less exquisitely configured in blond hues of the tesserated glass known as micromosaic. Luigi Podio was the chief micromosaic specialist in the Roman firm of Fortunato Pio Castellani. Matching ancient imagery with technologies also re-created from classical antiquity, Castellani served an avid international clientele. JDD

Frederick William MacMonnies
American, 1863–1937

Young Faun with Heron

1890, this cast ca. 1902
Bronze, 26¾ x 11 x 16 in. (67.9 x 27.9 x 40.6 cm)
Provenance: Sale, Guernsey's, New York, September 17, 1988, lot 168; Eileen and Marvin Reingold, 1988–2007; sale, Rago Arts and Auction Center, Lambertville, New Jersey, May 20, 2007, lot 1200; [Gerald Peters Gallery, New York], 2007.
Purchase, Diane, Daniel, and Mathew Wolf Gift, in honor of Ms. Thayer Tolles, 2007 (2008.26)

In 1890 the French-trained sculptor Frederick William MacMonnies completed a full-scale bronze for the garden of Naumkeag, the country residence of Joseph H. Choate in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. *Young Faun with Heron*, which depicts a boy playfully wrestling with a protesting heron, was subsequently issued in an unlimited edition of bronze reductions, from the first proof produced in Paris in 1890 (also in the Metropolitan) to those cast later in New York. When statuettes enjoyed consistent commercial popularity in French and American showrooms, artists would often invest in bronze "master models" to be used during the foundry process. Unlike softer plaster casts that wear down after several molds have been pulled, these master casts retain their crispness of detail and accurate scale, ensuring that the resulting bronze statuettes are consistently true to the artist's original aesthetic intent.

The master model for *Young Faun with Heron* is particularly complex and sophisticated. Eighteen pins at the joins secure nine separate pieces, and the extremely fine attention to textural detail is especially evident in the heron's enveloping wings and the boy's smooth flesh. American master models with visible pins and seam lines are extremely rare; this is the first to enter the Metropolitan's collection. TT

Smith & Wesson (manufacturer)
American, established 1852

Tiffany & Co. (decorator)
American, established 1837

New Model No. 3 Single-Action Revolver

Springfield, Massachusetts, and New York, 1888–89
Serial no. 25120: partly nickel-plated steel, silver; .44 caliber, overall l. 11 in. (28 cm), l. of barrel 5 in. (12.7 cm)
Provenance: Theodore Gewirz, Baltimore; Warren T. Lewis, Evergreen, Colorado; Dr. Gerald Klaz.
Gift of The Gerald Klaz Trust, 2007 (2007.477)

Between about 1880 and 1905 Tiffany & Co. embellished a series of deluxe handguns for the nation's leading firearms manufacturers, notably Colt, Winchester, and, most important, Smith & Wesson. The guns were either special orders for Tiffany's well-heeled clientele or commissioned by the manufacturer as show pieces for display in exhibitions such as the World's Columbian Exhibition in Chicago in 1893. This New Model Revolver was a special order, recorded in the Smith & Wesson archives as having been shipped to Tiffany's on November 11, 1888. Once in New York, the plain nickel-plated frame received a two-piece silver grip etched overall with scenes of a buffalo hunt. The subject is said to commemorate the historic excursion of Russian Grand Duke Alexis with his guide, William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody, to the Kansas-Nebraska plains in 1872.

During the late 1800s Tiffany's often used etching to render large areas of ornament, including complex and often charming pictorial compositions like this buffalo hunt. The revolver complements two other Tiffany-decorated Smith & Wesson firearms from the collection of Gerald Klaz that are already part of the Museum's holdings, one exhibiting an embossed and martelé silver grip, the other with a grip in *mokume*, a Japanese-style laminated metal. SWP

Edward Burne-Jones (designer)
English, 1833–1898

John Henry Dearle (designer)
English, 1860–1932

Merton Abbey Tapestry Works
English, founded 1881

Angeli Laudantes

Merton, Surrey, England, 1898
Wool and silk weft on cotton warp (15 warps per in.), 91⅜ x 79½ in. (232 x 202 cm)
Provenance: Commissioned by Major Charles Sydney Goldman, 1898; by descent in the Monck family; sale, Bonhams, London, November 14, 2006, lot 207; [Thomas Coulborn and Sons, Sutton Coldfield, England].
Rogers Fund, 2008 (2008.8)

This marvelously preserved tapestry representing two angels playing on harps of gold against a rich floral ground is an exemplary demonstration of the character and style of the tapestries made at the Merton Abbey Tapestry Works under the direction of William Morris. Morris founded the workshop at Merton, in Surrey, near London, in 1881 as part of his vision to use the integrity of medieval craftsmanship to revitalize the art and design of postindustrial Britain. These angelic figures were first conceived in 1878 for a stained glass window for Salisbury Cathedral by Edward Burne-Jones, Morris's lifelong friend and collaborator. In 1894 the figures and those in another window design provided the inspiration for two new tapestry cartoons painted by John Henry Dearle, the principal weaver and designer at the tapestry works. Dearle enhanced the linear emphasis and patterning of Burne-Jones's figures by placing them on a millefleur ground inspired by medieval tapestries. This tapestry is the second weaving of the design. It was commissioned by Major Charles Sydney Goldman as a stand-alone panel, possibly in anticipation of his impending marriage. TPC

Louis Lafon
French, active late 19th century

Tubular Jetty, Mouth of the Adour, Port of Bayonne

1892
Albumen silver print from glass negative, 14 3/8 x 18 5/8 in. (36.5 x 47.3 cm)
Provenance: [Laurent Herschtritt, Six Fours Les Plages, France]; [Charles Isaacs Photographs, New York], 2007.
Purchase, Alfred Stieglitz Society Gifts, 2008 (2008.145)

In April 1858 the director of the École des Ponts et Chaussées, the French national civil engineering school, observed that photography was "by now employed on many worksites, not only to record the details but also to see the state of progress of the construction." Indeed, a photographic library was soon founded at the school and photographic instruction became an established part of the curriculum. Not surprisingly, such photographs—depicting the most advanced industrial technology and produced by photographers unencumbered by the pictorial conventions of Second Empire art—now resonate as prescient examples of a modern aesthetic.

Little is known about Louis Lafon. He was based in Paris, photographed primarily industrial subjects, and won a medal for his submissions to the 1874 exhibition of the Société Française de Photographie. With its depiction of the airy pier hovering between sea and sky like a magic trick of engineering, *Tubular Jetty* ranks among the period's most striking emblems of modernity. MD

Theodore Robinson
American, 1852–1896

Low Tide, Riverside Yacht Club

1894
Oil on canvas, 18 x 24 in. (45.7 x 61 cm)
Provenance: The artist, until 1896; Theodore Robinson estate, New York, until 1898; estate sale, American Art Association, New York, March 24, 1898, lot 86; C. Armstrong, 1898–1926; [Ferargil Galleries, New York], 1926; [Macbeth Gallery, New York], 1926–after 1946; D. A. Schmitz, after 1946–1964; sale, Parke-Bernet Galleries, New York, January 29, 1964, lot 53; Raymond J. and Margaret Horowitz, 1964–2007.
Gift of Raymond J. and Margaret Horowitz, 2007 (2007.281.3)

Theodore Robinson passed the summers from 1888 to 1892 as a mainstay of the art colony that surrounded Claude Monet at Giverny, creating fine canvases such as *Bird's Eye View* of 1889 and *Old Mill* of about 1892 (both acquired nearly a century ago by the Metropolitan). After he returned to full-time residence in New York in December 1892 he sought inspiration for similarly tranquil, unprepossessing scenes in nearby locales. During much of the summer of 1894 Robinson worked in Cos Cob, Connecticut, a picturesque village that preserved New England traditions and was flourishing as a colony of painters dedicated to Impressionism. He stayed in Holley House, a genteel boardinghouse that overlooked the small rustic harbor, and found his subjects nearby. *Low Tide, Riverside Yacht Club* is the largest of a series of four similar canvases. Painted from the west side of Cos Cob harbor, it describes the mudflats that make up more than half the width of the Mianus River at low tide. Across the harbor, beyond the sleek recreational boats awaiting excursionists, is the newly renovated Riverside Yacht Club, which was then enjoying an influx of members. HBW

Joan Miró
Spanish, 1893–1983

Woman

1934
Pastel on paper mounted on board, 41¾ x 27⅝ in. (60 x 70 cm)
Inscribed on reverse: *Joan Miró / "Femme" / Octobre 1934*
Provenance: [Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York], possibly 1935–57; Richard S. Zeisler, New York, 1957–2007.
Bequest of Richard S. Zeisler, 2007 (2007.247.5)

In 1934 Joan Miró lived a tranquil life at his farm in Montroig in Catalonia, far from the hectic life in Paris. The year before, Pierre Matisse had organized a successful second exhibition of his work at his New York gallery. The Spanish Civil War was still two years away, yet in October 1934 Miró was already haunted by barbaric visions that he channeled into fifteen pastels of ferocious strength. Fittingly titled "Tableaux sauvages," they depict monstrous hybrid creatures, half animal and half biomorphic, in spectral pastel colors that float menacingly on mostly monochrome grounds.

Because Miró preferred plain, nonpoetic titles, he called the individual pastels simply *Figure* or *Woman*. This particular *Woman* is the most sexual of these monsters. With a huge gaping vagina, tiny penciled breasts, one wide-open blue eye, and fangs growing from her fishlike jaws, she evokes a praying mantis. The female praying mantis was much beloved by the Surrealists for her notorious mating behavior: she eats her mate just after—or even during—lovemaking. SR

Francis Bacon
British, 1909–1992

Head I

1947–48
Oil and tempera on board, 39½ x 29½ in. (100.3 x 74.9 cm)
Provenance: [Hanover Gallery, London], from 1949; [Redfern Gallery, London]; [Richard Feigen Gallery, New York], 1958–61; Richard S. Zeisler, New York, 1961–2006.
Bequest of Richard S. Zeisler, 2007 (2007.247.1)

Head I was one of seven similar paintings included in Francis Bacon's landmark exhibition at Hanover Gallery in London in 1949. Bacon's work had made only fitful appearances over the previous decade, but this exhibition established him as the author of remarkable, if repellant, paintings. "His themes are as vivid and as meaningless as a nightmare," wrote the London *Times* reviewer, "and they leave the same long-continued feeling of disquiet as a thoroughly bad dream." For its assault on bourgeois sensibility the 1949 show provoked particularly strong responses. The English painter and author Wyndham Lewis described Bacon's "shouting creatures in glass cases, those dissolving ganglia the size of a small fist in which one can always discern the shouting mouth, the wild distended eye." In his biography of Bacon, John Russell memorably likened his figures to "the disintegration of the social figure which takes place when one is alone in a room which has no looking glass, . . . [where] we may well feel . . . that the accepted hierarchy of our [facial] features [is] collapsing, and that we are by turns all teeth, all eye, all ear, all nose." GT

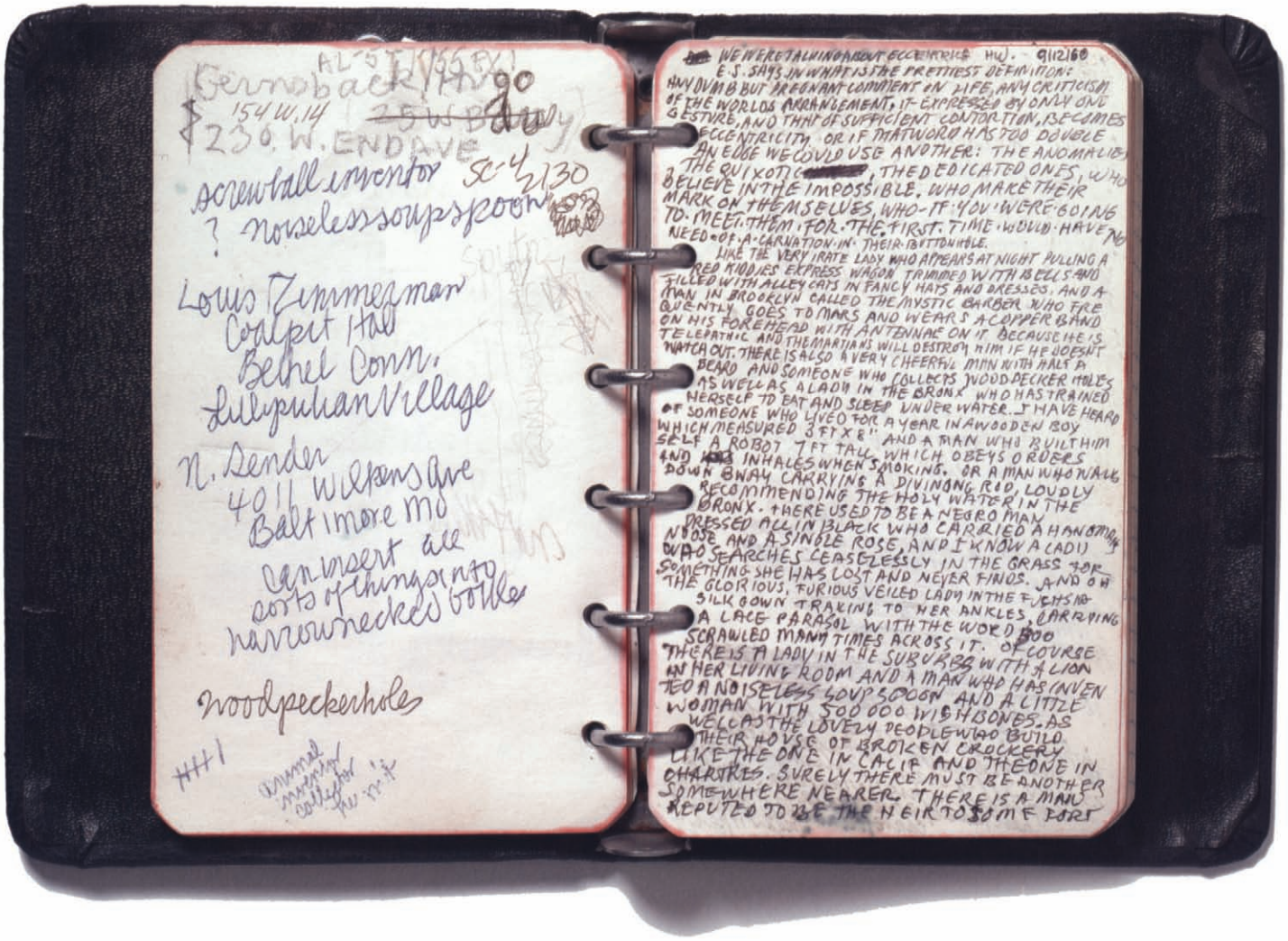
Diane Arbus
American, 1923–1971

Russian midget friends in a living room on 100th Street, N.Y.C.

1963
Gelatin silver print, 15 ⅜ x 14 ¾ in. (39 x 37.5 cm)
Inscribed and signed on verso at bottom in pencil: *diane arbus midget friends 1963;* in ink: *the living room NYC 1962*
Provenance: The Estate of Diane Arbus; [Fraenkel Gallery, San Francisco], 2007.
Purchase, Joyce F. Menschel, and Ann Tennenbaum and Thomas H. Lee Gifts; Louis V. Bell, Harris Brisbane Dick, and Rogers Funds and Joseph Pulitzer Bequest; and Marlene Nathan Meyerson Family Foundation, Twentieth-Century Photography Fund, Diana Barrett and Robert Vila, Elizabeth S. and Robert J. Fisher, Charlotte and Bill Ford, Lita Annenberg Hazen Charitable Trust and Hazen Polsky Foundation Inc., Jennifer and Joseph Duke, Jennifer and Philip Maritz, Saundra B. Lane, The Jerry and Emily Spiegel Family Foundation and Pamela and Arthur Sanders, Anonymous, and The Judith Rothschild Foundation Gifts, 2007 (2007.509)

Diane Arbus's first subjects, found in locations from Coney Island to Central Park, included children's games, female impersonators, and side-show performers at Hubert's Dime Museum on Forty-second Street near Times Square. It was at Hubert's in 1959–60 that Arbus met Andrew Ratoucheff, a Russian midget best known for his impersonations of Marilyn Monroe and Maurice Chevalier. Seen here in the home of old friends, Ratoucheff has shed his stage persona and poses with his companions for this intimate group portrait. As enigmatic as Velázquez's *Las Meninas*, Arbus's photograph explores the limits and nature of objectivity not through the lens of the Spanish court of Philip IV but by confronting us with the awesome potential drama of a personal encounter.

In 2007 the Museum acquired this and nineteen other vintage prints of Arbus's most important photographs. The selection, which includes one of her earliest photographs, *Masked boy with friends, Coney Island, N.Y.*, of 1956, and one of her last, *Blind couple in their bedroom, Queens, N.Y.*, of 1971, dramatically expands the collection. JLR



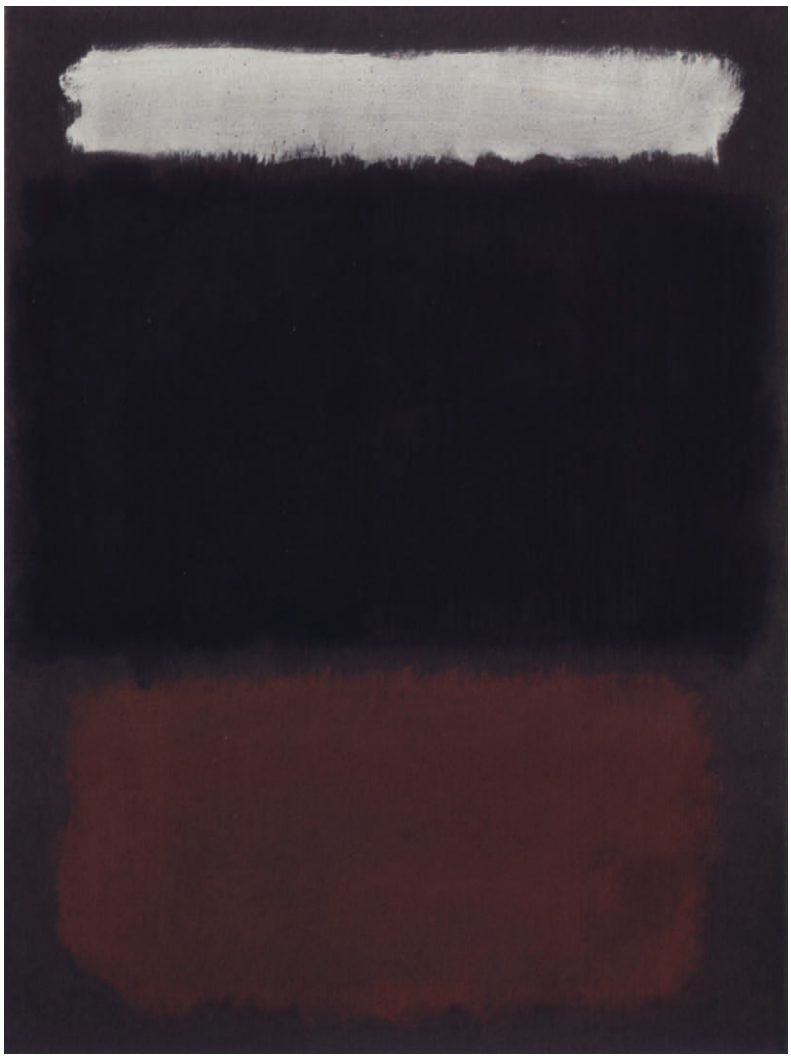
Diane Arbus Archive

A Diane Arbus Notebook from 1960

Provenance: The Estate of Diane Arbus.
Archive: Gift of Doon Arbus and Amy Arbus, 2007 (2007.500–.505) and Promised Gift of Doon Arbus and Amy Arbus, 2007
Notebook: Promised Gift of Doon Arbus and Amy Arbus, 2007

It is rare that any great artist should leave behind her entire output, but such is the case with Diane Arbus (1923–1971), the legendary American photographer known for her revelatory portraits of couples, children, nudists, carnival performers, and eccentrics. Acquired from the artist's estate by gift and promised gift, the Diane Arbus Archive will enable the Museum to map Arbus's creativity in the most complete way. The archive will provide contextual understanding of Arbus's stunning achievement with the camera and simultaneously offer fundamental insight into what it means to be an artist in modern times.

The Diane Arbus Archive includes hundreds of unique gelatin silver prints from Arbus's early career, as well as her complete corpus of negatives and contact prints (some 7,500 rolls of film), her photography collection, library, and personal papers, including appointment books, notebooks, correspondence, writings, and ephemera. Along with the purchase of twenty iconic photographs, the acquisition of the Diane Arbus Archive establishes the Metropolitan as the only comprehensive repository of this artist's work. The materials will be preserved, catalogued, and ultimately made available for study by scholars, artists, and the general public. JLR



Mark Rothko
American, born Russia, 1903–1970

Untitled (White, Black, Rust, on Brown)

1968
Acrylic on paper, mounted on wood panel; 24 x 18 in. (61 x 45.7 cm)
Provenance: Mark Rothko estate; to [Marlborough Gallery, New York]; to [Pace Gallery, New York], ca. 1978–79; to Mr. and Mrs. Leon Hess, New York, 1979.
Gift of Norma Wilentz Hess, 2007 (2007.327)

Recovering from an aortic aneurysm in the spring of 1968 and prohibited by his physician from working on anything over 40 inches high, Mark Rothko was forced to suspend work on large-scale oil paintings. That summer, in a rented house and studio in Provincetown, Massachusetts, he began to work in acrylic paint on small sheets of rag paper (many of these paintings were later mounted to canvases or boards). Intimate in scale and jewel-like in tone, this series of late works on paper draws from the mural cycle Rothko painted between 1964 and 1968 for a chapel commissioned by John and Dominique de Menil in Houston, Texas. Yet the medium of acrylic—quick-drying, inexpensive, and versatile—also allowed for experiments in a wide range of colors, along with a new, brushy style of paint application. The rich palette of rust brown, black, and white seems to echo the colors of the cycle of large-scale paintings he created for the Four Seasons restaurant in New York in 1958–59 (donated to the Tate, London, in 1968), and the composition of three soft-edged rectangles is signature in style. NR

Leon Levinstein
American, 1910–1988

[Street Scene, New York City]

Ca. 1970
Gelatin silver print, 14 x 10⅜ in. (35.5 x 26.3 cm)
Provenance: Estate of Leon Levinstein; [Howard Greenberg Gallery, New York]; Gary Davis, Connecticut.
Gift of Gary Davis, 2007 (2007.467.4)

From the late 1950s to the early 1980s, Leon Levinstein made poignant studies of isolated individuals on the streets of New York City. An informal student of the renowned Russian designer Alexey Brodovitch and the photographer Sid Grossman, Levinstein was a loner whose complete oeuvre and achievement with the camera are just now being recognized. This arresting photograph of a stylized garden flowering in the asphalt jungle is one of thirty by Levinstein chosen as gifts to the Museum from the premier private collection of the artist's work. Exploding with a smart, graphic virtuosity balanced by an unusual compassion for his offbeat subjects, Levinstein's photographs delight the eye and thrill the heart. JLR

Hermann Jünger
German, 1928–2005

Brooch

1972
Gold, emeralds, chrysoprase, sapphires, opals, lapis lazuli, enamel; 1⅞ x 2 in. (4.8 x 5.1 cm)
Provenance: Setter collection, Seckach, Germany; [Spectrum Gallerie, Munich]; Donna Schneier, New York.
Gift of Donna Schneier, 2007 (2007.384.27)

Hermann Jünger grew up in Hanau, Germany, where the well-respected craft of goldsmithing had flourished for many years. From 1947 to 1949 he studied at the Staatliche Zeichenakademie (State Drawing Academy) and then apprenticed in design workshops throughout Germany. Jünger's work was unique from the start. In his unorthodox designs he eschewed the smooth surfaces and precisely crafted settings of traditional German goldwork. He was attracted instead to the imperfections found in ancient works and preferred freer and more random compositions. He was also influenced by tribal artifacts, the rich palette of the gems and enamels used in Romanesque jewelry, and the paintings of Paul Klee and Julius Bissier, a lesser-known German artist whose abstract paintings consist of forms that seem to float weightlessly. JA

Kara Walker
American, born 1969

Fixin', Pitted, Fished, Pitied

1995
Cut and pasted painted paper on paper; four panels: 66 x 42 in. (167.6 x 106.7 cm), 66 x 42 in. (167.6 x 106.7 cm), 66 x 42 in. (167.6 x 106.7 cm), 55½ x 42¼ in. (141 x 107.3 cm)
Provenance: [Sikkema Jenkins and Company]; private collection, United States, on extended loan to the Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery, Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, New York, 2003–6; private collection, Luxembourg; [EVO Gallery, Santa Fe].
Francis Lathrop Fund, 2007 (2007.285a–d)

Though still young, Kara Walker has already achieved a remarkable oeuvre and cemented her place in the history of American art. Walker burst onto the New York art scene in 1994, a fresh graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design. The next year she created *Fixin', Pitted, Fished, Pitied*, a seminal statement in her signature style, consisting of nearly lifesize cutouts in black paper mounted on white paper. Characteristically, Walker undermines tradition and stereotype to create suspense and ambiguity. *Fixin'* recalls the slang of southern Blacks adapted by Joel Chandler Harris in his seven Uncle Remus books (1881), which feature Br'er Rabbit as the troublemaking trickster. Here Br'er Rabbit leads a small black girl carrying a baby down a long path. In *Pitted* Br'er Rabbit attacks a black boy. *Fished* shows a rural white man playing with a black baby boy, perhaps the Tar Baby Br'er Fox created in an attempt to capture Br'er Rabbit. In *Pitied* an adolescent female slave examines her devilish tail as she stomps through a landscape in disintegrating boots. In Walker's later work this same character sometimes appears as an alligator girl, half human, half reptile.

The choice of Harris's polarizing Uncle Remus stories is typical for Walker. Her work forces the viewer to consider the effect of prejudice on both the oppressor and the oppressed and the pernicious, self-perpetuating stain slavery and racism have left on all aspects of American culture. GT

Yu Peng
Chinese, born 1955

Returning to Nature through a Reclusive Life

Dated 1996
Hanging scroll: ink and color on paper, 91⅜ x 20⅞ in. (232 x 53 cm)
Provenance: Exhibited by the artist at Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh, 1996; acquired by a private collector; sale, Sotheby's, New York, March 31, 2006, lot 184; to David Solo.
Gift of David Solo, in honor of Maxwell K. Hearn, 2007 (2007.482)

Yu Peng belongs to the first generation of artists born in Taiwan after the Nationalist government reestablished itself on the island in 1949. Like many of his contemporaries, Yu often addresses the politically fraught issue of cultural identity. He lives in Taipei but often asserts his mainland Chinese heritage in his art, which explores both the legacy of his historic homeland and the disjunction between the "literati" lifestyle of an idealized past and the materialistic values of the present. *Returning to Nature through a Reclusive Life* is both whimsical and satirical, part autobiography and part fantasy, freely mixing antique models with images of modern life. Employing a traditional format and medium, Yu divided his composition roughly into thirds. The central section is dominated by a seated figure—perhaps the artist—posed and dressed to resemble a scholar-gentleman but wearing modern eyeglasses. Above him is a vast unpopulated landscape of densely textured mountains that recalls the idiom of the recluse artist Wang Meng (ca. 1308–1385), while the lower third of the painting is filled with figures, some naked, some clothed, in an elaborate garden setting.

This painting marks the Asian Art Department's commitment to acquiring works by contemporary artists when the format, medium, or subject matter relates meaningfully to traditional Chinese art. MKH

Shigeyuki Kihara
Samoan, born 1975

My Samoan Girl

2004–5, printed 2007
Chromogenic print, 31½ x 23⅝ in. (80 x 60 cm)
Provenance: [Sherman Galleries, Sydney, Australia].
Purchase, Evelyn A. J. Hall Charitable Trust and Stephanie H. Bernheim Gifts, 2007 (2007.356)

The photographs by Shigeyuki Kihara are powerful commentaries on Samoa's colonial past and how the people of Samoa were pictured by outsiders. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, commercial photographers from New Zealand, Australia, and Europe set up studios in Samoa. They sold photographs of scenic views, towns, and local people to colonials both in Samoa and back home, and their business thrived. Some photographers created respectful portraits, but others marketed images that encouraged stereotypes.

In *My Samoan Girl* Kihara has created an adaptation of a cliché studio tableau, presenting herself in the Eurocentric pose of the Samoan "belles" seen in colonial photographs. But Kihara is also a *fa'a fafine*, born male and living as a woman, an accepted status in Samoan society. Like the women pictured in colonial photographs, she is not what she appears to be. Her presentation thus not only addresses Western perceptions and the erroneous ideas that were perpetuated in historical photographs, it also uniquely confronts the issues of erotic portraits and gender identity and elicits questions about perception and acceptance in past and present constructions of Samoan identity. VLW

Zaha Hadid (designer)
British, born Iraq, 1950

Established & Sons (manufacturer)
British, established 2004

"Gyre" Lounge Chair

London, 2006
Polyester resin and polyurethane lacquer, 26⅝ x 83½ x 55⅞ in. (67.5 x 212 x 142 cm)
Provenance: Purchased from Established & Sons, London.
Cynthia Hazen Polsky and Leon B. Polsky Fund, 2007 (2007.339)

The architect Zaha Hadid, whose practice is based in London, is best known for her unconventional buildings that seem to defy the logic of construction. Until now the only interior furnishings she has designed were either experimental or created specifically for her buildings. The Seamless series of five curvilinear furniture pieces—a chair, a chaise, a cabinet, a set of stools, and shelves—was made in a limited edition of twelve. "Seamless" is an apt title that promotes Hadid's vision of architecture, design, and the manipulation of space, meant to be fluid, porous, and seamlessly produced. While the furniture was perfected on a computer, the manufacturing techniques tested the boundaries of both materials and process, just as her buildings do. JA

James Welling
American, born 1951

012 from the Flowers Series

2006
Chromogenic print, 46½ x 37¼ in. (118.1 x 94.6 cm)
Provenance: [David Zwirner Gallery, New York].
Purchase, Joyce F. Menschel Gift, 2008 (2008.35)

For the last three decades James Welling has improbably fused the reductivist principles of 1960s Conceptual art with the craft and darkroom manipulation of traditional photographic technique. At first glance Welling's new series of flower pictures—large and nearly psychedelically colored—seem almost garish when compared to the modestly scaled, darkling visions of his earlier work, yet they constitute a logical outgrowth of the artist's larger ambition of attenuating the processes of perception the viewer brings to a work of art.

The steps involved in the creation of these works are instructive: Welling first arranged and exposed plumbago blossoms on black-and-white sheet film negatives and then printed each negative on color photographic paper using a different assortment of colored gels. Each individual work, then, is the result of a "performance" in the darkroom in which an admixture of infinitely shaded hues seem to pulse, swell, and bleed around and through the spiky branches—a performance that can be repeated, varied, and completed by each viewer in the act of looking. The pictures are also exuberant displays of analog technical wizardry that implicitly rebuke digitally manipulated photography that is less than truthful about its methods and effects. DE

Olivier Theyskens (designer)

Belgian, born 1977

For Nina Ricci

French, established 1932

Evening Dress

Spring/summer 2007
Steel gray heat-crinkled silk organza edged with linear chain stitch in white silk, l. at center back
85 in. (215.9 cm)
Provenance: Mario Grauso, Puig Beauty and Fashion Group, Barcelona.
Gift of Mario Grauso, 2007 (2007.376.2a, b)

For his inaugural collection at Nina Ricci (now a division of the Puig Group), Olivier Theyskens referenced not only the archives of the house's eponymous founder but also her perfume, L'Air du Temps, with its two doves hovering above the bottle of swirling crystal. Inspired by the contained yet dynamic movement of the Lalique crystal flacon, Theyskens created a series of spiraling ensembles, from knitted sweaters to structured, couture-worthy ball gowns. As in his earlier work, under his own label and most recently for Rochas, Theyskens infused feminine and romantic designs with contemporary edge and relevance. This gown was shown on the runway without the elaborate underskirts, thus muting its reference to the Golden Age of postwar haute couture. Here, however, it is displayed in its full, crinolined form, as originally conceived.

Clearly, Theyskens is an artist of ambition, proposing as ready-to-wear the most extraordinary achievements of an atelier. The fashion press has coined the term "demi-couture" for these works that fall between prêt-a-porter and haute couture. This gown makes apparent that the boundaries between couture's labor-intensive handwork and lavish artisanal skills and ready-to-wear's creative suppleness and sensitivity to the mood of the contemporary woman have eroded. With his breathtaking vision and technique, Theyskens has successfully negotiated the elegance of the venerable past and the streetwise worldliness of the moment. HK

Anish Kapoor

British, born India, 1954

Untitled

2007
Stainless steel, 89¾ x 89⅜ x 18⅛ in. (228 x 227 x 46 cm)
Provenance: [Lisson Gallery, London].
Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift, and Cynthia Hazen Polsky and Leon B. Polsky Fund, 2008 (2008.29)

Internationally acclaimed minimalist sculptor Anish Kapoor is one of the foremost artists of our time and one of the most influential sculptors of his generation, renowned for his enigmatic forms that permeate physical and psychological space. This virtuosic example simultaneously explores the concept of the void and destabilizes our assumptions about the physical world. Created for public interaction and engagement with the surrounding space, the sculpture draws the viewer in with its refined surface and startling optical effects of depth and dimension. From a body of Kapoor's most recent work of mirrorlike pieces that reflect or distort the viewer and the surroundings and suggest the notion of continuous space, it offers a dazzling experience of light and a startling optical effect. Deeply rooted metaphysical polarities are at play in Kapoor's work: presence and absence, being and nonbeing, solidity and intangibility, and he draws on both Western and Eastern cultures for inspiration. His intention to engage the viewer and provoke a physical and visceral response is achieved in this reflective sculpture with its faceted facade that fuses the work, the viewer, and the environment into one pixelated, constantly fluctuating mosaic. ALS

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