



Recent Acquisitions

A SELECTION: 2014–2016



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THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK



Director's Note

In the Recent Acquisitions *Bulletin*, published every other year in the fall, we celebrate notable additions to The Met collection and acknowledge the many individuals who support the Museum's mission to collect, study, conserve, and present significant works of art across all times and cultures. In some cases, these new works transform how The Met is able to present a particular culture or period. Such is the case with Charles Le Brun's monumental portrait *Everhard Jabach (1618–1695) and His Family*, a landmark in the history of French portraiture and a gift from one of The Met's most devoted benefactors, Mrs. Charles Wrightsman. Equally transformative are two major gifts to the Department of Asian Art that were celebrated as part of the Asian Art 100 series of exhibitions in 2015: from longtime supporters Florence and Herbert Irving, an astounding donation of nearly 1,300 works of art from every major culture of East and South Asia; and from the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, three hundred masterpieces of Japanese art, including a magnificent thirteenth-century sculpture of the fierce protective deity Fudō Myōō.

Through key acquisitions and gifts, The Met is often able to strengthen areas in which we already have significant holdings. Two groups of works by renowned American photographer Irving Penn are a notable example. Sixty-four portraits from the Small Trades series and a promised gift of some 175 other works made throughout the artist's long career more than double the Museum's holdings of Penn's photographs, now the world's largest public collection of his work. We also acquired an exceptionally strong group of European paintings. In addition to the Le Brun, these include defining works by Joachim Beuckelaer, Guido Cagnacci, Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione, Fernand Khnopff, and Luis de Morales, each the first painting by these artists to enter the collection.

The Met is also fortunate to have acquired several rare pieces that date to the very beginning of important artistic traditions, from a small sculpture of a hippo goddess—one of the earliest known Egyptian statues to combine animal features with the human body—to a painted hanging of the biblical Exodus narrative, which has been dated to about A.D. 129–346, preceding much of the earliest known Christian art. Similarly, an exceedingly rare section of an illuminated Buddhist scripture from the mid-eighth century represents the beginning of narrative painting in Japan, while a lavish gospel book from the court of Charlemagne helped set the standard for all subsequent book production in the West.

From across the Americas comes a mix of works reflecting The Met's engagement with these areas of the collection, both before and after the colonial period. A spectacular gold labret (lip ornament) in the shape of a serpent ready to strike was likely made for the highest ranks of Aztec society. The lavish "Crown of the Andes," crafted in gold and emeralds, reminds us that the goldsmith's art continued to be prominent in colonial Spanish America. The Met's newly strengthened commitment to collect and exhibit new art from Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, and South America is reflected in the *Lipzoid Spice Garden* of Ernesto Neto, a key figure in contemporary Brazilian art, who immerses the viewer in an all-enveloping sensory experience.

Among the most anticipated exhibitions in New York this fall is The Met's retrospective of American artist Kerry James Marshall, whose large-scale narrative paintings engage with art history in order to examine and chronicle the African American experience. The Met is committed to bringing into its collection more important works by black artists—contemporary, modern, and historical. Recently, that included, in addition to Marshall's *Untitled (Studio)*, paintings by Harlem Renaissance artist Aaron Douglas and early nineteenth-century portraitist Joshua Johnson.

Other highlights among new acquisitions include a shirt of mail and plate made for one of the Mamluk sultans of Egypt, ranked among the greatest Islamic armors in existence; a brooch by famed jeweler Cartier set with a large emerald from Mughal India; an outstanding trio of silver vessels from Classical Greece whose decoration recalls that of Athenian red-figure vases; a massive hanging from the tapestry series known as The Honors, among the most important of the early sixteenth century; a Sachihongo mask from Zambia, part of the Mbunda peoples' rich performative tradition that in 2005 was added to the UNESCO list of Intangible Cultural Heritage; and a poignant painting by American artist Jules Tavernier that captures a sacred ritual of the Pomo Indians of northern California at the very moment when whites laid claim to their ancestral lands.

We are deeply grateful to the many passionate collectors and donors who make possible the continued growth of The Met collection. Acknowledged in these pages, on gallery labels, and in the Annual Report, they play a vital and ongoing role in the everyday life of the Museum.

Thomas P. Campbell
Director, The Metropolitan Museum of Art





Vessel with Two Zebu

Probably from the Gulf region, Tarut Island (al-Rafiah), ca. 2600–2350 B.C. Chlorite with calcite inlay, H. 4½ in. (11.4 cm). Gift of Mrs. Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff, 2014 (2014.717)

Depicted in a carved and inlaid technique are two zebu—a species of cattle originating in South Asia—striding one behind the other, their modeled bodies starkly outlined and their eyes, muzzles, horns, and humps sharply differentiated by deep incisions and sweeping curves. The humps are embellished with white circular inlays (a few of which survive), providing a stark contrast to the dark chlorite material. Of great interest is the rich landscape from which the animals emerge, particularly the scalloped patterning above, suggesting mountains; the parallel wavy lines and inlaid spirals, indicating perhaps a river and streams of water; and the flowers between the animals' legs, perhaps evoking the riverbank along which they walk.

This vessel belongs to a widely distributed group of third millennium B.C. carved chlorite vessels and other objects that have been designated as “Intercultural” in style. They provide graphic evidence for cultural interpenetration across the region stretching from the Indus Valley to the Euphrates and integrate motifs derived from both Near Eastern and Harappan traditions. Notable finds come from southeastern Iran and the island of Tarut, with elaborate examples deposited in both temples and tombs in Mesopotamia. [JA](#)



Early Hippo Goddess

Egyptian, Old Kingdom, Dynasty 3–early Dynasty 4 (ca. 2649–2528 B.C.). Painted indurated limestone, H. 6½ in. (16.5 cm). Purchase, Mr. and Mrs. John A. Moran Gift, 2015 (2015.595)

This powerful sculpture is one of the earliest known statues joining multiple animal features to a human body, a quintessential Egyptian concept that produced striking imagery. Here the gravid body of a woman was given a hippo's head, from which a great crocodile tail emerges and flows down her back. Close examination shows a crocodile's skin flap at the back of the hippo's mouth and subtle, incised lines at the outer edges of her eyes and above the brows, representing the long hairs found on a lion's face. Traces of pigment indicate she was once painted red with black details.

Hippo goddesses, such as Ipy and Taweret, are well known in the Egyptian pantheon after the late Old Kingdom (ca. 2323–2150 B.C.), but they are often depicted with a fiercer demeanor than that communicated here. These goddesses were responsible for pregnant women's safe delivery and for protecting a newborn's health. They also had a role in taking care of the king. This sculpture has been assigned an early date based on a number of significant differences from later and better-known examples, such as the closed mouth, absent neck, and lack of a lion's mane. [DCP](#)



Group of Cosmetic Vessels and Jewelry Elements (The Haraga Treasure)

Egyptian, Middle Kingdom, mid- to late Dynasty 12
(ca. 1887–1750 B.C.). El Haraga, tomb 124. Egyptian alabaster, silver,
gold, carnelian, lapis lazuli, turquoise, and faience; vessels,
H. 1½–4½ in. (2.9–10.4 cm); jewelry elements, L. ¾–1½ in. (0.8–2.9 cm).
Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift, 2014 (2014.619.1–.36)

In 1913 British Egyptologist Reginald Engelbach excavated a large but badly robbed tomb from a cemetery about seventy miles south of Cairo. Among the important funerary objects he found that had survived the extensive pillaging was a group of stone vessels used for cosmetics, including an exquisite spoon with a handle in the shape of the hieroglyph for “life” and a bowl shaped like the shell of a Nile River mollusk. Two other vessels in the group—a bag-shaped jar and a high-shouldered example—are, like the spoon, rare forms.

The most spectacular of Engelbach’s finds, however, were fragments of silver jewelry, including three pieces that name two kings of Egypt’s Twelfth Dynasty and nine elements from a pectoral inlaid with semiprecious stones. There were also silver pendants, inlaid with shell from imported Red Sea mollusks, and a girdle with imitation cowrie beads, several of which still contained pellets that, when shaken, would have made a soft sound. In Egypt, silver is the rarest of precious metals and is often poorly preserved; here the beads, pendants, and pieces from the inlaid pectoral, whose complex design honored the goddess Hathor,



were all badly corroded. The combination of such rare materials and the intricate designs suggests that the jewelry was a royal gift to the tomb’s occupant, most likely a woman, to judge from the presence of the necklace, pectoral, and girdle. [DCP](#)

Plate with Reclining Zebu

Eastern Iran, ca. late third–early second millennium B.C. Copper alloy, Diam. 9 in. (22.9 cm). Gift of Evelyn Kranes Kossak, The Kronos Collections, 2015 (2015.789)

Made from a sheet of copper alloy with a rim that has now broken away, this shallow plate is decorated at the center with an image of a zebu. The zebu’s distinctive hump and upraised curved horns are clearly visible as the recumbent animal turns to face its rump and arched tail. Details such as the texture of the fur on the neck and chest and the long tuft of hair at the tip of the tail are incised. The body is formed in low relief, and the modeling of the face is especially delicate, combining the techniques of repoussé and chasing.

The Bronze Age cemetery at Shahdad, in southeastern Iran, yielded three copper-alloy plates similar to this piece, which were likewise decorated with animals in low relief. Another low-sided copper plate, embellished with a lion attacking a bull, comes from a Bronze Age level at the site of Tepe Hissar, in northwestern Iran. These closely related, excavated examples suggest that The Met’s plate also comes from Iran. [SBG](#)



Stela of Kemes

Egyptian, Middle Kingdom, second quarter of Dynasty 13 (ca. 1750–1720 B.C.). Painted limestone, H. 28 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (73.4 cm), W. 13 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (33.9 cm), L. 26 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (66.2 cm). Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift, 2014 (2014.283a, b)

This intriguing object is one of a small number of unusual Middle Kingdom stelae that ingeniously recombine various components of a complete burial into a single monument: in this case, one dedicated to a man named “Kemes, Overseer of Percussionists.” The lower section represents the walls that enclosed an aboveground tomb chapel; symbolic gates bear the names of different goddesses in elegant hieroglyphs. The upper section imitates a shrine-shaped sarcophagus. The two short ends emulate chapels, each containing a figure of Kemes in high relief. One stands in a devotional attitude, with his hands palm down on a kilt, while the other is wrapped like a mummy, indicating his successful transition into the afterlife. One of the long sides depicts Kemes and his family receiving offerings, typical of Dynasty 13 stelae, while the other has protective spells from funerary texts that usually appear on wood coffins. [DCP](#)





Face from a Coffin Lid

Egyptian, Third Intermediate Period, Dynasty 22–24 (ca. 945–712 B.C.). Painted and plastered wood, H. 22 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (58 cm), W. 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (51 cm). Purchase, Friends of Egyptian Art Gifts, 2016 (2016.123)

This face once belonged to an anthropoid wood coffin decorated with plaster painted in polychromy. The sweeping white wings of a vulture curve around to protect the small face, which is dominated by large eyes and surrounded by an oversize wig with blue and gold striped lappets. The head is also adorned by a wide fillet of flower petals decorated with a band. A section of a beaded broad collar probably filled the space below the chin, now exposed down to raw wood. Directly above the bridge of the nose, a beetle pushes a red sun disk, representing the daily journey of the sun god Re across the sky. Normally the classic form of a scarab beetle would be depicted here, but this one

appears almost spiderlike. The northern area of Upper Egypt drew on a strong tradition of Libyan heritage during the time this coffin was made, and it is possible that the artist who produced it knew what was supposed to decorate the lid—a scarab beetle—but was less sure about what one looked like. [DCP](#)

Bes-Image Rattle

Egyptian, Third Intermediate Period (ca. 945–664 B.C.). Faience, H. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (21.6 cm). Purchase, 2007 Benefit Fund and Lila Acheson Wallace and Diane Carol Brandt Gifts, 2015 (2015.11)

Bes, the beneficent Egyptian domestic god, is represented here with his typical leonine face, dwarf body, and tail. Holes at the top of his feather crown and in his ears once held rattling elements. The god extends a *dom* nut to a baby in his arms, who



has Bes-like features. Monkeys are seated around his legs and alongside his crown. Behind his feathers is the incised figure of a bound oryx.

Known as a Bes-image, this rattle is part of a repertoire of figures created in a distinctive spotted faience from Dynasty 22 into Dynasty 26. The center of production of these works was Egypt's eastern Delta, in particular Bubastis and Tanis, an area where Near Eastern peoples had long been intermixed in the population. At this time it was also a center for the settlement of Libyan tribal peoples, all conditions that possibly influenced this production. Through their appearance, the figures on the rattle allude to the goddess Bastet, in particular the myth termed "The Return of the Faraway Goddess," in which the feline/leonine Bastet becomes angry with the god Re and leaves Egypt for Nubia. Re wants her back again, so he sends the god Thoth, who, taking the form of a monkey, lures her back with fables. Bes, musicians, and dancers accompany the train of the returning goddess, whose arrival brings the return of good fortune to Egypt. The Bes-image rattle must have been used in ritual performances; Bes's known role as a protector of women and child-birth suggests the rituals addressed such concerns. Bastet, too, had a role as the nurse of a divine child-king, and the allusions to her stories may have invoked her power for similar ends. MH

Stela of Djedbastetemtehou, Singer in the Interior of Amun

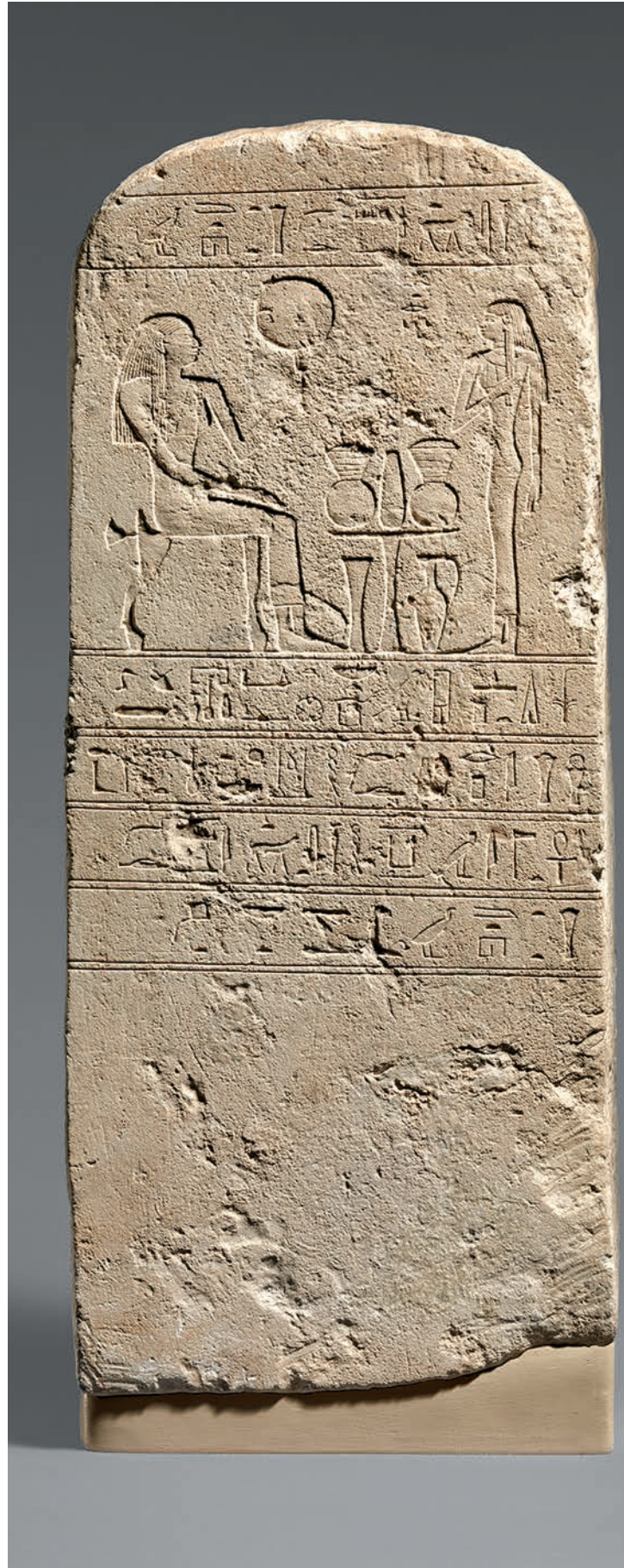
Egyptian, Third Intermediate Period–Late Period (ca. 690–650 B.C.).

Probably from Mefkat (Kom abu Billou). Limestone, H. 19½ in.

(49.5 cm). Purchase, Patricia A. Cotti Gift, and Elaine A. Evans Bequest, in memory of William C. Hayes, 2016 (2016.122)

Djedbastetemtehou, shown seated in the lunette of this stela, raises a large mirror and receives offerings from a smaller standing woman, Irtirw. A line of inscription at the top gives Djedbastetemtehou's title as "Singer in the Interior of Amun," an important office in the temple of Amun in the city of Thebes. Lines of inscription below cite the goddess Hathor in the town of Mefkat, in the West Delta—newly prominent at this time—on behalf of Djedbastetemtehou, who apparently traveled from a home there about four hundred miles to the south to serve as a religious singer at Thebes. She was probably sent by her father to receive this honor.

The stela is graphically striking, particularly the beautiful, linear slimness and strong, round visages of the women, the large mirror disk, and the elegant double register lines used through the inscription. It also provides clear testament to the tendency in Egyptian art at the end of the Third Intermediate Period to look to models from much earlier epochs. The figural styles and the dog-collar necklace, for example, hark back to the Old Kingdom, almost two millennia earlier, while the oversize mirror alludes to Hathor but recalls Middle Kingdom toilette scenes. MH





Two Kylikes (Drinking Cups) and a Phiale Mesomphalos (Libation Vessel)

Greek, Classical, late 5th century B.C. Silver gilt. Left to right: Diam. of kylix with Bellerophon (2015.260.2) 5 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (13 cm), Wt. 9.7 oz. (275 g); Diam. of phiale mesomphalos (2015.260.3) 8 in. (20.3 cm), Wt. 14.6 oz. (414 g); Diam. of kylix with Scylla (2015.260.1) 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (17 cm), Wt. 14.3 oz. (405 g). Gift of Mary and Michael Jaharis in honor of Thomas P. Campbell, 2015 (2015.260.1–.3)

Very little Classical Greek silver plate survives today. The golden figural decoration on these rare, outstanding examples calls to mind that found on Athenian red-figure vases, leading some scholars to speculate that precious vessels like these were the inspiration for the painted wares. However, since most gold-figured silver vessels have been found in Thracian tombs, on the northern fringes of the Hellenized world, and are dated to the second half of the fifth century B.C.—much later than the advent of the red-figure style—it has also been suggested that the influence may have gone the other way.

On the tondo (center medallion) of the cup at left, the hero Bellerophon rides Pegasos, the winged horse, as he battles the Chimaera, a mythical creature with the heads of a lion and a goat and a tail in the form of a snake. On the richly embellished libation vessel, at center, four youths on horseback hunt deer with spears. Here the artist made clever use of the circular shape to show the hunters encircling their quarry. The kylix at right presents an enthralling image of “dread-yelping” Scylla, the Homeric sea monster, who brandishes the broken rudder of a ship as she emerges from the wine-dark sea framed by a gilt laurel wreath. SH

Statue of an Attendant

Greek, South Italian (Tarentine), late 4th or 3rd century B.C. Marble and limestone, H. 48 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (123 cm). Purchase, 2005 Benefit and Philippe de Montebello Funds; Spiro Latsis, Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Butler, Anonymous, James H. and Zoe Moshovitis, Dr. and Mrs. Roy Vagelos, Lewis M. Dubroff, Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. Frederick W. Beinecke, Cynthia Hazen Polsky, Jeannette and Jonathan Rosen, Annette de la Renta, Basil P. Goulandris, Andrés A. Mata, Joyce Frank Menschel, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Ruddock, Shelby White, and James and Theodore Pedas Family Foundation Gifts, in honor of Mary Jaharis, 2015 (2015.66)

This funerary statue is said to come from Taranto, the site of the ancient Greek colony of Taras, in southern Italy. A young girl, slightly smaller than lifesize, wears a long woolen garment (peplos) and soft shoes that were originally detailed in paint. The figure’s long dress is folded at the shoulders, where it is pinned, and is belted below the breasts. The girl stands with her weight carried on the left leg; her bent right leg is drawn back and to the side. She turns her head sharply to the left and upward, gazing at a larger figure, now missing, that originally stood to her left. The combination of an attendant and a figure of the deceased (the former usually handing over an object such as a jewelry box) is one of the traditional iconographic schemes in Classical Greek funerary sculpture. The group would have adorned a funerary *naiskos*, or small templelike monument.

The head and neck of the girl were carved separately in marble and inserted into the figure’s limestone body and contiguous narrow plinth. Although the combination of imported marble (used to represent flesh) and local limestone is characteristic of Greek sculpture from southern Italy and Sicily, very few of these combined statues survive in their entirety. CAP



Askos and Amphoriskos (Flasks)

Greek, South Italian (Apulian, Gnathian), ca. 340–320 B.C. Terracotta; H. of askos 4¼ in. (10.8 cm), H. of amphoriskos 6½ in. (16.5 cm).

Askos: Purchase, The Concordia Foundation Gift and funds from various donors, 2015 (2015.642). Amphoriskos: Purchase, John S. and Maria Christina Bilimatsis Gift, 2015 (2015.641)

These two flasks, undoubtedly for oil, have been known since the early 1880s, when they were purchased by the noted British archaeologist Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt-Rivers. They remained with his descendants until 1992. Documentation indicates that they were found together at Capua, a major center in the Italian region of Campania. However, the technique of decoration, in which color is applied onto the vase, points to neighboring Apulia as the place of production. The simple motifs are adapted with exceptional sureness to the irregular surfaces of the respective shapes. Under the spout, the askos additionally shows a suspended theatrical mask between ribbons and ivy leaves, popular details associated with the wine god, Dionysos. JRM





Volute-krater

Etruscan, ca. 340–300 B.C. Terracotta, H. 19 in. (48.3 cm). Purchase, William and Joan Weiant Gift, 2014 (2014.192)

Workshops producing vases in mainland Greece, particularly Athens, exported thousands of pieces to ancient Italy. As the imports arrived and circulated, local artists reinterpreted the shapes, subjects, and decorative motifs to suit the needs and tastes of their clientele. This volute-krater (bowl for mixing wine and water) is a paradigmatic example of Etruscan creativity. The heavily articulated shape and bizarre detail of the vertical handles, the bold but inorganic ornament on the neck and shoulder, and the heads encircled by a ring and emerging between large palmettes under the handles give wild new life to their disciplined Greek models. The figural subjects probably depict episodes of the Trojan War. On the obverse, the Trojan prince Troilos, in the center, is about to be killed by the Greek Achilles, a prelude to the war itself. The scene on the reverse is unclear. The vase may never have been used during the owner's life but only for his burial. [JRM](#)





Plate

Roman, Imperial, 1st–2nd century A.D. Greywacke, Diam. 9½ in. (24.1 cm). Gift of Ariel Herrmann, 2014 (2014.248)

Greywacke, a type of dark sandstone, was used in Egypt from Predynastic until Late Dynastic times. The Met's Department of Egyptian Art has many fine examples of carved greywacke, including palettes, statues, and sarcophagi. There is less evidence for its use in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Only one ancient quarry is known—located in the Wadi Hammamat, in Egypt's Eastern Desert—that bears evidence of its exploitation in the Roman period. Wealthy Romans were fond of vessels made of semiprecious and exotic stones, and some became avid collectors of costly examples. Such vessels were intended more for display than practical use. Rare in ancient times, few have survived; the well-preserved condition of this piece makes it even more precious.

The plate was made on a lathe, with two solid, integral projecting handles carved out into simplified volutes with animal-head finials. On its upper surface, a low raised boss decorates the center of the plate; on the underside, there is a plain base ring with a small, central raised disk surrounded by two concentric raised circles. The inside is highly polished, but the underside has been left with traces of its carving and working. [CSL](#)

Banquet Group

Greek, Hellenistic, 3rd–2nd century B.C. Possibly from Myrina. Terracotta, polychromy, and gilt, L. 9 in. (22.9 cm). Purchase, Patricia and Marietta Fried Gift, 2016 (2016.253)

A nuptial banquet takes place on a lavishly decorated *kline* (couch or bed). A man, reclining at far right, raises a wine jug, while a woman, seated at the front edge of the couch, plays a lyre (now missing). The young couple is joined by two child Erotes, one holding a wine jug and the other undressing himself. All participants are crowned with ivy leaves and wreaths. Relief sphinxes support the elaborately turned legs of the couch, which is furnished with two layers of cloth and plush pillows at the ends. Exceptional for its three-dimensionality and ornate style, the group preserves much of its original polychromy: blue and red for the bedding, blue for the wings of the Erotes, and red for the hair and the wreaths of all the figures. There are traces of gilding applied on yellow ocher on the drinking vessels as well as on the ivy berries decorating the crown of one of the Erotes. Terracottas from Myrina often represent similar subjects of nuptial banquets and Erotes playing music. Most likely a grave offering, this group visualizes the overlap in Greek thought and art between the bridal and death *kline* and the role of lyre music as an expression of marital love. [KK](#)





Statuette of a Goddess

Greek, Hellenistic period, mid- to late 2nd century B.C. Terracotta, polychromy, and gilt, H. 24¾ in. (63 cm). Gift of Thomas Colville, 2016 (2016.496.1)

This finely executed statuette shows a female figure leaning with her left elbow on a pillar. She is dressed in a thin, sleeveless chiton, which has slipped off her shoulders, and a heavier himation, wrapped around her hips. Her hair, secured by a ribbon, falls in two long locks on either shoulder. She wears a polos headdress, decorated with rosettes and surmounted by a wreath, and a necklace with spearhead-shaped pendants, once gilded. The original ornate appearance of the statuette would have been greatly enhanced by the now-lost earrings and attributes as well as the rich polychromy and gilding. The statuette represents a goddess, perhaps Aphrodite, Persephone, or Tyche, the personification of Fortune, who enjoyed widespread popularity in Hellenistic and Roman times.

The statuette belongs to a class of large-scale, high-quality terracottas that were produced in the major coroplastic workshops of Asia Minor (such as Myrina, Priene, and Smyrna) during the second and first centuries B.C. and intended to echo monumental sculptures in bronze or marble. The elongated proportions and classicizing face of this example, with its long, straight profile, further support a date in the late second century B.C. [KK](#)

Exodus Painting (Five Elements from a Hanging Depicting the Crossing of the Red Sea)

Byzantine (Egypt), mid-2nd–mid-4th century. Paint and indigo-dyed linen; overall (framed), 24⅞ × 55½ in. (62.5 × 141 cm). Purchase, Rogers and Harris Brisbane Dick Funds; Caroline Howard Hyman Gift; Hagop Kevorkian Fund Gift, in memory of Hagop Kevorkian; Mr. and Mrs. Paul Ruddock, Tianaderrah Foundation, John C. Weber, Diane Carol Brandt, several members of The Chairman's Council, and Elizabeth A.R. and Ralph S. Brown Jr. Gifts; Austin B. Chinn Gift, in honor of Diane Carol Brandt, and Christopher C. Grisanti and Suzanne P. Fawbush Gifts, 2014 (2014.629a–e)

These five exquisitely painted elements from a narrative image of the Crossing of the Red Sea (Exodus 14:19–15:20) demonstrate the exceptional quality of the work associated with the emerging Jewish and Christian visual traditions in the early centuries of the Common Era. The artist made dramatic use of the indigo-dyed ground to intensify the drama; here, we see the torso of an Israelite advancing before the Angel of the Lord toward the army of the pharaoh. The Philistines, identified as “the astonished people,” look down on the remaining arm and reins of a charioteer being swept away by the waters of the Red Sea. At far right, Mariam plays her cymbal in celebration of the Israelites' safe crossing.

Carbon-14 analysis has dated the fragments with 96.7 percent probability to about A.D. 129–346, raising questions about the identity of the patrons, as the beginning of this time frame predates some of the earliest Christian art. The narrative-covered



walls of the synagogue at Dura-Europos in Syria, destroyed in about A.D. 256, included an image of the Crossing as a celebration of the triumph of the Israelites. Mariam appears in a similar pose on later fourth-century Christian sarcophagi, with the Crossing symbolizing universal salvation through baptism. Continuing study of these compelling images should offer further insight into the origins of Jewish and Christian art. [HCE](#)

Pendant with a Ruler Wearing a Deity Headdress

Maya, Late Classic period (ca. A.D. 550–900), 7th–8th century. Jadeite and pigment, H. 3 in. (7.6 cm). Gift of Steven Kossak, The Kronos Collections, 2015 (2015.677)

The lower half of this highly polished stone is a naturalistic representation of the face of a Maya lord. The ruler, whose lips are slightly parted as if he is about to speak, wears a headdress in the form of a supernatural being. His face seems to emerge from the gaping jaws of the deity, a visual element commonly seen in depictions of the crown jewels worn by Maya kings and queens, especially in the seventh and eighth centuries. This pendant was likely one such crown jewel, perhaps the centerpiece of a royal diadem similar to those found in the tombs of important dynastic rulers. Fiber run through holes drilled on the reverse would have affixed the jewel to a headband, and multiple small drill holes on the chin would have allowed beads to dangle below, creating sound. Exceptional for its relatively large size and for the rich volumetric carving of the apple-green jade, the pendant, whose iconography is strongly related to Maya beliefs about rulership, would have marked the wearer as a conduit for divine powers. [JAD](#)





Teotihuacan-Style Host Figure

Guatemala (Escuintla, Tiquisate region), 5th–7th century. Ceramic, pyrite, and pigment, H. 14¾ in. (37.5 cm). Partial and Promised Gift of Linda M. Lindenbaum, from the Collection of Samuel H. and Linda M. Lindenbaum, 2015 (2015.226a, b)

This representation of a man seated cross-legged with his hands on his knees is known as a “host” figure. Although made in the Pacific Coast region of Guatemala, the present example is related stylistically to the great Mexican city of Teotihuacan—nearly seven hundred miles to the northwest—where this type of hollow figure is thought to have originated. The figure has a bowl haircut in front that falls to the shoulder in the back, with

a perforation at the back of the head. He wears large ear ornaments and a beaded necklace but is otherwise undressed. Traces of red pigment indicate that the figure was once brightly painted; the eyes were inlaid with shiny pyrite. The removable chest plate reveals mold-made figurines and medallions attached to the inside of the body.

Host figures may have been deployed in intimate ritual activities, with the interior figurines revealed at certain moments. Of paramount importance in understanding Precolumbian concepts of the body, they may speak to ancient Mesoamerican ideas of personhood and the divine, hinting at beliefs that essences, be they ancestors, deities, or natural forces, reside inside humans. JP



Funerary Urn with a Deity

Mexico (Monte Alban), ca. 6th century. Ceramic, H. 18¾ in. (47.6 cm).
Gift of Justin Kerr, in memory of Barbara Kerr, 2014 (2014.632.2)

Cylindrical ceramic urns decorated with anthropomorphic figures are hallmarks of the rich visual tradition of Monte Alban, an important archaeological site in the southern Mexican state of Oaxaca. During the Classic period (ca. A.D. 200–700), artists from the Zapotec culture, which flourished in the region, created elaborate sets of such urns. Modeled in a fine gray clay and decorated with bright pigments applied after firing, they were intended as funerary offerings. The largest, such as this iconic example, would have been the central offering, accompanied by smaller vessels.

The main figure on this urn—a male who is seated cross-legged and dressed in elaborate regalia—may represent either a deity or a venerated ancestor in stoic meditation. He wears an elaborate headdress, ear flares, a pectoral shaped like an elongated quatrefoil, and a loincloth draped over his legs. The headdress is crowned with a fan of feathers; mold-made medallions and tassels cascade down toward each of the figure's shoulders. The abstract shapes on the pectoral may be hieroglyphic symbols in the largely undeciphered Zapotec script, while the finely incised swirling lines around the eyes might represent tattoos or scarification, both common in ancient Mesoamerica. A buccal mask with three serpentlike fangs protrudes from the lower face, creating an imposing visage to watch over the recently deceased. JAD



"Buddha Preaching," from the *Illustrated Sutra of Past and Present Karma*

Japan, Nara period (710–794), mid-8th century. Handscroll section mounted as a hanging scroll; ink and color on paper, 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (25.7 × 27.3 cm). Purchase, Louis V. Bell, Harris Brisbane Dick, Fletcher, and Rogers Funds and Joseph Pulitzer Bequest; The Vincent Astor Foundation and Mary and James G. Wallach Foundation Gifts, 2016 (2016.19)

This exceedingly rare section of a mid-eighth-century illuminated Buddhist scripture represents the very beginning of narrative painting in Japan. Depicting a scene of the Buddha preaching to monks and lay followers, it is the earliest pictorial work in The Met's Asian collection. So venerated was this holy text in Japan that it was repeatedly copied in premodern

times. The Met also owns two sections of the late thirteenth-century "Matsunaga Version," rarities in their own right. With this acquisition, the Museum now owns the only example in America of the ancient prototype on which these later works were based.

Surviving sections of the *Illustrated Sutra of Past and Present Karma* (Japanese: *Kako genzai inga kyō emaki*)—which narrates the life and past lives of the historical Buddha—are comparable in art-historical significance to pages from the earliest illuminated versions of the Bible, such as the *Lindisfarne Gospels* or the *Book of Kells*, both created about the same time. Japanese collectors through the ages avidly sought sections from important handscrolls of calligraphy and painting such as this and had them remounted as hanging scrolls, suitable for display at tea gatherings or other social occasions. JTC



Gospel Book

Carolingian, possibly Metz (present-day France), ca. 825–50. Ink and opaque watercolor on parchment, 11¼ × 7½ in. (28.6 × 19 cm), 200 folios. The Cloisters Collection and Director's Fund, 2015 (2015.560)

Charlemagne, the first Holy Roman emperor, and his successors accorded outsize status to the written word. Creativity at the Carolingian court thus centered on bookish endeavors, as artists and scribes took special delight in developing new, visually appealing modes of display for the presentation of esoteric knowledge and in reviving and improving upon ancient scripts. This exquisitely preserved gospel book epitomizes Carolingian taste in such matters. Its principal decoration appears on the pages devoted to the Eusebian canon tables, an elaborate

concordance used to compare and contrast passages from the gospels. Here, splendid architectural frames organize essential information. Certain pages venture into the realm of the whimsical. On one, column bases have been replaced with naked and seminaked men squatting, drinking, and scratching their heads. On another, columns are surmounted by the heads of lions, with their feet found below. On a third, each column is topped with a tonsured monk peering out of a roundel. The text itself attests to the achievement of Carolingian calligraphers, whose work set the standard for all subsequent Western book production. The well-proportioned letters, consistency of letter forms, rhythmic alternation of pen strokes, and judicious use of empty space result in a book of eminent legibility and undeniable elegance. MHb

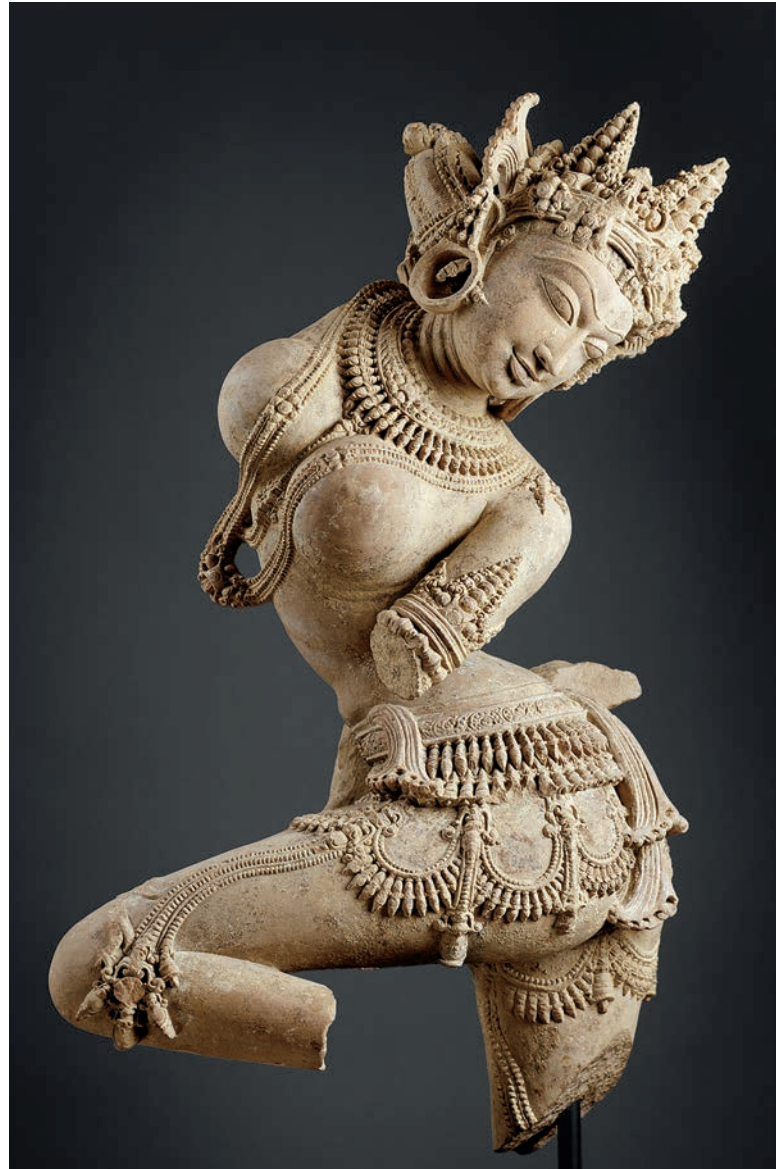


Vishnu

Nepal (Kathmandu Valley), Thakuri period (ca. 869–mid-12th century), dated August 12, 1105. Gilt-copper alloy with inlaid rock crystal, H. 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (42.3 cm). Inscribed and dated: on base, *Nepal samvat* 226 (1105). Purchase, Louis V. Bell, Harris Brisbane Dick, Fletcher, and Rogers Funds and Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, Brooke Russell Astor Bequest, The Vincent Astor Foundation and Mr. and Mrs. Richard L. Chilton Jr. Gifts, and The Fred Eychaner Charitable Fund Gift, in honor of John Guy, 2015 (2015.678)

This heroic representation of the Hindu deity Vishnu wears an elaborate crown of a type that reflects how early Nepalese art absorbed the potent visual legacy of North India's Gupta dynasty. The crown has a leonine *kirtimukha* mask as the central medallion, framed by strings of pearls. The figure itself is enhanced by rich mercury gilding and settings for semiprecious stones, creating an image of imperial grandeur. The four-armed Vishnu displays his prescribed identifiers, including a flaming discus (*cakra*), mace (*gada*), and conch shell (war trumpet), all kingly symbols associated with warfare.

The pedestal of the sculpture bears an inscription naming the donor, Sri Jayadhara Vada, identified as a minister of state during the reign of Sri Simvadeva, likely King Sivadeva (1098–1126). The donor, together with his wife and child, are depicted in relief on the pedestal, where they flank a full-bodied vessel overflowing with abundant plant life: the auspicious vase of plenty (*purnaghata*), an ancient Indian symbol of fecundity and prosperity. The family presents offerings of conical rice cakes and lotuses. The six-line inscription records the icon's consecration by the donor at "Dola Sikhara [Changu] Narayana," a center of royal worship, on August 12, 1105. This day and its attendant rituals, held during a full moon, celebrated Vishnu's awakening after his annual four-month slumber, marking the end of the monsoon: a highly auspicious day to make a religious donation. JG



Celestial Dancer (*Devata*)

Central India (Madhya Pradesh, possibly Khajuraho area), Chandela dynasty (mid-9th–early 13th century), mid-11th century. Sandstone, H. 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (85.1 cm). Gift of Florence and Herbert Irving, 2015 (2015.500.4.14)

The Hindu temple is conceived as a heavenly abode for the presiding deity. The temple exterior is stepped, indented, and towering, evoking the mountains of Indra's heavens, where the assembly of gods resides. That realm is populated by celestial beauties, dancers, and musicians. This sculpture of a celestial dancer is an extraordinary rendering of a heavenly celebrant, performing in honor of the gods. The dancer's body is contorted in an improbable pose, her legs projecting right as her upper

torso and head turn sharply left. The extreme flexion reflects prescribed dance positions (*karanas* and *sthanas*) described in the *Natyasastra*, an ancient dramatic-arts treatise. It is understood in Indian aesthetics that such extreme flexing of the body enhances the appreciation of beauty, and in all respects her face and body are treated according to prescribed canons. This divine dancer moves with such energy that her jewelry swings dramatically, emphasizing the movement of her full breasts and strong hips. She is bejeweled with a tripartite diadem, large disk-shaped ear ornaments, and a long necklace that follows her contours, as does the skirt of ornaments worn on the hips. Her necklace and belt are decorated with jasmine-shaped pendants. JG



Head from a Central Asian Figure

Iranian, 12th–13th century. Gypsum plaster, H. 6⅞ in. (17.5 cm).

Purchase, Friends of Islamic Art Gifts, 2014 (2014.529)

The round face of this head, which is originally from a wall relief, has slit eyes, a small flat nose, a small mouth, and eyebrows that are modeled along a continuous line. A fragment of a decorated headdress remains above the parted hair; from its center a small pendant appears to hang down the forehead. The round shape of the face, which is typical of Central Asian Turks, evokes an ideal of beauty for both sexes exalted in eleventh-century poetry as being akin to the moon.

The sex of the figure remains uncertain. A related male head in The Met's collection (42.25.17) has what appears to be a curl on the forehead; the pendant also differs from the drop-shaped diadems commonly depicted on women's headdresses in Iranian art from this period. Like those comparable works, this example comprises two layers of plaster, with the finer one on the exterior. Analyses have shown that the two layers have a similar composition and were made using a traditional firing technology. Notably, they do not contain volcanic glass, a component detected in gypsum plasters excavated at Rayy—an ancient site that is part of present-day Tehran—and in other unprovenanced pieces. The head is said to have been acquired in Iran in 1957 by the prominent collector and importer Rafi Y. Mottahedeh (1901–1978), who immigrated to New York in 1925 and, along with his wife, Mildred, ran Mottahedeh and Company, a leading manufacturer of luxury porcelain reproductions. [MR](#)

Armor for the Torso and Hips

Dali Kingdom (present-day Yunnan, China), 12th–13th century.

Leather, lacquer, copper alloy, and iron, H. as mounted 24 in. (61 cm).

Purchase, Arthur Ochs Sulzberger Gift, 2014 (2014.592)

In terms of style and construction, this form of armor is unique to the areas populated by the Yi or Nuosu people in the Yunnan and Sichuan provinces of southwestern China. The type remained in use there for approximately one thousand years, or from about the ninth through the nineteenth century. This example is one of only two predating the seventeenth or eighteenth century that are known to exist. Scientific testing of the leather establishes its date to the time of the Dali Kingdom, an independent state that ruled the region before it was conquered by the Mongols, renamed Yunnan, and incorporated into China during the Yuan dynasty. The armor is made of rigid leather panels, probably buffalo hide, coated with alternating layers of red and black lacquer and joined by leather laces. The layered-lacquer technique, called *tixi* (marbled) or *ticaí* (carved colors), was well known in China from at least the fifteenth century on. In addition to its rarity as armor, this object is also extremely important as one of the earliest and most complete examples of this lacquer technique and for being identifiable as among the few examples of lacquerwork of this period from the Dali Kingdom or the Yunnan area. [DLR](#)





Kaikei

Japanese, active 1183–1223

Fudō Myōō

Kamakura period (1185–1333), early 13th century. Lacquered Japanese cypress, color, gold, cut gold (*kirikane*), and inlaid crystal eyes, H. 21 in. (53.3 cm). Mary Griggs Burke Collection, Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, 2015 (2015.300.252a, b)

This marvelous statue of a Buddhist protective deity with a fierce scowl but benevolent intentions is one of three hundred masterpieces of Japanese art recently bequeathed to The Met by former trustee Mary Griggs Burke (1916–2012). Fudō Myōō (Sanskrit: Acala-vidyārāja) literally means the “Immovable Wisdom King,” signifying this deity’s role as a tenacious protec-

tor of Buddhist law. Descriptions of Fudō Myōō in ancient sutras and illustrations depict his body as black or blue, with bulging eyes, protruding fangs that bite his lower lip, and hair that hangs down his left shoulder. He carries in his left hand a lasso to catch and bind demons (obstacles to awakening) and in his right hand a sword to decapitate them (cutting through ignorance). The present example, from the workshop of Kaikei, one of the leading sculptors of his day, adheres to this iconography. Traces of colored pigments and strips of cut gold (*kirikane*) are visible in the deity’s robes, and his eyes are inlaid with crystal, intensifying his ferocious expression. The Burke Collection at The Met also includes an exquisite sculpture of the bodhisattva Jizō (2015.300.250a, b) signed on the inside of the head by the same artist. [JTC](#)



Beaker

French, late 13th or early 14th century. Mold-blown glass with applied foot, H. 2¾ in. (7 cm), Diam. of rim 3⅞ in. (8.7 cm). The Cloisters Collection, 2015 (2015.584)

The truncated shape of this beaker—the width of the mouth exceeds its height—is unusual, but the finesse of the patterning and the delicacy of the vessel are exceptionally rare, if not unprecedented, in medieval glass. The minute, detailed patterning is so crisp and precise that a metal mold must have been used. The decoration closely resembles the pigeon-eye pattern widely found in early Islamic glass but unknown in the West. A small group of truncated beakers of very thin glass with mold-blown, diagonal diaper patterns has been excavated in the Vaucluse, in southeast France—namely, at the Petit-Palais at Avignon, Cadrix, and Rougiers—but these optically blown vessels are merely raised in the interstices, and all lack the “pigeon eye” in the center. Fragments of similar optically blown vessels have been found as far afield as Basel and Lübeck. Furthermore, all the Vaucluse glasses lack the applied pincer foot of this example, which is more typically German. The present vessel thus appears to blend Islamic design with disparate characteristics of fourteenth-century glass production and may well be the product of an itinerant workshop creating high-quality products of sophisticated design for clients of rank attached, perhaps, to one of the palaces during the Avignon papacy (1309–77). **TBH**



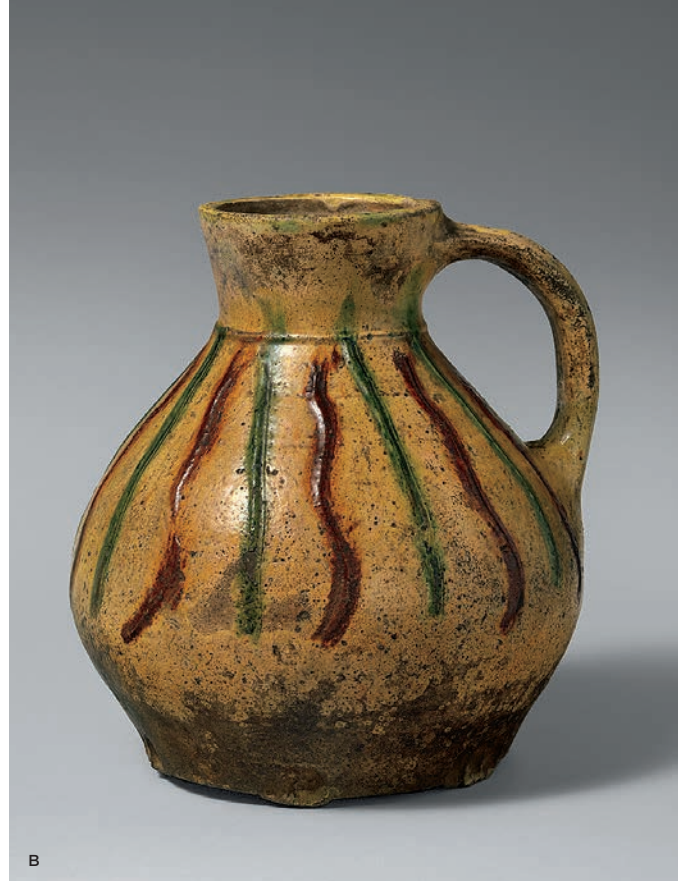
Jug from Kedleston Hall

British (Derbyshire), 13th century. Glazed earthenware, H. 16 in. (40.7 cm). The Cloisters Collection, 2014 (2014.280)

In 1878 this massive jug was described by its finder, Llewellynn Jewitt, in *The Ceramic Art of Great Britain* as “probably the finest and most interesting fictile remain of the Norman period in existence.” Jewitt, a local antiquarian, had excavated it in 1862 at a medieval kiln site in a field on Burley Hill, on the Kedleston estate, property of the earls of Derby. Most likely intended for making and storing ale, the jug has an olive-green glazed surface decorated with applied badges referring to the de Ferrers family, the medieval earls. Four floral thumb-pressed and incised pads alternate with horseshoes, which have chevrons incised between and within them, and brooches appear near the handle. The jug survives in good condition, but the firing cracks on the side rendered the pot a “waster,” meaning one not suitable for holding liquid. It was the largest piece discovered among two mounds of discarded wasters. A kiln scar from the base of another pot can also be seen on the side. Its large size, known findspot, association with the earls of Derby, and excellent state of preservation all contribute to the exceptional importance of this jug. **PB**



A



B

Three Jugs

A. Jug with twisted handle: British (Potter Toynton?, Lincolnshire), late 13th century. Lead-glazed earthenware, H. 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (27.2 cm).

B. Jug with applied decoration: British (Surrey), 13th century.

Lead-glazed earthenware (whiteware) with polychrome decoration, H. 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (24.9 cm). C. Jug with sgraffito decoration: British (Mill Green, Essex), 14th century. Lead-glazed earthenware, H. 15 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (39.1 cm). The Cloisters Collection, 2014 (2014.582–.584)

Since its inception, The Cloisters has consistently sought to acquire secular art, both to complement the domestic architecture incorporated into the building and to present a broad range of the artistic production of medieval Europe. Particularly difficult to find are objects that reflect the fabric of daily life but also endure as works of art in their own right. These three jugs, together with the monumental Kedleston jug (at left), also recently acquired, significantly enrich our collection of medieval ceramics. Products of disparate potteries creating distinctive wares, all three are imposing in scale, striking in form, and engaging in decorative detail.

The Lincolnshire jug is distinguished by its gritty surface texture, twisted handle, beaklike spout, and pristine state of preservation. The Surrey jug's stout profile, in combination with the red and green applied decoration set off by the ochre color of the body, differentiates that vessel from the more ordinary wares produced south of London. Here, scale enhances the visually effective use of color and form. While numerous Mill Green vessels have survived, none surpasses the imposing scale, elegant balance, and attenuated proportions of this example: an outsize vessel that has a capacity of one gallon, presumably related to its intended function. **TBH**



C



Tray with Women and Boys on a Garden Terrace

China, Yuan dynasty (1279–1368), 14th century. Carved red lacquer, H. 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (6 cm), Diam. 21 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (55.6 cm). Gift of Florence and Herbert Irving, 2015 (2015.500.1.31)

The addition of geometric patterns to define the sky, water, and veranda in the background of this spectacular tray was a significant fourteenth-century innovation in the development of Chinese carved lacquer. The tray shows two women, one standing and one seated, supervising twenty-three boys playing on a veranda near a lotus pond on an idyllic summer day. Children became a popular artistic theme during the Tang dynasty (618–907) and were seen as auspicious symbols of longevity. The standing woman holds one of the children, another clutches her skirt, and a third crawls toward the seated figure. While some of the boys frolic in a pavilion near the pond, three are playing hide-and-seek, one nestles in the scholar's rock at right, and three more are bathing in a shallow tub. The boys in the foreground mimic the processions of scholar-officials that were a common sight in Chinese cities; two, one with a banner and the other with a stick, lead the group. They are followed by an additional pair riding hobbyhorses, a toy that may have been invented in China, and three boys imitating a scholar-gentleman and his attendants, trailed by a boy holding a parasol for the use of this purportedly high-ranking individual. [DPL](#)

Belt

North Italian (possibly Genoa), ca. 1330–50. Silver with traces of gilding and enamel, L. 65 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (166 cm). The Cloisters Collection, 2015 (2015.705)

Woven into the tales of Boccaccio, described in inventories, and illustrated in works of art, luxury belts were the defining possessions of a medieval merchant class that was wealthy, proud, and cosmopolitan. Yet fewer than a dozen examples from the fourteenth century survive as more than fragments. This belt stands with the best of them for the quality of its engraving, the variety and interest of its imagery, and the sheer weight of its silver.

To judge from its considerable length—and the inclusion of medallions portraying a lady who has shot an arrow from her bow to pierce her lover's heart—this belt was likely intended for a woman. It would have been given in anticipation of marriage and worn as a sign of the lady's virtue. Lovers, fantastic creatures, falconers, and musicians, all of which feature here, belong to the standard repertory of fourteenth-century goldsmiths' work. This belt, however, is unique in its portrayal of exotically clad, orientaling figures. One, sitting cross-legged with his falcon, has been accorded pride of place on the pendant tab of the belt; the other appears on one of the medallions. These seem to celebrate the wide world in which wealthy Italian merchants and their families prospered. [BDB](#)



Mamluk *Philae* Dish

Egypt, mid-14th century. Brass inlaid with silver and gold, H. 1½ in. (3.8 cm), Diam. 11½ in. (29 cm). Purchase, James and Diane Burke Gift, in honor of Dr. Marilyn Jenkins-Madina, 2014 (2014.589)

This kind of shallow dish with a narrow rim and a flattened omphalos (boss) at center is known as a *philae*. The type dates back to antiquity, but examples from the early and medieval Islamic periods are rare, and their function likely differed from era to era. Here the ogive medallions, rosettes with swirling petals, ducklike birds, and radiating patterns are all typical of Mamluk metalwork. However, the patterns in the central boss—an interlaced, six-pointed star formed by three curvilinear panels—depict large lotus blossoms, reflecting the introduction of Ilkhanid Mongol chinoiserie to Mamluk Syria and Egypt after about 1320.

This dish compares closely with two others inscribed with the honorific titles of mid-fourteenth-century Mamluk sultans: one in the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., made for a Mamluk officer of Sultan Hasan (r. 1347–51, 1354–61), and another in the Keir Collection that was made for Sultan Salih (r. 1351–54). On all three examples the brass is inlaid with precious silver and gold, suggesting that this dish, like those, was intended for a member of the Mamluk ruling elite. The Arabic verses inscribed around the cavetto (concave portion of the dish) encourage the dish's owner to drink, but whether wine or water is unclear. **DB**



Sword Guard

Tibetan or Chinese, 14th–15th century. Iron, gold, silver, and copper, W. 4¾ in. (12.1 cm). Gift of Steven Kossak, The Kronos Collections, 2014 (2014.533)

Originally part of a complete and very lavish weapon, this sword guard was made to be mounted at the juncture where the base of a sword grip meets the top of the blade. It represents the face of a wrathful Tibetan Buddhist guardian deity (*srung ma* or *mgon po*), signified by the third eye, called the eye of wisdom (*dpral mig*), in the center of the forehead, the fiery eyebrows, and the row of bared teeth, including two fangs at the edges of the mouth with small spits of flame above them. The pupils of the eyes are now hollow but once may have been filled with turquoise, coral, or another material to enliven the face and add contrast. The guard is exceptional for the precision and crispness of its chiseling, punched work, and damascening; for the height of the raised decoration; and for the balance and cohesion of its overall design. Also notable for its dramatic sculptural effect, this piece represents the highest-quality decorated Tibetan or Sino-Tibetan ironwork from what was the peak period for this art form, which coincided with the rule of the Phagmodrupa kings in central Tibet and the Hongwu and Yongle dynasties in China. [DLR](#)

Labret in the Form of a Serpent with an Articulated Tongue

Aztec (Central Mexico), 13th–early 16th century. Gold alloy, H. 2½ in. (6.7 cm). Purchase, 2015 Benefit Fund and Lila Acheson Wallace Gift, 2016 (2016.64)

Superbly crafted in the shape of a serpent ready to strike, this labret—a plug inserted through a piercing below the lower lip—



is a rare survival from the once-thriving tradition of goldworking in the Aztec Empire. The serpent's head has a powerful jaw with serrated teeth and two prominent fangs. A bulbous snout with rounded nostrils rises above the maw, and the eyes are surmounted by a pronounced supraorbital plate terminating in curls. The bifurcated tongue, ingeniously cast as a movable piece, could be either retracted or allowed to swing from side to side, perhaps swaying with the wearer's movements. The sinuous body attaches to a basal plug ringed with a band of tiny spheres and wavelike spirals. The plain, extended flange would have held the labret in place within the wearer's mouth. Such labrets were worn by the highest ranks of Aztec society, perhaps by the emperor himself as part of his ceremonial or battle attire. Crafted from a sacred material, a labret like this one would have underscored the Aztec ruler's divinely sanctioned authority and asserted his position as the individual who could speak for an empire. [JP](#)

Head of Saint James the Greater

French (Burgundy or Champagne?), 1450–1500. Limestone with traces of paint, H. 14¾ in. (35.8 cm). Purchase, The Cloisters Collection and Audrey Love Foundation Gift, 2015 (2015.241)

Saint James the Greater, one of Christ's twelve apostles, gained widespread popularity in Europe, particularly in the period from 1000 to 1300, when his tomb at Santiago da Compostela, Spain, developed into one of the greatest pilgrimage sites in western Europe. This majestic head is carved in a fine-grained limestone with assured, even virtuoso, technical mastery. The bearded head features a great sheepskin hat secured by a strap around the chin. The large scallop shell mounted on the front of the hat served as the defining attribute of Saint James. Worn by pilgrims

as a sign of their devotion to the saint, the shell was also a marker of their journey to his tomb.

Even with just traces of its original color, Saint James's face retains a commanding presence and exudes a sense of serenity rarely matched in monumental sculptures of fifteenth-century France. Despite damage—likely the result of iconoclasm or revolution—the face has a wonderful quality of carving and attention to detail that are still evident throughout. The sharp cutting edge of the chisel brings life to the physiognomy, imbuing the face with compassion, tenderness, and humanity. The saint's almost melancholic appearance, counterbalanced by the extraordinary hat, betrays features found in the sculpture of Burgundy and Champagne. No doubt once part of a lifesize standing devotional statue, the figure would have adorned a church, confraternity, or hospital. CTL

Shirt of Mail and Plate of Al-Ashraf Sayf ad-Din Qaitbay, 18th Burji Mamluk Sultan of Egypt

Probably Egyptian, ca. 1468–96. Steel, iron, brass, and gold, H. 31 in. (78.7 cm), Wt. 25 lb. 2½ oz. (11.41 kg). Purchase, Arthur Ochs Sulzberger Gift, and Rogers, Acquisitions and Fletcher Funds, 2016 (2016.99)

Made for one of the most illustrious and longest-reigning Burji Mamluk sultans of Egypt, this royal shirt of mail and plate is one of only four Mamluk examples of its kind known to survive. It

was created for Al-Ashraf Sayf ad-Din Qaitbay (r. 1468–96), whose legacy includes the foundation of a large number of religious institutions, the refurbishment of major mosques and shrines, the building of fortresses, and numerous victorious military campaigns, including against the Ottoman Turks. Although the shirt compares closely in construction to examples originating from other parts of the Islamic world, the delicate gold-damascened ornamentation of its plates with inscriptions, hexagrams, and intricate scrolling foliage is undeniably Mamluk. In conception, execution, and scale, it is also one of the most forceful and potent expressions of a distinctive style that was favored for the enrichment of luxury armor and weapons. As such, the shirt is a masterpiece of fifteenth-century Mamluk metalwork and ranks among the greatest Islamic armors in existence. It appears to have been seized by the Ottoman Turks following their conquest of Egypt in 1517, more than twenty years after Qaitbay's death, and was long kept as a trophy of war in the Ottoman arsenal in Istanbul. PT





Gian Giacomo Negroli
Italian, Milan 1463–1543 Milan

Close Helmet

Milan, ca. 1510–20. Steel and gold, H. 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (33.3 cm), Wt. 3 lb. 6 oz. (1530 g). Purchase, Arthur Ochs Sulzberger Gift, 2014 (2014.282)

This previously unrecorded helmet sheds new light on the surviving works of the celebrated Negroli family of Milanese armorers—of which The Met owns key examples—and on the art of embossing armor in Renaissance Italy. The only known piece that may be ascribed with reasonable certainty to the Negroli family patriarch, Gian Giacomo, it is a forerunner of the spectacular embossed armors made by his son and nephew. It is also proof that the bold designs and virtuoso execution that characterize their oeuvre actually began with him, a generation earlier. Unparalleled in terms of aesthetics and superbly crafted, the helmet is the first work by the Negroli to incorporate into an entirely functional and serviceable headpiece the fantasy for which they are perhaps best remembered today: in this instance, the seashells embossed in relief on the bowl and visor. Whereas early sixteenth-century Italian armor was sometimes decorated with comparable designs, the seashell embossed on the visor of Gian Giacomo's helmet is unprecedented, a clear manifestation of the master's creativity and audacity. As such, it provides an important point of departure in the historical development of a style of luxury armor that would bring great fame to Milan and to the Negroli family in particular. [PT](#)



Design attributed to Bernard van Orley and workshop,
with collaborators

Netherlandish, Brussels ca. 1492–1541/42 Brussels

Honor, from the series *The Honors*

Designed before 1520; woven 1525–32, probably in Brussels. Tapestry, woven in wool and silk (6–7 warps per cm), 14 ft. 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. × 26 ft. 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (450 × 803 cm). Purchase, 2014 Benefit and Director's Funds, several members of The Chairman's Council Gifts, Brooke Russell Astor Bequest, Ambassador and Mrs. W. L. Lyons Brown, Richard M. Chilton, and Josephine Jackson Foundation Gifts, 2015 (2015.396)



Honor, the central hanging in a series known collectively since the sixteenth century as *The Honors*, epitomizes the massive scale and multilayered allegorical programs prized in tapestry during this period. Across nine tapestries, the series represents the qualities a successful prince should espouse. Here, a male personification of Honor is about to be crowned. Below him, a tribunal ranks great kings from history as well as virtuous ladies from the Bible and secular legend; the scribe checks the list of those honorable enough to be granted entry to Honor's pavilion. In the foreground, a wonderfully unruly mass of dishonorable protagonists also taken from legend and history tries to scale Honor's walls.

The most important tapestry series of the first quarter of the sixteenth century, *The Honors* was considered so ambitious that it was only very rarely woven. Just two sixteenth-century editions have survived: the first, acquired by Holy Roman Emperor Charles V in the 1520s, remains in the Spanish Patrimonio Nacional; the second, from which this *Honor* comes, was acquired sometime between 1525 and 1532 by Charles's trusted adviser Cardinal Erard de la Marck, prince-bishop of Liège and one of the most powerful men of his generation. [EC](#)



Jan Gossart (called Mabuse)

Netherlandish, Maubeuge ca. 1478–1532 Antwerp (?)

Christ Carrying the Cross

Ca. 1520–25. Oil on Baltic oak, 9 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (25.1 × 19 cm). Gift of Honorable J. William Middendorf II, and Purchase, Walter and Leonore Annenberg and The Annenberg Foundation Gift, Director's Fund, Gift of George A. Hearn, by exchange, and Marquand and The Alfred N. Punnett Endowment Funds, 2016 (2016.39)

This diminutive but emotionally powerful work presents Christ burdened, both physically and emotionally, by the immense weight of the cross that he bears on his route to Golgotha, the place of his crucifixion. Intended for private meditation on Christ's suffering, it can be linked to popular devotional texts, namely Thomas à Kempis's *Imitation of Christ* (ca. 1420). Book Two, chapter 12 of that treatise, titled "On the Royal Road to the Holy Cross," begins with a passage that paraphrases a verse from the Gospel of Saint Matthew (16:24) as "Deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Me." The quotation is followed by an exegesis on how the route to salvation lies only through vicariously bearing the cross and dying with Jesus, and that by sharing his sufferings, one shares his glory. Gossart depicted the lonely, dejected, and suffering Christ in several paintings and a print of about 1525–30, taking inspiration for the poses from antique sculpture he had seen on his trip to Rome in 1508.

Here Gossart's Christ recalls the famous sculpture group of Laocoön and his sons, which had been excavated in 1506. He no doubt understood the Laocoön as epitomizing pain and sacrifice, thus serving as a model not only for its dynamic pose but also for its analogous meaning. [MWA](#)

Painted by Simon Bening

Netherlandish, Ghent (?) 1483/84–1561 Bruges

Book of Hours

Bruges, ca. 1530–35. Tempera, gold, and ink on parchment with modern red leather binding, manuscript (closed), 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 2 × 1 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (6.5 × 5.2 × 2.9 cm). The Cloisters Collection, 2015 (2015.706)

The special magic of this prayer book derives from the artist's exceptional skill at rendering a miniature world. This seems to have been a point of pride for Simon Bening, whose self-portrait in The Met's collection (1975.1.2487) shows him at his easel, holding his specs, as if advertising his ability to paint unrivaled, tiny masterpieces. Although this work was created late in his career, when he might have rested on his laurels, Bening here tweaks the representation of standard subjects to make them especially poignant. Most remarkable is the image of Saint Christopher, who, according to legend, ferried the Christ Child across a stream. Commonly the child rides piggyback or is held high above the waters, but in this miniature the saint gently cradles the small child in his arms, safely setting him on the shore.

Each miniature has a facing full-page border, often keyed to the subject. A border of skulls opposite the Raising of Lazarus casts a somber mood, for example, while a dog in quest of bones in the miniature seems to lighten it. The names of several unusual saints in the calendar (Engratia, a virgin of Saragossa, and Berard of Carbio, a Franciscan martyred in Morocco) suggest that this book was made for a Spanish or Portuguese client. [BDB](#)





Luis de Morales

Spanish, Badajoz ca. 1509/20–1586 Alcántara

The Lamentation

Ca. 1560. Oil on walnut, 35 × 24 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (89 × 62.5 cm). Purchase, Alejandro Santo Domingo and Annette de la Renta Gifts; Bequests of George D. Pratt and of Annette B. McFadden, and Gifts of Estate of George Quackenbush, in his memory, of Dr. and Mrs. Max A. Goldzieher, of Francis Neilson, of Dr. Foo Chu and Dr. Marguerite Hainje-Chu, of Mr. and Mrs. Harold H. Burns, and of Mr. and Mrs. Joshua Logan, and other gifts and bequests, by exchange; Victor Wilbour Fund; and Hester Diamond Gift, 2015 (2015.398)

Luis de Morales, often known as “El Divino,” captured in paint the fervent religious sentiment expressed in the writings of the mystics Saint Teresa of Ávila (1515–1582) and Saint John of the Cross (1542–1591), both of whom helped define the spirituality of Counter-Reformation Spain. Morales’s activity was centered in

the cities of western Spain, especially Badajoz, where the reforming bishop Juan de Ribera encouraged the development of his imagery. This painting, dating to one of the most productive periods of the artist’s life, is an important recent rediscovery. It likely belonged to Pope Pius VII (d. 1823) and descended through his family, the Chiaramonti, who recognized its superb quality. The Virgin cradles the tormented body of Christ in her arms, with Saint John and the Magdalen watching tearfully at the sides. The black background, interrupted only by the wood cross at center, enhances the penetrating sorrow of the image. While Morales’s paintings are extraordinarily distinctive, he was acutely aware of the work of Flemish artists known in Spain as well as the profoundly spiritual paintings sent there by Venetian artist Sebastiano del Piombo (1485/86–1547). Sebastiano painted some of these on slate and set the figures in relief against an impenetrable darkness, possibly inspiring Morales’s composition. [AJB](#)



Joachim Beuckelaer

Netherlandish, Antwerp 1533–1575 Antwerp

Fish Market

1568. Oil on Baltic oak, 50% × 68½ in. (128 × 174 cm). Signed and dated: lower left, on table, *Joachim büekeleer* / *IB* [in monogram] / 1568. Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift and Bequest of George Blumenthal, by exchange, 2015 (2015.146)

The Met has long sought a great example of the incipient stages of still-life painting as it developed into an independent genre in seventeenth-century Holland. Beuckelaer's *Fish Market* fills that void with a splendid panel that is signed, monogrammed, and dated 1568. Along with his teacher, Pieter Aertsen (1507/8–1575), Beuckelaer became famous in his own time as a painter of scenes of everyday life that featured the bounty from land and sea available at local markets. This masterful composition

places fish, figures, and a lively arrangement of recurring square and round shapes within a geometric structure of strong verticals, horizontals, and diagonals. The virtuoso brushwork, with extraordinary impasto and scratched-in passages, especially in the fish, has a remarkably modern sensibility. Initially such paintings would have incorporated subsidiary religious scenes in the background, but the Iconoclasm of 1566, or Beeldenstorm, with its wholesale destruction of religious images, mandated a new course for painters of purely secular themes. Nonetheless, these early still lifes increasingly embraced a moralizing subtext, warning against the excesses of food and sexual pleasures. Here, for example, the fishmonger's quizzical glance toward the housewife, who considers purchasing the succulent salmon steaks, is met with resolute rejection as she warily crosses her hands over her open vessel. [MWA](#)



Attributed to Manohar

Indian, active ca. 1582–1624

The Virgin and Child, Attended by Angels

Mughal period, ca. 1600. Ink, colors, and gold on paper, 12 $\frac{5}{8}$ × 9 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (32.1 × 23.3 cm). Gift of Steven Kossak, The Kronos Collections, 2015 (2015.785)

The Virgin Mary and infant Jesus, seated on a floral carpet, are honored with an offering of a plate of fruit, visible in the foreground, consistent with the Hindu devotional practice of *prasad* (offering). They are attended by three angels, one bearing a gold censer and another with a Chinese-style blue-and-white porcelain bowl decorated with geese. Their feathery bodies and faces resemble those of the *peris*, or fairies, of Indo-Islamic painting. This hybridity of style and cultural reference is a hallmark of Mughal painting at the turn of the sixteenth century,

when European influences in subject matter and technique were being absorbed by court artists such as Manohar. The artist used a tinted drawing method known as *nimqalam* (half-pen) to create this delicate image. [NNH](#)

Powder Flask

French, ca. 1570. Antler and iron, L. 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (19.2 cm), Wt. 8.2 oz. (231 g). Purchase, Arthur Ochs Sulzberger Gift, 2014 (2014.191)

Exceptional for the quality of the design and execution of its low-relief decoration, this French Renaissance powder flask is one of only a half-dozen similar examples, all made of hollowed and polished antler, that were likely carved by the same hand. Among the works in this rare group, this is the only one that features a biblical subject: David and Goliath. Engraved on the back are the arms of an early owner, Don Juan de Caralta, a member of the Iberian military order of Saint James. The unknown carver's virtuosity is readily apparent in the subtle modeling of the figures' musculature, hair, and clothing and in the delicate texture of the background and surrounding objects. As is often the case with such flasks, the metal mountings that would have capped the extremities are now lost. This flask joins another example in The Met's collection by the same artist (14.25.1491), which is carved with the heraldic arms, motto, and emblem of the French nobleman Jacques de Silly. [PT](#)





Kano School

Amusements at Higashiyama in Kyoto

Japan, Edo period (1615–1868), ca. 1620s. Pair of six-panel screens; ink, color, gold, mica, and gold leaf on paper, each screen 33 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. x 8 ft. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (84 x 273 cm). Purchase, 2013 Benefit Fund and Mary and James G. Wallach Foundation Gift, 2014 (2014.491.1, .2)

This captivating pair of screens depicts hundreds of people from all walks of life enjoying a sunny afternoon during cherry-blossom season in Kyoto's scenic Eastern Hills, or Higashiyama, district. The right and left screens highlight famous sacred sites—Kiyomizudera Temple and Yasaka Shrine, respectively—and each features a festive outdoor banquet attended by elite samurai. Intricately patterned gold clouds create a dramatic background for the colorful activities amid the cherry and pine trees. The screens are covered with fascinating vignettes of people of every social status, including courtiers and court ladies, itinerant performers, and mendicant monks.

A masterpiece of Kano school painting, *Amusements at Higashiyama in Kyoto* conveys the celebratory spirit of a country that was finally at peace after nearly a century of civil war. Although the types of scenes differ, this kind of painting can be seen as an equivalent to Western genre painting, as applied to certain



Dutch paintings of the seventeenth century. By the early eighteenth century, the type had already been succeeded in Japan by the popular art of *ukiyo-e* (pictures of the floating world). JTC



Tawaraya Sōtatsu

Japanese, died ca. 1640

Inscribed by Takeuchi no Toshiharu

Japanese, 1611–1647

“Mount Utsu,” from The Tales of Ise

Edo period (1615–1868), ca. 1634. Poem card (*shikishi*) mounted as a hanging scroll; ink, color, and gold on paper, 9¾ × 8¾ in. (24.6 × 20.8 cm). Mary Griggs Burke Collection, Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, 2015 (2015.300.88)

This celebrated painting of a scene inspired by a classic Japanese tale is one of more than three hundred masterworks of Japanese art recently bequeathed to The Met by the New York-based

collector and former trustee Mary Griggs Burke (1916–2012). Two-thirds of the Burke Collection consists of Japanese paintings dating from the tenth to nineteenth century.

This poem card comes from a set of more than twenty surviving sheets, each illustrated with a scene from the tenth-century *Tales of Ise* (*Ise Monogatari*) and accompanied by a poem from the relevant chapter inscribed by a courtier of the day. In this episode, a courtier traveling on Mount Utsu (literally, “Mountain of Sadness”) meets an itinerant monk on his way to Kyoto, whom he asks to give his regards to a lover in the distant capital. The poem, inscribed in columns that echo the diagonals of the mountainscape, reads, “Amid the ‘sad hills’ / of Mount Utsu / in Suruga Province, / I cannot meet my lover, / not even in my dreams.” [JTC](#)

Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione (Il Grechetto)

Italian, Genoa 1609–1664 Mantua

Saint Francis in Ecstasy

Ca. 1650. Oil on canvas, 77 × 53¼ in. (195.6 × 135.3 cm). Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift; Gwynne Andrews Fund; and Gift in memory of Felix M. Warburg from his wife and children, Bequest and Gift of George Blumenthal, Bequests of Theodore M. Davis, Adele L. Lehman, in memory of Arthur Lehman, Helen Hay Whitney, Jean Fowles, in memory of her first husband, R. Langton Douglas, and Gifts of Coudert Brothers and Harry Payne Bingham Jr., by exchange, 2014 (2014.270)

Wearing a Capuchin habit, Saint Francis kneels on a rocky promontory in the wilderness. The skull and open book at his feet are reminders of mortality and the vanities of the world. The ardent and deeply felt devotion of the saint, who clutches a crucifix, sends him into a state of ecstasy. Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione, one of the most technically innovative artists of the seventeenth century, captured the saint's rapture with a breathtakingly rich and varied application of paint. He defined the rocks and other elements in the lower register of the canvas with a dense, tactile impasto that dissolves into freer and more energetic brushstrokes—at times almost sweeping the surface of the canvas—as you look up to the sky. Castiglione's facility with the medium helps guide our visual understanding of the composition as the scene transitions from the material to the spiritual world.

Paintings by Castiglione, who is better known as a master draftsman and printmaker, are rare. Although its original location is unknown, this work, one of the artist's largest, was probably an altarpiece and was likely painted about 1650, when Castiglione was in Rome. [SSW](#)





Pedro de Mena

Spanish, Granada 1628–1688 Málaga

Ecce Homo and Mater Dolorosa

Ca. 1674–85. Polychrome wood; H. of the Ecce Homo, 26¼ in. (66.7 cm), H. of the Mater Dolorosa, 26 in. (66 cm). Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift, Mary Trumbull Adams Fund, and Gift of Dr. Mortimer D. Sackler, Theresa Sackler and Family, 2014 (2014.275.1, .2)

These busts represent a pinnacle of naturalism and expressive force in seventeenth-century Spanish sculpture. Through virtuosic manipulation of materials—carved and pieced wood, enhanced by paint, gold and silver leaf, and the addition of glass eyes and hair eyelashes—the artist created startling likenesses of bodies and clothing. Christ's battered and bleeding body, the Virgin's tears, and the thoughtfulness suggested by their gazes invite meditation on the Passion and identification with the mortified Christ and the sorrowful Virgin, both central to Catholic devotion in the period. The interaction among the two holy figures and the devout beholder is integral to the sculptures, which may have flanked an altar or have been situated so that the viewer could stand between them.

One of the leading sculptors of his age, Pedro de Mena made a specialty of paired busts of the Ecce Homo and Mater Dolorosa. He may even have invented the form, which he popularized across several generations of patrons and sculptors in Spain and abroad. At Mena's best, as seen here, the naturalism and pathos with which he imbued his devotional figures is disarming; they seem to hover between this world and another. [PJB](#)

Crown of the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception (Crown of the Andes)

Colombia, ca. 1660 (diadem) and ca. 1770 (arches). Gold, repoussé and chased, and emeralds, Diam. 13½ in. (34.3 cm). Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift, Acquisitions Fund and Mary Trumbull Adams Fund, 2015 (2015.437)

The "Crown of the Andes" is considered one of the most important surviving examples of goldsmith's work from colonial Spanish America. Notable for its rarity, richness, and exquisite craftsmanship, the crown epitomizes the distinctive artistic achievement of a region whose wealth derived from gold and emerald mines. It was made to adorn a sacred image of the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception venerated in Popayán, in the former viceroyalty of New Granada (now Colombia). An attribute of Mary's divine queenship, the crown is encircled by scrolls of acanthus leaves set with emeralds in blossom-shaped clusters, symbolizing the Virgin's purity. The diadem, crafted in the mid-seventeenth century, is surmounted by imperial arches made a little more than a century later. Pear-shaped emerald pendants are suspended beneath them, and they are topped by a cross-bearing orb signifying Christ's dominion over the world. Although the practice was controversial, it was common throughout the Spanish world to bestow lavish gifts, including jewels and sumptuous garments, on sculptures of the Virgin Mary. Such gifts, which exalted the Virgin and increased the splendor of her worship, were offered by devotees who sought her intercession or wished to give thanks for it. [RK](#)



Guido Cagnacci

Italian, Santarcangelo di Romagna 1601–1663 Vienna

The Death of Cleopatra

Ca. 1645–55. Oil on canvas, 37 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 29 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (95 × 75 cm). Purchase, Diane Burke Gift, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, by exchange, Friends of European Paintings Gifts, Gwynne Andrews Fund, Lila Acheson Wallace, Charles and Jessie Price, and Álvaro Saieh Bendeck Gifts, Gift and Bequest of George Blumenthal and Fletcher Fund, by exchange, and Michel David-Weill Gift, 2016 (2016.63)

Holding the asp about to bite her, Cleopatra looks heavenward as she takes her life following the death of her beloved, Mark Antony. The subject, pulled from Plutarch's *Lives* (1st century A.D.), appealed to the Baroque imagination because of its physically and emotionally engaging action. Guido Cagnacci, who first drew from artistic currents in Bologna and then Rome, where he worked early in his career, had a singular ability to enliven his subjects with his lush, carefully modulated paint handling. Although he initially made altarpieces and other religious paintings, in later years Cagnacci worked exclusively on portraits and such erotically charged subjects as this. His attraction to dramatic images of women has often been aligned with his almost proto-Romantic biography. As a young man, the artist attempted to elope with an aristocratic widow, was later the recipient of assets belonging to another rich lady, and purportedly traveled with a series of lovers/models who disguised themselves as men in order to pass unnoticed. In the nineteenth century, this important painting hung in the collection of the Earl of Caledon, in London, but it may have first belonged to Michiel Valenzin, a Jewish collector in Venice. [SSW](#)

Prince Rupert of the Rhine

Bohemian, Prague 1619–1682 Westminster

The Great Executioner with the Head of Saint John the Baptist

1658. Mezzotint with engraving (third state of three), 25 × 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (63.5 × 44.3 cm). Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift, in honor of George R. Goldner, 2015 (2015.43)

The Great Executioner is the most ambitious and exquisite of the mezzotints produced during the early years of the medium. Mezzotint is a technique of subtraction; the printing plate is roughened to achieve an overall rich, velvety tone, and then the image is created by polishing the plate to create areas of light. Prince Rupert, one of the technique's first practitioners, invented the "rocker," the tool used to darken the plate. This rich impression shows the energetic sweeping marks of the rocker and illustrates the rough, experimental quality characteristic of early mezzotints.

Son of the Elector Palatine Frederick V and Elizabeth Stuart, Rupert led a more adventurous life than most engravers. At fourteen, he fought the Spanish in the Netherlands. He later joined the Royalist army during the English Civil War and was exiled under Cromwell, during which time he fought on the side of the French and then became a Royalist corsair in the Caribbean. He was eventually appointed the first governor of the Hudson's Bay Company in Canada. It was during his exile from England, while living in Frankfurt, that Prince Rupert met Ludwig von Siegen, inventor of the technique, and created his mezzotints. [NMO](#)





Charles Le Brun

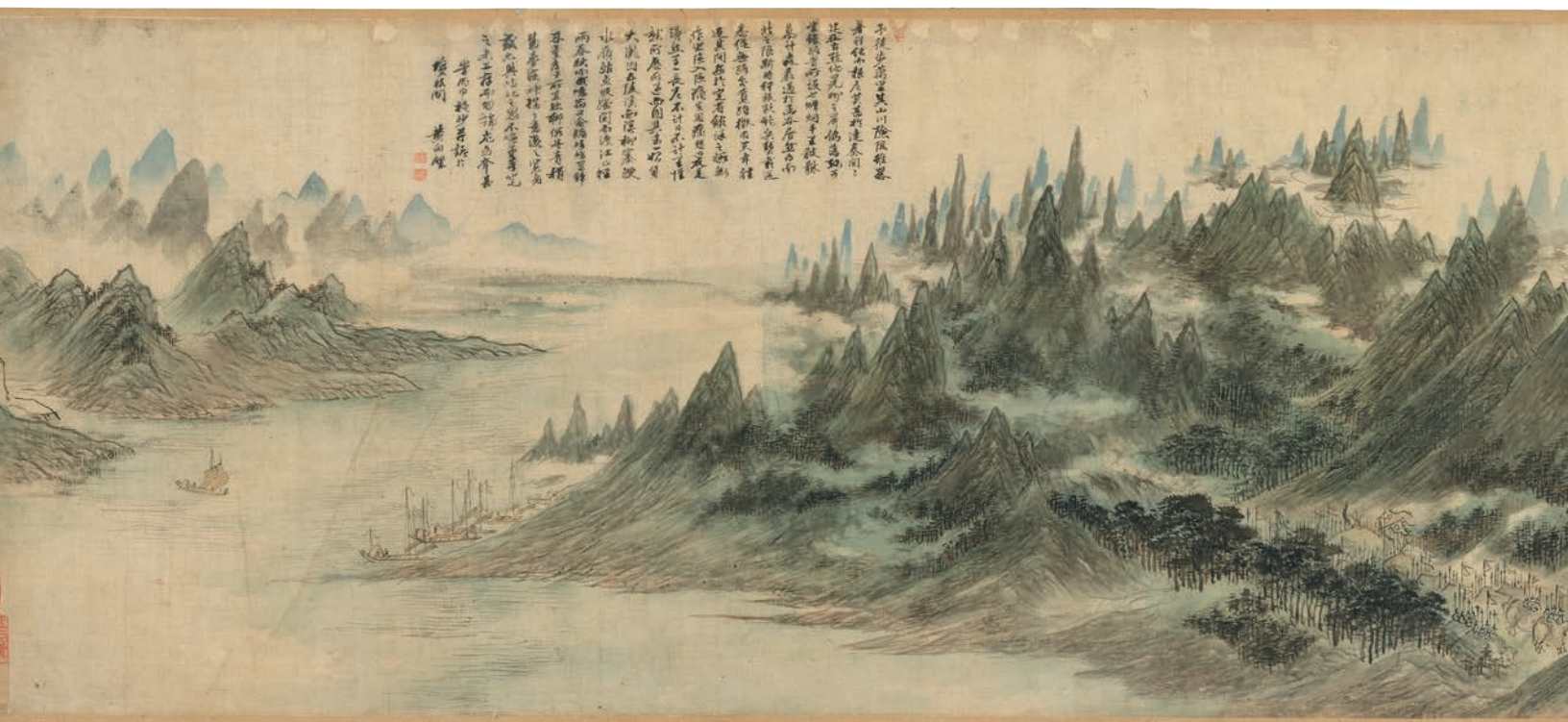
French, Paris 1619–1690 Paris

Everhard Jabach (1618–1695) and His Family

Ca. 1660. Oil on canvas, 110¼ × 129½ in. (280 × 328 cm). Purchase, Mrs. Charles Wrightsman Gift, in honor of Keith Christiansen, 2014 (2014.250)

This masterpiece of French painting is a landmark in the history of family portraiture. At the time the painting was commissioned, Charles Le Brun was on the threshold of becoming the most powerful artistic presence in France. Here, he skillfully balanced the depiction of material opulence with the arresting portrayal of the individual characters and likenesses of his sitters. Le Brun presents Everhard Jabach IV and his family at

home, in the company of their pets, and even depicts himself, brush and palette in hand, reflected in the mirror behind them. Jabach was one of the most celebrated art collectors of his day. Through an eventual sale of his holdings to the French crown, many of Jabach's works became prized possessions of King Louis XIV (r. 1643–1715) and are among the core collections of the Musée du Louvre, Paris. Whereas Jabach invites us to admire his wealth and directs our attention to a group of objects that indicate his culture and erudition, Le Brun, through his presence in the mirror, reminds us that we are equally marveling at his own artistic skill. Upon seeing this painting in 1774, the great writer and poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe wrote, "I find it difficult to describe my response to these impressions, so overwhelmed was I by them." [ssw](#)



Huang Xiangjian

Chinese, 1609–1673

Searching for My Parents

Qing dynasty (1644–1911), dated 1656. Handscroll: ink and color on silk; image, 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 18 ft. 2 in. (36.5 × 553.7 cm). Gift of Julia and John Curtis, 2015 (2015.784.4)

This painting illustrates one of the most celebrated acts of filial piety in Chinese history. In 1643 Huang Xiangjian's father was appointed county magistrate in Yunnan Province, but for nearly a decade thereafter Huang heard nothing from his parents. Not knowing whether they had survived the chaos following the fall of the Ming dynasty, in 1644, he set out in 1652 from his home in Suzhou and traveled more than 1,400 miles in search of them. In his vivid published account, Huang describes the hardships he endured before being reunited with his parents in rural Yunnan. He eventually escorted them back home, completing his round-trip journey in 558 days. Painted three years after his return, this handscroll documents the most arduous portion of the journey, including treacherous mountain trails and the military garrisons where he faced interrogation. In his inscription, he expresses the hope that the painting will “exorcise the nightmares” that still haunted him. *Searching for My Parents* is part of an important gift of ten works of Chinese art donated to The Met by Julia and John Curtis in 2015. [JS-D](#)

Vase with “Odes to the Red Cliff”

China, Qing dynasty (1644–1911), Kangxi mark and period (1662–1722). Porcelain painted with cobalt blue under a transparent glaze (Jingdezhen ware), H. 20 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (52.7 cm). Gift of Julia and John Curtis, 2015 (2015.784.1)

Two of the four sides of this vase record the “Odes to the Red Cliff,” classics of Chinese literature written by the statesman and writer Su Shi (1037–1101) in 1082, while he was in exile in Hubei Province. The other two sides illustrate scenes from these famous prose poems. The odes describe visits Su undertook with two companions to the Red Cliff, a renowned scenic site that was also the location of a critical third-century naval battle. Su recounts conversations he had while enjoying the area, reminiscing on its historical importance, and also drinking wine. The painting based on the first ode shows Su and his companions standing on a promontory as Su points to the Red Cliff in the distance. The pavilion in the background may represent Su's dwelling, known as the Hall of Snow (Xue Tang). In the painting accompanying the second ode, they are seated in a boat on a moonlit evening looking up at the towering cliff while a crane flies overhead. Additional details, such as the turbulent waves in the second scene, help distinguish autumn, when the later ode was written, from the summer excursion in calmer waters. [DPL](#)



Bada Shanren (Zhu Da)

Chinese, 1626–1705

Two Eagles

Qing dynasty (1644–1911), dated 1702. Hanging scroll: ink on paper; image, 73¼ × 35½ in. (187.3 × 90.2 cm). Gift of Oscar L. Tang Family, 2014 (2014.721)

This heroic image of defiance is one of the grandest expressions of Bada Shanren's lifelong opposition to Manchu rule. Born to relative comfort as a scion of the Ming imperial family, Bada experienced hardship after the Ming dynasty fell to the invading Manchus in 1644. He lived out his mature years in humble and occasionally tragic circumstances, first as a Buddhist monk and



later as a professional painter; at times, overwhelmed by sadness at the fall of the Ming, he struggled publicly with mental illness. As a painter, Bada channeled his alienation from the new dynastic order into images of melancholy beauty and sardonic wit. Here he depicts two proud eagles, bowed but unbroken, surveying the horizon with a world-weary stolidity that evokes Bada's own position as a member of a royal family that had been stripped of its empire. Defying canons of brushwork, Bada saturated the paper with wet ink, building the scene out of daringly abstract forms that look distinctly modern even today. Painted just three years before the artist's death, this monumental painting is one of Bada's largest surviving works and an archetypal example of his mature style. [JS-D](#)



Elias Adam

German, ca. 1669–1745; master 1703–45

Enameling attributed to Johann Jacob Priester I

German, 1658–1726; master ca. 1688–1726

"Four Seasons" Liqueur Service

Augsburg, ca. 1710. Silver gilt, enamel, and copper; H. overall 9½ in. (24 cm), H. of each beaker approx. 2 in. (5.2 cm). Purchase, Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Acquisitions Fund, 2015 (2015.387a–j)

The goldsmith Elias Adam, a leading specialist in the mounting of miniature enameled ensembles, was an innovator who sought out new forms and types of ornament. Instrumental in introducing French late Baroque arabesque to Germany, where it was known as *Bandelwerk* (strapwork), he also collaborated with Johann Jacob Priester I, arguably southern Germany's best enamel artist at the time. The overall design of this liqueur service, whose enameling has been attributed to Priester, is highly original: a paradigm of how a great goldsmith might transform valuable silver and gold into an even more treasured work of art. Perhaps the most striking component of the service, however, is the fragile and technically demanding miniature enameling, which here serves a visually enticing and whimsical mythological program. Based on engravings by Jean-Baptiste de Poilly (1669–1728) after paintings by Pierre Mignard (1612–1695) of the Four Seasons—made for the Galerie d'Apollon at the Château de Saint-Cloud (1686–91; now destroyed)—they deftly conflate several scenes from Mignard's monumental ceiling paintings into a sumptuous miniature table ornament. Probably rarely used for drinking, the service was more likely an object of visual delectation. [WK](#)



Amoy Chinqua

Chinese, dates unknown

Figure of a European Merchant

1719. Polychrome unfired clay and wood, H. overall 13 in. (32.9 cm). Purchase, Louis V. Bell, Harris Brisbane Dick, Fletcher, and Rogers Funds and Joseph Pulitzer Bequest and several members of The Chairman's Council Gifts, 2014 (2014.569)

This figure is one of the earliest known sculpted portraits of a European by a Chinese artist. Made of painted, unfired clay supported on a wood armature, it almost certainly depicts a senior official with the English East India Company, the trading firm established in 1600 to expand England's trade with the Far East. Although the sitter's identity is unknown, it is clearly a portrait of a specific individual observed firsthand rather than a generic image of a foreign merchant. The sensitive modeling of the face and wig, the confident pose of the body, and the considerable detailing of the costume reflect the skill of the Chinese artist Chinqua, who signed and dated the sculpture on its base. Two other figures bearing Chinqua's signature are known, and it is likely that these portraits were commissioned by the sitters to be sent from China to family members in England. These small-scale sculptures date from a period when England's trade with China had begun to flourish, and imported luxuries such as tea, spices, silks, and porcelain became staples of Britain's growing middle class. [JM](#)



John Michael Rysbrack

Flemish, Antwerp 1694–1770 London (active Britain, from 1720)

John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough (1650–1722)

Early-mid-1730s. Marble, H. overall 36 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (93 cm). Purchase, Director's Fund, Wrightsman Fund, in honor of Olga Raggio, and Mr. and Mrs. J. Tomilson Hill, Hester Diamond, and Mr. and Mrs. Richard L. Chilton Jr. Gifts, 2015 (2015.35)

John Michael Rysbrack was at the height of his powers when he carved this bust of John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough, one of Britain's greatest military heroes. Indeed, his innovative combination of Baroque naturalism and classical idealization, so brilliantly exemplified in this portrait, established the formal principles of eighteenth-century British sculpture. Rysbrack also popularized the convention of showing contemporary sitters clad in classical costume. Here he depicts Marlborough

as a laurel-crowned ancient Roman general, a type he usually reserved for Britain's kings.

This portrait relates to a series of monuments and sculptures from the 1720s and 1730s commissioned from Rysbrack by Marlborough's widow, Sarah Churchill, to secure her husband's posthumous reputation. Five marble versions of Marlborough's bust were produced; the duchess gave one to Oxford University and the others to her husband's intimate supporters. Of the four surviving works, The Met's example is the finest. Rysbrack carved the bust from flawless white marble, syncopating the interplay between line, light, and form with graceful precision. The vividly observed likeness and convincing rendering of ancient regalia capture Marlborough's august dignity, while the laudatory inscription on the socle immortalizes his deeds. Marlborough's eyes, which were left blank in emulation of classical sculptures, evoke his indomitability even after death. DA



Robe à l'anglaise

British, ca. 1747 (altered 1770s). Silk and metal, L. at center back 55 in. (139.7 cm). Purchase, Friends of The Costume Institute Gifts, 2014 (2014.138a, b)

Believed to have been worn by Honor Borough of Derbyshire on the occasion of her marriage to Philip Gell, in 1747, this gown displays the exquisite patterning of English dress silks of the mid-eighteenth century, with delicate flowers and asymmetrical



cartouches disposed in a graceful meander across an open ground. The ivory silk faille is brocaded with three types of silver thread—flat strip, *filé* (composed of a silver strip wound around a silk core), and *frisé* (a crinkled metallic thread)—which add rich texture to the lively brocade pattern. Such sumptuous textiles incorporating metallic threads signified the wealth of the wearer, but they also were admired for the brilliant effects of light reflecting off their surfaces. The flat silver strip brocaded at the centers of the flower blossoms and cartouches would

have created a coruscating effect, while the *frisé* of the stems produced a more restrained luster. Gowns of white and silver were fashionable at this date among aristocratic and wealthy brides, both colors symbolizing purity. Although altered in the 1770s, this dress remains a superb example of the elegant effect and lasting appeal of such fine silks. JR

Clock Movement by Ferdinand Berthoud

French, Switzerland 1727–1807 France

Case by Balthazar Lieutaud

French, ca. 1720–1780

Longcase Equation Regulator

French, ca. 1752. Oak veneered with satinwood and kingwood; gilt-bronze mounts, glass, enamel, steel, and brass; H. 86¼ in. (219 cm). Purchase, Acquisitions Fund, and Annette de la Renta, Mercedes T. Bass, Beatrice Stern, Susan Weber, William Lie Zeckendorf, Alexis Gregory, and John and Susan Gutfreund Gifts, in honor of Mrs. Charles Wrightsman, 2015 (2016.28a–e)

The sophisticated movement of this clock, which includes a full calendar and the equation of time, was the work of Ferdinand Berthoud, one of the most talented clockmakers in eighteenth-century France. An engraved plaque inside the case reveals that the movement was presented in 1752 to the Académie Royale des Sciences in Paris, where it was greatly admired. It may have been Berthoud's first equation timepiece showing both true solar time, which varies slightly according to season, and mean solar time, which does not. As such, this movement is an important monument in the history of timekeeping and was included in the third edition of Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d'Alembert's *Encyclopédie* of 1779.

The case is executed in the Rococo style, expressed in the graceful swelling of the trunk and the serpentine outline of

the hood. Balthazar Lieutaud, one of the leading Paris cabinet-makers of the period, skillfully combined curvilinear shapes, parquetry, and end-cut marquetry decoration with exuberant gilt-bronze mounts. Formerly part of the Hillingdon Collection at Wildernesse, Sevenoaks, Kent, this regulator is an early example of a distinguished group of longcase clocks in the successful collaboration of Berthoud and Lieutaud. DOK-G

Chimneypiece with Images of Adam and Eve

Boston, ca. 1760. Wool and silk embroidery on linen, 16 × 38 in.

(40.6 × 96.5 cm). Purchase, Anonymous Bequest, 2016 (2016.120)

Eighteenth-century embroideries wider than they are tall, like this one, were called "chimneypieces" because they were meant to be hung above a parlor mantel, a place of honor. The prominent display of this type of schoolgirl needlework signaled that the young lady of the home had been well educated and was ready to become an accomplished wife. The designs found on chimneypieces were usually derived from European print sources; in this case, scenes from the story of Adam and Eve were adapted from prints of paintings in the renowned collection of Archduke Leopold Wilhelm of Austria. The Hapsburg archduke was patron to Flemish artist David Teniers the Younger (1610–1690), who was charged with overseeing the publication of Leopold Wilhelm's collection of Italian paintings. The resulting volume, called the *Theatrum Pictorium* (1660), was the first illustrated printed collection catalogue. Several editions of the highly influential book were published, and at least one copy clearly found its way to the American colonies. In order to aid the catalogue's team of engravers, Teniers painted small copies of the works in the duke's collection. Coincidentally, Teniers's copy of *Adam and Eve in Paradise*, which relates to an image in this embroidery, resides in The Met's collection (1975.1.127). AP





Edward Duffield

American, 1720–1801 (active Philadelphia)

Tall-Case Clock

Philadelphia, 1765–80. Walnut, brass, and iron, H. 105 in. (266.7 cm).

Purchase, William Cullen Bryant Fellows and Close Friends Gifts, in honor of Morrison H. Heckscher, 2014 (2014.223a–c)

Edward Duffield was one of the leading producers of precision timepieces in prerevolutionary Philadelphia. Known for his friendship with Benjamin Franklin—both men were members of the Library Company and the American Philosophical Society—Duffield made clocks for Franklin's family and served as executor of his estate. This tall-case clock possesses a brass, weight-powered eight-day movement with an hour strike bell. The silvered dial has a seconds register, date aperture, Roman numeral chapter ring, and an engraved and painted, gear-driven moon-phase dial framed within elaborate brass spandrels. Duffield's sophisticated movement perches within a superior Philadelphia mahogany tall case with intricately carved appliques on the tympanum and a scrolled pediment with a carved cockerel cartouche at the center, a motif frequently seen on English and French clocks but rarely on American pieces. The cockerel may have been a reference to the apostle Peter, patron saint of watchmakers, and to Jesus's proclamation at the Last Supper, "I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me" (Luke 22:34). [AE](#)

Anne Seymour Damer

British, 1748/49–1828

Shock Dog

Probably 1782. Carrara marble, L. 15 in. (38 cm). Purchase, Barbara Walters Gift, in honor of Cha Cha, 2014 (2014.568)

In eighteenth-century Britain, small breeds like the Maltese—then known as "shock dogs" for their thick coats—were beloved



companions, much as they are today. The emotional bond between owners and their pets was often commemorated in appealing portraits like this one. Here the small dog, which is portrayed lifesize, looks up attentively, awaiting a word or touch from its master.

Anne Damer, often celebrated as Britain's first woman sculptor, portrayed both animals and people with memorable personal style. Noble-born and highly educated, she inscribed the dog with her name in Greek to recall her art's classical origins. Contemporary responses to her animal portraits acknowledged their status as one of Damer's signature subjects. In 1782 Damer's cousin, Horace Walpole, wrote of a similar work, "Her shock dog, large as life, and only not alive, has a looseness and softness in the curls that seemed impossible to terra-cotta; it rivals the marble of one of Bernini in the royal collection." Damer presented another marble to her friend Queen Charlotte, who wrote in thanks that the "sweet little dog" would "like a magnet draw more spectators to it." The engaging naturalism of Damer's shock dog testifies to her artistic mastery and empathy. At her death, Damer requested to be buried with her sculptor's tools and the bones of her favorite dog, mementos of two lifelong joys that had sustained her. [DA](#)

David Roentgen

German, 1743–1807

Peter IV Kinzing

German, 1745–1816

Obelisk Clock with a Franklin Movement

Neuwied am Rhein, ca. 1785–90. Oak and Thuja burl wood; gilt bronze, silver, and steel; H. 75 in. (190.4 cm). Purchase, Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Acquisitions Fund, in honor of Wolfram Koeppe, 2015 (2015.504a–d)

With its powerful visual austerity, this clock is a superb example of the cooperation of two ingenious artistic minds of the eighteenth century: David Roentgen, Europe's leading cabinetmaker, and the innovative clockmaker Peter Kinzing, who together created an object of startlingly modern appearance and technical bravura. The obelisk shape of the case, which accommodates the swing of the pendulum, reflects the "Egyptomania" that swept central Europe in the 1780s. The finial, fittingly, is in the form of the double-faced head of Janus, the Roman god of beginnings and endings. The ingenious movement—consisting of just three wheels, a four-hour ring dial, and a single hand—was invented by Benjamin Franklin in the 1760s or 1770s. Kinzing improved upon Franklin's original model with the addition of a small pointer, seen through an aperture in the minute hand, that allows for a clearer determination of the correct hour. The dial is made of solid silver, an extremely rare and expensive feature. The clock's link to Franklin's technical innovations makes this already exquisite work of art an even more significant acquisition for an American museum. [WK](#)





Muhammad Baqir

Iranian, active 1740s–1800

Vanity Box

Probably Shiraz, dated A.H. 12[0]4/1789–90. Papier-mâché and pasteboard, painted and lacquered, H. 13¾ in. (35 cm). Purchase, Goldman Sachs Gift, 2015 (2015.252)

This superbly painted lacquer vanity case is signed and dated by Muhammad Baqir, one of the most celebrated painters of the Zand dynasty in Iran (1750–79). It consists of a rectangular frame with a drawer and a removable lid covering a mirror. The drawer is intended to hold the dressing set; it has compartments for a variety of implements, such as a scissors, tweezers, and comb. The outer surfaces of the case are covered with sensitively rendered bird and flower (*gul-u-bul-bul*) painting, a hallmark of the Zand style, which was centered at Shiraz, home to enchanting gardens as well as a constellation of master Persian poets such as Hafiz and Sa'di. The inner surface of the lid features a lively feasting scene, or *bazm*, that epitomizes the lyricism of Zand painting at its height. A prince and his lover sit on a veranda surrounded by courtiers and musicians, who serve them wine and refreshments and provide entertainment. The lover holds a long, narrow type of poetry anthology known in Persian as a *safina*. Poetry recitations accompanied by music were integral to the *bazm*. The string instruments seen here, such as the *kamanche* (Persian spike fiddle) and *tambour* (a Persian variation of a lute), are representative of those in use at the time. [ME](#)

Portrait of Yun Dongseom (1710–1795)

Korean, Joseon dynasty (1392–1910), ca. 1790–1805. Hanging scroll: ink and color on silk; image, 52¾ × 30¾ in. (133 × 77.2 cm). Purchase, Harris Brisbane Dick and 2014 Benefit Funds; Friends of Korean Art, Locks Foundation, Hyun Jun M. Kim, and Tchah Sup and Myong Hi Kim Gifts, 2014 (2014.605)

Dressed in elegant formal attire, this elderly statesman sits in three-quarter view in a high-back chair draped with a leopard skin. A heightened sense of realism guided the rendering of the figure and his trappings, reflecting the trends of the time. Meticulous brushwork captures the tactile qualities of materials such as the embroidered rank badge on the sitter's chest, his gauzy silk-and-horsehair hat, and the spotted fur behind him. The sensitive treatment of Yun's face through crisp, fluid lines and subtle shading conveys both his physical characteristics and strong personality.

A quintessential example of traditional Korean ancestral portraiture, this painting would have functioned as the centerpiece of a family shrine dedicated to honoring the male lineages, in accordance with the strictures of neo-Confucian philosophy. The identification of the sitter—a celebrated scholar, calligrapher, and civil official—can be confirmed by two other extant portraits in collections in Korea. [SL](#)





Joshua Johnson

American, ca. 1763–ca. 1824

Emma Van Name

Ca. 1805. Oil on canvas, 29 × 23 in. (73.7 × 58.4 cm). Purchase, Nancy Dunn Revocable Trust Gift, 2016 (2016.116)

This compelling portrait of a Maryland toddler is widely regarded as an icon of American folk painting. Included in numerous international exhibitions since its discovery in the late 1950s by Edith Halpert, then New York's leading dealer of folk and modernist art, it is now accepted as an important work by Joshua Johnson, the earliest known professional African American painter. Born into slavery, Johnson was manumitted in 1782 and joined Baltimore's large free black population. Apparently self-taught, he was active in the city's competitive art world and was a resident

of the Fells Point neighborhood, a waterfront district populated by white Quakers and abolitionists as well as African Americans. Johnson produced the bulk of his work between 1803 and 1815, with more than half of his oeuvre featuring children.

Emma Van Name is arguably Johnson's most ambitious portrait of an individual child. Revealing the hallmarks of his characteristic style, the painting is distinguished by a bravura demonstration of Johnson's talents in its nuanced palette, compositional complexity, and deft handling of details, especially in the child's dress and demeanor. The portrait's combination of naturalist precision and imaginative flair underlies the particular appeal of historical folk painting to early twentieth-century modernists as well as its ongoing charm and fascination to contemporary viewers. [SY](#)



Goya (Francisco de Goya y Lucientes)

Spanish, Fuendetodos 1746–1828 Bordeaux

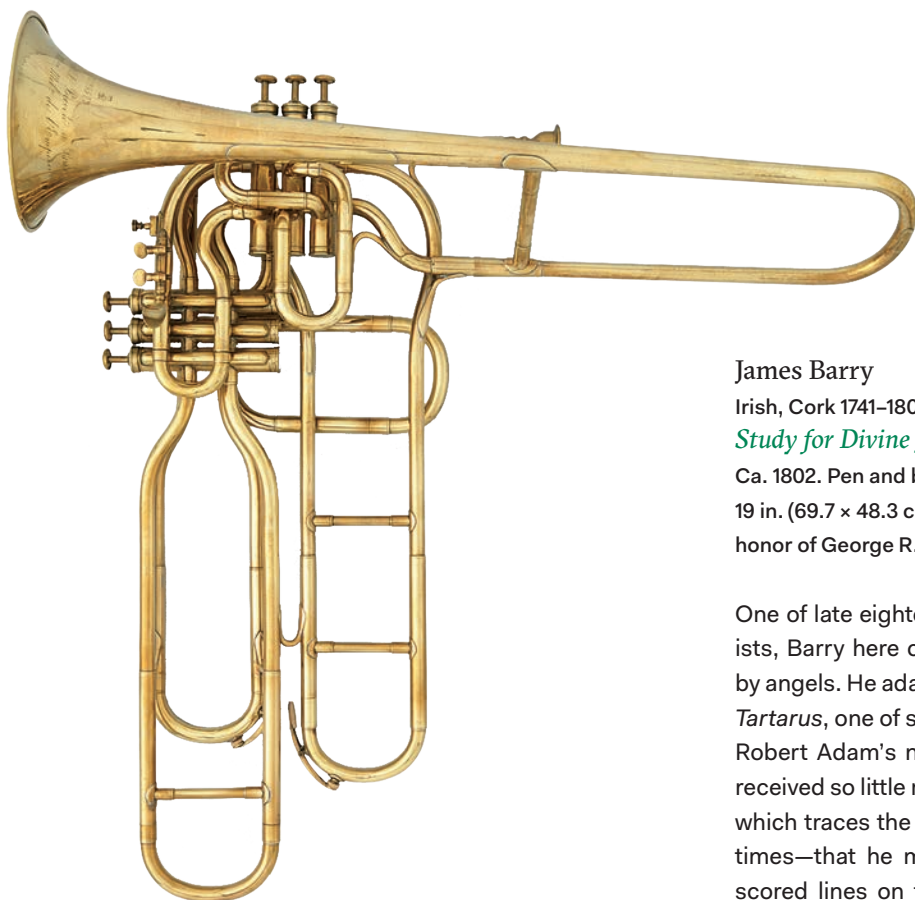
Landscape with Buildings and Trees

Ca. 1807–10. Etching and aquatint: sheet, 12 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 17 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (30.8 × 43.4 cm); plate mark, 6 $\frac{5}{8}$ × 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (16.7 × 28.5 cm). Purchase, The Derald H. Ruttenberg Foundation Gift, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, and several members of The Chairman's Council Gifts, 2015 (2015.539)

This is one of four known impressions of *Landscape with Buildings and Trees* printed by Goya during his lifetime. Within the context of his prints, this work—made after his first major series of etchings, *Los Caprichos* (1799), and before the *Disasters of War* (ca. 1810–15)—sits at an important juncture when Goya was exploring individual subjects that were not part of a series. The

diminutive workers and the grazing horse are overshadowed by the looming rock at right, bisected by trees bent at an alarming angle. A dark cloud dominates the farmhouses at left. These elements seem to menace an otherwise peaceful landscape, and indeed there is something unsettling about the print. Could it perhaps reflect Goya's meditation on the impending threat of the Napoleonic army, which invaded Spain in early 1808?

About 1810, Goya cut the *Landscape* copper plate in half and used the backs for two etchings in his *Disasters of War* series, probably owing to the shortage of copper at the time. Around 1920 the plates were temporarily rejoined, but the disfiguring fault could not be concealed, and only a few impressions were printed. [MMcD](#)



James Barry

Irish, Cork 1741–1806 London

Study for Divine Justice

Ca. 1802. Pen and brown ink with gray wash over graphite, 27½ × 19 in. (69.7 × 48.3 cm). Purchase, Charles and Jessie Price Gift, in honor of George R. Goldner, 2015 (2015.44)

One of late eighteenth-century London's most imaginative artists, Barry here celebrates patrons and philosophers attended by angels. He adapted the image from the center of *Elysium and Tartarus*, one of six murals he painted between 1777 and 1782 for Robert Adam's new Great Room at the Society of Arts. Barry received so little recompense for this magisterial achievement—which traces the rise of human culture from ancient to modern times—that he made etchings to disseminate his ideas. The scored lines on this large, rare drawing demonstrate how he

Antoine-Joseph “Adolphe” Sax

Belgian, Dinant 1814–1894 Paris

Valve Trombone

Paris, ca. 1863. Brass, L. 29½ in. (75 cm). Purchase, Amati Gifts, 2014 (2014.488a-d)

Although Adolphe Sax is best remembered for the invention of the saxophone, he also made significant contributions to the development of brass instruments. The system of six independent valves featured on this trombone was devised to correct the intonation problems of typical three-valve instruments, which can sound out of tune when valves are used in combination. Valve trombones were useful in situations where using a slide was awkward, such as while marching or playing in a cramped orchestra pit. The valve system of this instrument is detailed in Sax's 1859 patent (France, no. 39371). It is an ascending system, in which the valves do not add extra tubing to the instrument's length; instead, each valve isolates different amounts of the instrument's total tubing and is used on its own, causing the instrument to sound a half tone lower than the previous valve. Sax applied his six-valve independent system mostly to sax-horns and trombones. Although at the vanguard of instrument design for their day, they did not achieve lasting popularity. Players were reluctant to learn such a radically different fingering system, and the instruments were much heavier to hold than conventional three-valve models. [EBS-S](#)





transferred the forms, while the dynamic pen work and tonal wash reveal his continued enthusiasm for the subject. Barry wrote that he intended to honor “those great and good men of all ages and nations who were cultivators and benefactors of mankind.” Accordingly, at the apex of the drawing an angel scatters flowers over patrons ranging from Trajan to Peter the Great, Henri IV, Louis XIV, and Pope Julius II. Below, we see a debate among philosopher-theologians, including Origen, Pascal, and Bishop Joseph Butler, a prominent English cleric. The design is supported by the great brooding figure of Divine Justice. One of Barry’s finest conceptions, this sublime being lies at the edge of Tartarus and holds scales to identify her as judge. [CMcP](#)

Shelf for Cosmetic Boxes with Pine, Bamboo, Cherry, and Family Crests

Japan, Edo period (1615–1868), early 19th century. Lacquered wood with gold, silver *takamaki-e*, *hiramaki-e*, and cutout gold- and silver-foil application on gold *nashiji* (“pear-skin”) lacquer ground, H. 27½ in. (70 cm). Purchase, John and Pauline Gandel Gift, 2015 Benefit Fund, Brooke Russell Astor Bequest and Acquisitions Fund, 2016 (2016.167)

This sumptuous lacquer display shelf (*kurodana*) was created as one of the centerpieces of a wedding trousseau commissioned to celebrate the marriage of children of two important feudal lords (*daimyo*) of the late Edo period. The bride was a daughter of the wealthy Shimazu clan; the groom was the son of the politically influential Matsudaira family. The engagement agreement, dated to the fourth month of 1826, still survives, giving an approximate date for the commissioning of the set. Remarkably, The Met acquired thirty-one lacquers from this set in 1910 (10.71–.31). Reuniting this elegant shelf with those cosmetic boxes provides an authentic idea of how this trousseau was intended to be seen and displayed.

The shelf is ornamented with stylized landscape passages featuring clusters of pine, bamboo, and blossoming cherry, conveying auspicious wishes for long life, renewal, and nobility. Intermingled with these motifs are circles enclosing the two families’ crests: a cross for the Shimazu, lords of Satsuma Province, and a stylized plum blossom for the Matsudaira, close allies and relatives of the Tokugawa shoguns, who were lords of Kuwana, in Ise Province. The fine details and extravagant use of gold and silver decoration on the gold *nashiji* background attest to the high social status of the families. [MB](#)

Male Papaya Tree

India, probably Calcutta, ca. 1785–1800. Watercolor on paper, 29¾ × 21⅞ in. (75.6 × 54.4 cm). Louis E. and Theresa S. Seley Fund for Islamic Art, 2016 (2016.169)

The forests of India, some of the richest resources of the British colonies, helped to increase interest in the study of natural history and scientific collecting, including among Indian artists working for British patrons. This work comes from the album of Major James Nathaniel Rind (d. 1814), a colonial officer known to have had a keen interest in flora and fauna. Commissioned into the Bengal Marines in 1778, Rind later transferred to the 18th Regiment of Bengal Native Infantry. Between 1785 and 1789, he was based at Calcutta and was among the officers involved in a survey of India. This botanical study of a papaya tree shows the male flowers, the pollen from which can fertilize a nearby female flower and yield the fruit. **NNH**



Ekure or Egogo (Bell)

Nigeria (Court of Benin), Edo peoples, early–mid-19th century. Brass, L. 14⅞ in. (37.9 cm). Purchase, Amati Gifts, 2015 (2015.450)

Elaborate handbells like this one, which depicts a horse and rider—a symbol of male achievement—are extremely rare. It was probably made for a lesser member of the royal entourage at the court of Benin, as it is a single, not a double, bell and is made of brass, not ivory. The bell is clapperless, so its ring is produced by striking the outer surface. It would have been used at annual court ceremonial functions to assist in repelling evil spirits.

The unusually elaborate decoration of the bell and handle includes small crotaled bells vertically aligned along the edges, a leopard head (symbolic of royal power) flanking each side of the oval mouth, and an interlaced pattern filling the band at the lip. The surface treatment sets figures against a stippled background with vinelike meanders and, on the back, a floral (tulip) pattern. The front is dominated by an equestrian figure in relief; his left hand holds a staff, and his right holds the reins. The horse's neck and head emerge from the bell's surface. The back features a relief depiction of a crocodile, a symbol of the *oba* (king) and his connection to Olokun (god of the sea), a theme repeated at the end of the bell's handle. **JKM**

Joseph-Philibert Girault de Prangey

French, Langres 1804–1892 Courcelles-Val-d'Esnois

Group of Eight Daguerreotypes

1842. Variable dimensions. Purchase, Philippe de Montebello Fund, Mr. and Mrs. John A. Moran Gift, in memory of Louise Chisholm Moran, Joyce F. Menschel and Annette de la Renta Gifts, and funds from various donors, 2016 (2016.91–.98)

An artist and self-taught architectural historian, Girault de Prangey learned the daguerreotype process within a year or two of the public announcement of Daguerre's invention, in 1839. By 1842 he had mastered the process sufficiently to become one of a handful of photographers to embark on photographic excursions around the eastern Mediterranean, where he made the earliest surviving daguerreotypes of Greece, Egypt, Turkey, Syria, and Jerusalem and among the first daguerreotypes depicting

Italy. Daguerreotypists during this period faced enormous technical challenges, especially in the desert, so examples from these years are exceedingly rare. Most successful images were damaged or destroyed during the production of illustrated print publications. Girault de Prangey considered his daguerreotypes essential source material for archaeological research, however, and, after carefully labeling almost one thousand of them, he stored them in custom-made boxes and inventoried them at least twice in his lifetime. Working without an established photographic repertoire, he cut oversize daguerreotype plates to produce unprecedented formats, including horizontal panoramas, narrow vertical compositions that echo the profiles of columns and minarets, and small squares that capture surprising architectural details. In the hands of Girault de Prangey, the daguerreotype thus became the radical and trailblazing tool of a new technology: photography. [SCP](#)



Temple de Minerve Poliade, Athènes



Le désert, près d'Alexandrie



Dress

British, 1824–26. Cotton, silk, and wool, L. at center back 48½ in. (123.2 cm). Purchase, Irene Lewisohn Bequest, 2015 (2015.98a, b)

In the early decades of the nineteenth century, fashionable English dress revealed a fascination with historical styles. Drawing inspiration from literature, theater costume, and history paintings of medieval and Renaissance subjects, the designers of such garments incorporated stylistic details from the twelfth through the seventeenth century into contemporary dress. The decoratively slashed sleeves of the sixteenth century, for example, through which linen undershirts were loosely drawn, inspired a variety of puffed trimmings, including the *bouillons* of fine white lawn that encircle the hem of this 1820s dress. Held to shape by bands of pomegranate-colored satin, the *bouillonnée* hem is bordered by padded rouleaux, which help weight the skirt and regulate its drape. The revival of historical modes reflected a nostalgia for England's past, evoking romantic notions of the chivalry or patriotism of earlier eras. Although the sheer white cotton might suggest that the dress was intended for summer wear, the crewel wool-embroidered holly boughs at its base indicate that it was worn during wintertime. Holly had long been used in Christmas decorations and was strongly associated not only with the holiday but also with the season, when its berries and foliage provided welcome color. JR

Bedding Bag

South Caucasus, ca. 1825–75. Wool and cotton; *sumak* brocaded, tapestry-woven bottom; H. 20 in. (50.8 cm), W. 41 in. (104.1 cm), D. 19 in. (48.3 cm). Gift of Inger G. and William B. Ginsberg, 2015 (2015.490.23)

Bedding bags, called *mafrash*, were produced by up to three women sitting side by side, each working on a section of the rectangular bag. They would have woven the piece on the loom in the brocading technique called *sumak*, producing the various hexagonal and hook motifs of the side and end panels as well as the tapestry-woven bottom. On this example, wool loops were sewn into the top edges of the bag so it could be fastened by straps to camels. When the nomads who used these bags were encamped in their tents, the bedding that the bags contained could be removed and the bag hung on the walls of the tent.

Thanks to its lustrous color and fine state of preservation, this example has been described by noted expert John T. Wertime as one of the “outstanding Qarabagh bedding bags to survive.” Its field design includes a central band of connected white hexagons alternating with half hexagons. The red cruciform design on the white cotton ground in the hexagons contributes to the striking appearance of the field. Yellow guard stripes with stylized tendrils separate the main band from the upper and lower secondary bands of rotated cloud-collar motifs. SRC

Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres

French, Montauban 1780–1867 Paris

Madame Paul Meurice, née Palmyre Granger

Ca. 1845–50. Graphite on wove paper, 22 × 17¹/₂ in. (55.9 × 44.8 cm).

Purchase, Harris Brisbane Dick, Louis V. Bell, and Harry G. Sperling Funds, The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, and Leon D. and Debra R. Black Gift, 2016 (2016.20)

This striking study, presumably a preparatory work for a lost or never-executed painted portrait, is a new discovery. It depicts the artist's goddaughter, Palmyre Meurice (1819–1874), referred to by family and close friends as “Myrette.” Her father, the Neoclassical painter Jean-Pierre Granger, was an old friend of Ingres. In addition to studying art herself, she would go on to become a renowned musician—a pianist, singer, and composer.

After his return to Paris in 1841, having served as director of the French Academy in Rome, Ingres was feted as a great figure and awarded all manner of accolades and privileges. He hoped to cultivate his legacy through history painting but could not avoid the persistent requests for portraits from members of the court and from France's wealthiest families. If he considered painting a portrait of Palmyre during this time, when he frequently complained of feeling overtaxed, it must have been purely out of affection. In contrast to the artist's many small portrait drawings that are finished works, this is a study, notable for its large scale and striking frontality. Sinuous lines in a dark, soft graphite, firmly applied and repeatedly gone over, establish the sitter's contours, while her features are rendered with clarity in a decidedly more delicate technique. [PS](#)





Eugène Delacroix

French, Charenton-Saint-Maurice 1798–1863 Paris

Sunset

Ca. 1850. Pastel on blue laid paper, mounted on paper board, 8 × 10¼ in. (20.4 × 25.9 cm). Gift from the Karen B. Cohen Collection of Eugène Delacroix, in honor of Philippe de Montebello, 2014 (2014.732.4)

Primarily a painter of historical and religious subjects, Delacroix saw in nature the potential to enhance the expressiveness of his canvases. His journal entries from about 1850 make frequent reference to early evening walks on which he would study the atmospheric effects of sky and clouds. He recorded his obser-

ventions in a series of pastels, which capture the intensity of these ephemeral experiences. In this example, the land has been reduced to an indistinct and foreboding strip along the bottom edge; the sky alternates between cool bands of turquoise tinged in gray and fiery ribbons of pink and gold, producing rosy rays of light fanned out across the upper portion of the composition.

On May 8, 1850, Delacroix noted that he had made “a pastel of sorts of the effect of sunlight, with an eye to my ceiling,” a reference to the painting he had been commissioned to make on the ceiling of the Gallery of Apollo in the Louvre. The sheet in question may well have been this one, since the central scene of that painting depicts the sun god riding his chariot through a similar burst of light. [PS](#)



Pierre-Louis Pierson

French, Hinckange 1822–1913 Paris

Aquilin Schad

Austrian, 1817–1866

Fright

1861–64. Salted-paper print with applied color, 22½ × 17½ in. (57 × 44 cm). Purchase, The Camille M. Lownds Fund, Joyce F. Menschel Gift, Louis V. Bell and 2012 Benefit Funds, and C. Jay Moorhead Foundation Gift, 2015 (2015.395)

In 1856 Virginia Oldoini (1837–1899), Countess of Castiglione, was sent to France in order to persuade Emperor Napoleon III to champion the cause of Italian unification by any means necessary. The unrivaled beauty quickly became notorious not only as the emperor's mistress but also for her flamboyant

self-presentation. Between 1856 and 1867, and then again toward the end of her life, she collaborated with the photographer Pierre-Louis Pierson to produce some four hundred photographs, many of which were enlarged and painted according to her specific directions. Momentous scenes from her life (some merely imagined) were mixed with episodes drawn from the theater, opera, and literature in service to a carefully choreographed personal mythology: a fixture of today's selfie-saturated social media, but something unprecedented in the nineteenth century. In *Fright*, she instructed the painter Aquilin Schad to embellish her portrait in the guise of a fancifully dressed ball guest who flees a conflagration. The exact source of the scene remains unknown, but it provides the perfect setting for a precocious fashionista to envision herself as a mysterious femme fatale. [SCP](#)



Designed by Bruce J. Talbert
British, Dundee, Scotland 1838–1881 London
Manufactured by Holland and Sons
British, active 1843–1942

Sideboard (The Pericles DRESSOIR)

London, 1866. Oak inlaid with ebony, walnut, boxwood, and amaranth, carved and gilded; brass fittings; H. 128 in. (325 cm).
Purchase, Gift of Irwin Untermyer, by exchange; Romano I. Peluso, Ada Peluso, William Lie Zeckendorf, Lila Acheson Wallace, Malcolm Hewitt Wiener Foundation, Carol Grossman, Patricia Wengraf Ltd., Anonymous, Henry Arnhold, Marilyn and Lawrence Friedland, Irene Roosevelt Aitken, Andrew Butterfield and Claire Schiffman, Jason Jacques, Anne Rorimer, and Ian Wardropper and Sarah McNear Gifts, in honor of James David Draper, 2015 (2015.281a, b)

Holland and Sons, one of the largest furniture-making firms in mid-nineteenth-century London, commissioned Bruce Talbert to design its display stand for the 1867 Exposition Universelle, in Paris. Trained as a woodcarver, Talbert was a versatile designer of decorative arts. In a reaction to the more perpendicular Neo-Gothic style advocated by Augustus W. N. Pugin (1812–1852), Talbert popularized a simpler, more practical take on Gothic idioms, embodied by this architectural sideboard. Known as the “Pericles Dressoir,” it was the centerpiece of the Holland and Sons display at the exposition and was awarded a silver medal. Details of the piece are illustrated in Talbert’s 1867 book *Gothic Forms Applied to Furniture, Metal Work and Decoration for Domestic Purposes*, which popularized his so-called Reformed Gothic style. The inlaid decoration of fish, fruit, game, and fowl evokes the theme of dining, while quotations adapted from Shakespeare refer to feasting and saying grace before a meal. A banquet scene from Shakespeare’s *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* is also carved in relief on the top gable. The references to plays by the preeminent

English dramatist and the liberal use of oak, a native wood, are both manifestations of British national pride, very appropriate for a work intended for display at an international exhibition. [DOK-G](#)

Manufactured by Colt’s Patent Fire Arms
Manufacturing Company

American, established 1855

Grip designed by John Quincy Adams Ward

American, Urbana, Ohio 1830–1910 New York

Colt Model 1862 Police Revolver, Serial No. 38549

Hartford, ca. 1868. Steel, gold, and brass, L. 11 in. (27.9 cm),
Caliber .36 in. (91 mm). Gift of W. C. Foxley, 2014 (2014.699)

In addition to being an important example of a presentation-quality revolver in excellent condition, this handgun is noteworthy for its unusual custom decoration, which includes delicate gold inlay on the barrel and cylinder and a figural grip modeled fully in the round. The inlay, set on a nearly pristine blue-black ground, is restrained in design, a marked contrast to the densely engraved or inlaid decoration normally found on luxury firearms of this period. The revolver’s most distinctive aspect, however, is its ornate brass grip embellished with a female figure representing Christianity and Justice. The sculptor John Quincy Adams Ward was commissioned to create the original model of the grip in 1862 or 1863 for a pair of Colts that were presented on behalf of President Abraham Lincoln to Kibrisli Pasha, governor of Adrianople (present-day Edirne, Turkey), in 1864. The grip of The Met’s revolver was probably cast from the same mold shortly after that. Relatively unknown at the time, Ward soon became one of America’s most celebrated sculptors. This early example of his work demonstrates how accomplished Ward’s modeling and compositional skills were at the outset of his career. [DLR](#)



Jules Tavernier

American, born France 1844–1889 Honolulu

Dance in a Subterranean Roundhouse at Clear Lake, California

1878. Oil on canvas, 48 × 72¼ in. (121.9 × 183.5 cm). Marguerite and Frank A. Cosgrove Jr. Fund, 2016 (2016.135)

Trained in Paris, Jules Tavernier settled in San Francisco in the 1870s and soon became the city's leading artist. He received the commission for this canvas, the most important of his career, from Tiburcio Parrott, a prominent San Francisco banker. In 1876 Parrott and his Parisian business partner, Baron Edmond de Rothschild, were attempting to acquire the mineral-rich lands inhabited for generations by the Pomo Indians of Northern California. In the process, Parrott obtained entry for himself and Rothschild to a sacred Pomo ritual in their underground roundhouse at Clear Lake, north of San Francisco. He asked Tavernier to commemorate the event in a painting. Tavernier spent two years creating the complex composition, in which two young male Pomo dancers—surrounded by the tribe and several white visitors (among them Parrott and Rothschild)—enact a coming-of-age ritual. The artist rendered the dimly lit interior with brilliant technical finesse by means of highly controlled tonal variations and flashes of color. The painting captures a sense of the tribe's rich culture but, at the same time, suggests their seemingly inevitable demise in the face of white settlement. Upon its completion, Parrott presented the painting to Rothschild, and it remained in his family until the present day. [EMK](#)

Moon Mask

Côte d'Ivoire, Baule peoples, 19th century. Wood, H. 10½ in. (26.7 cm). Purchase, Mrs. Howard J. Barnet Gift, 2015 (2015.566)

The Baule master carver who modeled this mask employed a smooth, poised style to depict the face as a perfect domed circle. This shape, echoed by the semicircles of the eyes and eyebrows and reinforced by the pierced serrated decoration of the openwork rim, alludes to the radiating luminosity of the full moon. The slender nose, naturalistic mouth, panels of nested triangles carved in relief on each cheek, and cup with zigzag rim delicately balanced on top all contribute to the mask's refined, harmonious composition.

Only a handful of Baule moon masks are known. Together with other masks representing natural phenomena, such as rainbows and the setting sun, they are worn to “warm the dance space” as part of the initial sequence of an operatic public entertainment known as Mblo or Gbagba. Featuring a succession of skilled masked dancers who impersonate familiar subjects, beginning with spirits of nature and animals, such performances culminate with skits honoring the community's most distinguished member. This rare mask's provenance in the West can be traced to several prestigious collectors of African art, from the famed Parisian art dealer Charles Ratton to *Vanity Fair* editor Frank Crowninshield to the American adventure writer and artist Russell B. Aitken. [YB](#)





Augustus Saint-Gaudens

American, born Dublin, Ireland 1848–1907 Cornish, New Hampshire

Cornelius Vanderbilt I

1882. Bronze, 16 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 22 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (41.3 × 57.8 cm). Purchase, Brooke Russell Astor Bequest and David Schwartz Foundation Inc. Gift, 2016 (2016.71)

Saint-Gaudens's work for the French Renaissance-style mansion of Cornelius Vanderbilt II on Fifth Avenue at Fifty-Seventh Street included three bronze bas-relief portraits of family members and an imposing red Numidian marble mantel, now in The Met's Charles Engelhard Court (25.234). This posthumous likeness of family patriarch Cornelius Vanderbilt I (1794–1877), a steamship and railroad entrepreneur, was based on photographs taken in the early 1870s. The "Commodore," as he was familiarly known, is posed in profile against a dense decorative background of oak leaves and acorns. This motif, suggesting strength and regeneration, was adapted from the family coat of arms, visible at lower right. The inscription on the sculpture notes that Vanderbilt is portrayed at age 79 in 1873, the year he provided the founding gift to Vanderbilt University, Nashville. The aestheticizing elements in the background are very much in harmony with the sumptuous tapestries and embossed leathers that decorated the house's extravagant Gilded Age interior. This unique bronze cast remained in the Vanderbilt family until entering The Met's extensive collection of some fifty works by Saint-Gaudens, the leading American sculptor of the late nineteenth century. **TT**





Fernand Khnopff

Belgian, Grembergen 1858–1921 Brussels

Hortensia

1884. Oil on canvas, 18 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 23 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (47.8 × 59.7 cm). Signed and dated: incised into paint, at lower left, *FERNAND KHNOPFF 1884*. Purchase, Bequest of Julia W. Emmons, by exchange, and Catharine Lorillard Wolfe Collection, Wolfe Fund, and Promised Gift of Charles Hack and the Hearn Family Trust, 2015 (2015.263)

Knopff's sister and favorite model, Marguerite, may have posed for this tranquil picture, probably set in their family's summer home in the Belgian countryside. Made when the artist was only in his mid-twenties, the inventive composition reconceives the subject of a woman reading in a domestic interior. As highlighted by Khnopff's title, the hydrangea (*hortensia* in French), placed prominently in the foreground, boldly upstages the sitter. The angled, cropped viewpoint heightens the air of informality and spontaneity, qualities also found in the work of French contemporaries such as Degas and Caillebotte, which Khnopff may have seen while visiting Paris. Soft white and lilac hues, accented by a single red blossom, attest to his penchant for refined color harmonies and ethereal effects. Scenes of modern everyday life were rare for Khnopff, who went on to become a leader of the Symbolist movement of the later 1880s and 1890s, renowned for more mystical, otherworldly imagery. With this acquisition, The Met enriches its growing collection of paintings representing the creative verve of central and northern European art during the late nineteenth century. [AH](#)

Louis Comfort Tiffany

American, New York 1848–1933 New York

Squash Window with Pebbles

New York, 1885–90. Glass, quartz, and lead came, 24 × 24 in. (61 × 61 cm). Purchase, Sansbury-Mills Fund and Anonymous Gift, 2015 (2015.707)

This inventive window dates to the earliest period of Tiffany's long and productive career. Novel in its abstracted vegetal forms, the window was made using Tiffany's experimental "confetti" glass and has a border of translucent, found beach pebbles framed by a sinuous gilded lead came. The texture of the matte, rounded stones, which protrude into the viewer's space, contrasts with the smooth, shiny fluidity of the squash and agitated vines, giving the impression that the glass has been preserved in its molten state.

Tiffany first introduced translucent sea-worn quartz into his repertoire in 1885, when, as recalled by Emily Johnston de Forest (wife of Robert W. de Forest, fifth president of The Metropolitan Museum of Art), he visited the de Forests at their house in Montauk, Long Island. Tiffany gathered pebbles from the beach and brought them back to his studios. He added some to a window he made that year for the de Forests, and he continued to incorporate them in other windows and lampshades during the early years of his career. The use of such "found objects"—an avant-garde concept that was a half century ahead of its time—contributes to the window's modernist sensibility. [ACF](#)

Henry P. Bosse

American, born Germany, 1844–1893

Pine Bend

1885. Cyanotype, 10½ × 13½ in. (26.8 × 34.3 cm). Purchase, Acquisitions Fund and Mr. and Mrs. John A. Moran Gift, in memory of Louise Chisholm Moran, 2015 (2015.39)

This view overlooking pine bluffs toward a river bend comes from an album of 169 photographs by Henry P. Bosse, the German-born cartographer employed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to map the upper Mississippi River. Officially titled *Views on the Mississippi River between Minneapolis, Minnesota and St. Louis, Missouri, from Negatives Taken and Printed under the Direction of Major A. Mackenzie, Corps of Engineers, U.S.A, by H. Bosse, Draughtsman, 1883–1891* (known as the Mackenzie Album), the series chronicles the transformation of the Mississippi River valley from a pioneer territory into a regulated artery of transportation and commerce. For this project, Bosse made some two hundred glass negatives that document the interplay between the natural and the man-made within this quintessentially American landscape. His choice of cyanotype—the same process used until recently by architects to duplicate line drawings—was likely one of economy, as the materials were readily available to draftsmen. The cyanotype's characteristic



Prussian blue pigment also offered Bosse an ideal medium for depicting a landscape defined by water, revealed here in the inky reflections shimmering across the surface of the river. This evocative print belongs to a group of eighteen photographs from the Mackenzie Album acquired by The Met in 2015. [BS](#)





Sachihongo Mask

Zambia, Mbunda peoples, 19th–early 20th century. Wood and pigment, H. 17 in. (43.2 cm). Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace, Anonymous, Dr. and Mrs. Sidney G. Clyman, The Katcher Family Foundation Inc., Steven Kossak, and Holly and David Ross Gifts, 2016 (2016.106)

Mbunda-style Sachihongo masks are characterized by their round shape, proportionally exaggerated features, and prominent brow ridge and cheeks. Large concentric arcs define the forehead wrinkles, brows, eyes, and cheeks, while filed teeth, revealed in the opened square mouth, convey the physical and supernatural power of a revered ancestor. In this iconic interpretation, the sculptor, although working in an established genre, achieved an unprecedented level of visual fluency through a powerful rhythmic alternation of convex volumes and bold linear accents.

During a period of seclusion, adolescent Mbunda boys undergo circumcision and are instructed in qualities they are expected to take on as adult men. The Sachihongo mask form appears at the culmination of the celebration, when the youths are brought back to the community. The subject of the mask, which is danced to a rapid tempo, is the spirit of a cultural archetype: an ancestral hunter armed with a bow and arrow and carrying either a flywhisk or ceremonial ax. In 2005, this performative tradition was added to the UNESCO list of Intangible Cultural Heritage. [AL](#)





Commemorative Portrait of a Chief (*Singiti*)

Democratic Republic of the Congo (Luika River region), 19th–early 20th century. Wood, H. 30¾ in. (78 cm). Purchase, Jane and Gerald Katcher, Lila Acheson Wallace, Daniel and Marian Malcolm, Hamilton E. James, Anonymous and Steven Kossak Gifts, 2015 (2015.119)

Through the sculptural creations of master carvers, the departed leadership of Hemba chiefdoms remained vitally present to their successors. This work is one of those visual tributes, which immortalized princely subjects from communities situated across the vast grass plains extending from the right bank of the Upper Zaire River to a branch of the Luika. Originally enshrined within darkened ancestral mausoleums, these profoundly contemplative figures were positioned centrally within the community, where they were cared for by its living leadership. This classic example, in which the head and torso are emphasized, eloquently synthesizes serenity and vitality. The summit of the head is crowned by an elaborate openwork coiffure, identified with elevated rank, while the umbilicus denotes the line of generational connection between family members. [AL](#)

Théo van Rysselberghe

Belgian, Ghent 1862–1926 Saint Clair

Intimacy

1890. Conté crayon, 17½ × 20 in. (43.4 × 50.8 cm). Walter and Leonore Annenberg Acquisitions Endowment Fund, 2015 (2015.386)

This peaceful scene, whose intimacy is enhanced by the tightly cropped composition, is the work of one of the most gifted Belgian artists at the turn of the nineteenth century. Although inspired by the drawings and Pointillist paintings of Georges Seurat, Van Rysselberghe applied the Frenchman's technique in a less rigid manner, resulting in a greater naturalism. By varying the density of the Conté crayon marks and making effective use of the white paper support in areas such as the book read by the woman at right, Van Rysselberghe achieved a rich gradation of tone and an evocative luminosity, especially in the halo of light surrounding the blond hair of the woman sewing. She can be identified as Maria Sèthe, an accomplished musician who would become the wife and collaborator of the great Belgian architect Henry van de Velde; the woman reading is Van Rysselberghe's wife. Intended as an independent work and signed with his elegant monogram, at lower right, the drawing was first exhibited a year after its creation in Brussels by the influential artists' association known as Les XX (The Twenty), of which Van Rysselberghe was a founder. [SA](#)



Gustave Caillebotte

French, Paris 1848–1894 Gennevilliers

Chrysanthemums in the Garden at Petit-Gennevilliers

1893. Oil on canvas, 38 $\frac{5}{8}$ × 23 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (98 × 59.8 cm). Gift of the Honorable John C. Whitehead, 2014 (2014.736)

This snail's-eye view of a lush flowerbed is The Met's first painting by Caillebotte, who holds a key place among the Impressionists as an artist, patron, and organizer of the group's exhibitions. Although Caillebotte was a lifelong gardener, his interest in the genre of floral still life did not develop until the 1880s. This work, from 1893, depicts blossoms that he cultivated on his property at Petit-Gennevilliers, a small town on the Seine just northwest of Paris. Chrysanthemums were then hugely popular in France, celebrated for their resplendent colors and associations with the exotic Far East, and a number of the Impressionists found them to be an attractive subject; the present canvas joins bouquets by Caillebotte's friends Monet (29.100.106) and Renoir (2003.20.10) in the Museum's galleries. The unusual, close-up



glimpse of the densely packed blooms has been related to Caillebotte's project for dining-room doors ornamented with paintings of plants, a conception akin to the decorative series that Monet based on his own garden at Giverny. Fittingly, Caillebotte gave a companion picture of chrysanthemums as a gift to Monet (Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris), who in turn created a series of four paintings that show the bright buds arranged in lively, spreading patterns. [AH](#)

Léon Bakst

Russian, Grodno 1866–1924 Paris

Costume Design for a Eunuch in "Schéhérazade"

Ca. 1910. Gouache and graphite, heightened with gold paint, 17 × 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (43.2 × 27.3 cm). Bequest of Sallie Blumenthal, 2015 (2015.787.6)

Schéhérazade, a one-act ballet by the Ballets Russes, debuted at the Théâtre National de l'Opéra, Paris, in 1910. The first completely original production staged by the Russian company, it is

still considered one of the most spectacular, owing not least to the sensuously rich costume and set designs by Léon Bakst. This drawing depicts the costume for one of the eunuchs of the Persian ruler, Shah Shariar. As with many of Bakst's most inspired costume designs, the drawing shows the details of the costume but also reveals elements of the story line and the disposition of the character depicted. The eunuch, true to his profession, has followed the commands of his master, evidenced by the drops of blood streaming down the blade of his sickle and ominously echoed in the ornaments of his broad sash and harem pants. Yet the expression of his eyes is one of sadness and resignation, illustrative of his internal struggle with the demands of his servitude. The present drawing is part of a group of thirty designs for ballet costumes and decors bequeathed to The Met by the late Sallie Blumenthal. [FS](#)

Manol (Emmanuel Venios)

Greek (active Turkey), Folegandros 1838/45–1915 Istanbul

[Ūd](#)

Istanbul, 1916. Spruce, mulberry, and various other woods, mother-of-pearl, and mastic, L. approx. 31½ in. (80 cm). Purchase, Amati Gifts, 2014 (2014.522a, b)

Emmanuel Venios, known as Manol, was a Greek luthier living in Istanbul in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. By 1870 he had established a workshop on Istiklal Avenue, in the Beyoğlu district, where he developed the Turkish/Armenian style of ūd. His instruments are distinct from the larger Arab model, represented in The Met's collection by the well-known Egyptian workshop of Les fils de Gamil Georges (1982.143.1). Manol's instruments, by comparison, are lighter, use fewer ribs to form the instrument's vaulted back, and have a different internal bracing and attachment system at the neck, all features that helped create the "Manol sound" and established his reputation as the "Stradivarius of the Ūd."

With its alternating wood and mother-of-pearl trim, plectrum guard, meandering vegetal designs on the fingerboard, and back of eighteen alternating light and dark wood staves, this instrument is more ornamented than the majority of the twenty-five or so existing examples by Manol. It was owned previously by the renowned Armenian musician John Bilezikjian and by Udi Hrant Kenkulian (Udi Hrant), who was crucial in transforming the instrument for use in contemporary popular music. Ūds have existed for more than five thousand years and served as the forerunner of many instruments worldwide, including the lute, which takes its name from the Arabic term for an ūd (*al'ūd*). Their distinctive pear-shaped form is frequently depicted in art. [JKM](#)



Commemorative Figure (*Lefem*)

Cameroon (Grassfields region), Bamileke peoples, Bangwa chiefdom, 19th–early 20th century. Wood and organic matter, H. 38 in. (96.5 cm). Gift of Sidney and Bernice Clyman, 2015 (2015.753)

In the Grassfields region of Cameroon, each chiefdom is led by the sacred person of the *fon*, who is responsible for rites concerned with the well-being of his people and the fertility of the land. The leaders of the Bangwa principalities commissioned representations of themselves as supremely commanding rulers. The renowned sculptors they recruited for these idealized portraits, or *lefem*, emphasized the expressive qualities of the sitter's character, creating works that are impressive from all vantage points. The vital connection between an individual and his or her sculptural counterpart was further reinforced through pairing the figure with relics, typically crania and intimate possessions preserved in royal shrines.

A landmark of African art, this strikingly beautiful figure has been attributed to a sculptor sometimes called the Master of the Berlin Tanyi, who imparted to his subjects a regal majesty and poised serenity. Like two related examples of seated chiefs by the same artist, this one holds a palm-wine vessel made of a calabash gourd in his right hand, with the base balanced on his thigh. The elongated bodies of all three works are marked by gently rounded contours and delicate features. The black surface patina is the residue of libations applied by successive generations to commemorate its subject. [AL](#)

Ancestral Headdress

Nigeria (Middle Benue region), Jukun peoples, 19th–early 20th century. Wood and organic accretions, H. 45 in. (114.3 cm). Purchase, Pfeiffer, Leona Sobel Education, 2005 Benefit, and Dodge Funds; Gift of Dr. Mortimer D. Sackler, Theresa Sackler and Family; Andrea Boltt Bequest, in memory of Robert Boltt Sr. and Robert Boltt Jr.; Elaine Rosenberg, Laura and James J. Ross, and The Katcher Family Foundation Inc. Gifts, 2015 (2015.445)

This monumental headdress, the work of a Jukun sculptor active in central Nigeria's Benue River region, is a dramatic ancestral representation. It was carved out of a single tree trunk, from the massive crowning element, supported by a columnar neck, to the planks of the mask standing in for the body. The sculpture's imposing stature and its pared-down features serve to concentrate attention on the head, which is framed by flattened, disk-like ear spools: adornments favored by regional elites. The plane of the face tilts at an angle that tapers toward the straight edge of the mouth, while the boldly defined median ridge of the nose is flanked by raised circular eyes.

The headdress was designed to be an ambulatory sculpture, either worn on top of the head or possibly carried, using the side apertures, during nighttime performances. These kinetic visions, held seasonally in conjunction with the annual planting and harvesting of crops, were believed to guard the community's





well-being and bestow agricultural success. Access to them was highly circumscribed, and few researchers had the opportunity to witness them, preserving their enigmatic aura. [YB](#)

Cartier

French, founded Paris, 1847

Brooch

Emerald: India, Mughal, 17th century; setting: New York, ca. 1920.

Carved emerald and platinum set with emeralds and sapphires, W. 2½ in. (5.5 cm). Inscribed: on mount, *Cartier N.Y.* Gift of Her Highness Sheikha Amna bint Mohammed Al-Thani, 2015 (2015.54)

In 1911 Jacques Cartier, head of the London branch of the family firm, traveled to India to source gems and cultivate Indian clients. By the 1920s, socialites in Europe and the United States as well as men and women of the Indian nobility were sporting Mughal gems in settings fashioned by Cartier and other European jewelers. To this day, Cartier and other elite jewelers in Europe and India have continued to use Mughal gems as the centerpieces of their creations.

This large octagonal Mughal emerald is decorated with a carved lotus blossom rosette and four leafy stalks extending in the cardinal directions. The stone itself is thin, having been cut down, perhaps in the early twentieth century, when it was set in a platinum mount by Cartier. Although the stone originally may have been set in a *bazuband*, armor worn by men on the upper arm, Cartier repurposed it as a brooch, presumably for a woman. Along the edges of the octagon, square cabochon sapphires alternate with an emerald-set arch enclosing a trefoil of three round cabochon sapphires and terminating in emerald volutes, intersected on each side by two sapphires. The brooch may have been made for one of Cartier's American clients. [SRC](#)





H. N. White Company

American, 1893–1965

Tuba/Baritone (“Bellophone”)

Cleveland, ca. 1930. Brass and mother-of-pearl, L. 46½ in. (118 cm).

Gift of Drs. Eli and Carolyn Newberger, 2015 (2015.768.1a–f)

This singular instrument was made to the specifications of the distinguished performer and teacher William Bell, who set modern standards for tuba playing in America. Through this feat of brass instrument engineering and construction, Bell sought one instrument capable of playing the wide range called for in the tuba and low brass parts of orchestral and band repertoire. Typically, players would need to switch between bass tubas and tenor tubas or baritones built in a variety of keys and sizes to handle these parts. The “Bellophone” alleviated the need for a tuba player to have several instruments at hand during a performance. To achieve this, the instrument was built to function both as a tuba and as a baritone. It has two separate bells but a shared set of four Périnet valves. A separate rotary

valve directs air into either the baritone or tuba section of the instrument. Of the two mouthpiece receivers, one serves both instruments and leads to the rotary change valve; the other allows the tuba to be played independently. Two players can thus play the instrument simultaneously. Bell performed on this Bellophone in the Cincinnati Symphony, the Band of America, and the Goldman Band. [EBS-S](#)

Carlo Scarpa

Italian, Venice 1906–1978 Sendai, Japan

Collection of Venetian Glass Designed for Venini, 1932–47

Left to right: *Mezza Filigrana*, no. 3516 (1934), H. 16½ in. (42 cm);

Battuti, no. 3972 (ca. 1942), H. 9¾ in. (24.9 cm), Diam. 5 in. (12.7 cm);

A Cerchi, *A Fasce*, *A Spirale*, no. 3606 (ca. 1936), H. 11 in. (27.9 cm),

Diam. 10⅞ in. (26.4 cm); *A Bollicine*, no. 3596 (ca. 1934–36), H. 5 in.

(12.7 cm), Diam. 2⅞ in. (7.3 cm); *Incarniciati “cinesi,”* no. 3578 (ca. 1936),

H. 10⅞ in. (26.5 cm), Diam. 4½ in. (11.4 cm); *A Bollicine*, no. 11001

(ca. 1932–33), H. 13¼ in. (33.7 cm), Diam. 6½ in. (16.5 cm). Gift of

Marie-Rose Kahane and David Landau, 2014 (2014.208.1–.44)

In 2014 Dr. David Landau and Marie-Rose Kahane donated forty-four works in glass designed by Italian architect Carlo Scarpa for production at Venini glassworks, on the Venetian island of Murano. Murano glass has a history going back hundreds of years. Between 1932 and 1947 Scarpa worked closely with Paolo Venini and other master glassblowers to pioneer techniques, silhouettes, and colors that thoroughly modernized Murano’s ancient glass traditions. The gift is exceptional for its inclusion of a great many of the techniques and forms Scarpa created over the full course of his tenure at Venini. The vessels are named for the techniques employed in their making, emphasizing the fact that experimentation was crucial to producing such a dazzling array of visual and material effects. Among the donated works are twelve pieces of *mezza filigrana* (half-filigrée) glass, a technique used since the sixteenth century in which a series of clear glass rods is fused with a piece of *lattimo* (milky) or colored glass at the center. Because the glass is blown into the thinnest possible structures, the vessels weigh just a few ounces each. Two *battuti* (beaten) vases feature the cold-working technique of surface carving that Scarpa used in the early 1940s as a way to achieve a hammered-silver effect. In two examples of a *spirale* glass, alternating clear and opaque glass ribbons entwine to delineate complex geometries. Six other works illustrate the technique known as a *bollicine*, in which air bubbles are produced by injecting potassium nitrate, a salt compound that when heated frees carbon dioxide. Scarpa drew from East Asian art for his a *bollicine* glass, as in the jade green example shown here, and in his use of the *incarniciati* (sleeve) technique, employed for the “*cinesi*” form, inspired by Chinese porcelain. [CL](#)

Dora Maar

French, Paris 1907–1997 Paris

Boy with a Cat in His Arms Leaning against a Shop Window

1934. Gelatin silver print, 15½ × 11½ in. (39.4 × 29 cm). Purchase, Twentieth-Century Photography Fund and Kurtz Family Foundation Gift, 2015 (2015.40)

Dora Maar first turned to photography during her training as a painter at the Académie Julian and later studied alongside Henri Cartier-Bresson at the École de la Photographie de la Ville de Paris. Her early career was informed by the altered perspectives and dynamic geometries associated with Germany's Neue Sehen (New Vision) movement, but foremost by her friendships with Surrealist artists and writers, including Man Ray, Georges Bataille, and André Breton. After establishing her own photography studio in 1930, Maar published and exhibited with the Surrealists. She also produced advertisements and magazine work reflecting this group's interests in psychology, perception, and the *outré* through uncanny compositions and montage techniques.

From 1930 to 1934 Maar turned her camera to the inhabitants of the streets, blending documentary and Surrealist modes. Her photographs from this period often focus on socially marginal figures such as the poor or disabled, revealing her political engagement as a founding member of Contre-Attaque and Groupe Octobre, both left-wing organizations. In this striking image, an adolescent with rumpled hair protectively grasps a cat to his chest, his gaze challenging Maar's camera. The boy's expression and posture imbue this chance encounter—and the composition—with an arresting psychological dimension. **BS**



Irving Penn

American, Plainfield, New Jersey 1917–2009 New York

The Irving Penn Foundation Centennial Gift

1939–2006. 175 gelatin silver, platinum, platinum-palladium, dye-transfer, silver dye bleach, and chromogenic prints, dimensions variable. Promised Gift of The Irving Penn Foundation

A promised gift from The Irving Penn Foundation honoring the centennial of the artist's birth comprises 175 exquisitely produced photographs representing the full achievement of Penn's dynamic, seventy-year career with the camera: from fashion, still life, and portraiture to street scenes and war. The gift features the artist's finest surviving gelatin silver prints, platinum-palladium prints, and color prints (dye transfers, silver dye bleach prints, and chromogenic prints), all made and carefully

preserved by Penn himself. *After-Dinner Games* is a celebrated example of Penn's mastery of the still life. It appeared in *Vogue* in February 1949 alongside paintings by two other masters of the genre, William Michael Harnett (1848–1892) and Raphaëlle Peale (1774–1825). Using coffee and liquor, cards and dice, and a burned-out match, Penn conjures the traditional theme of the *vanitas* to compose a charming, late-night image of life and death: the games of chance we all play every day.

Beginning in 1959 and continuing for more than fifty years, The Met has built a superb collection of important photographs by Penn, from his color still lifes and black-and-white portraits to experimental nude studies. This extraordinarily generous gift more than doubles the Museum's holdings, now the world's largest public collection of Penn photographs. [JLR](#)



After-Dinner Games, New York, 1947



Fishmonger, London, 1950

Irving Penn

American, Plainfield, New Jersey 1917–2009 New York

Sixty-Four Portraits from the series *Small Trades*

1950–51. Platinum-palladium prints, each 19¾ × 14¾ in. (50 × 37.6 cm).

Purchase, The Lauder Foundation and The Irving Penn Foundation Gifts, 2014 (2014.268.1–.64)

Irving Penn was one of the most prolific, beloved, and influential artists of the twentieth century. Known as the premier fashion photographer for *Vogue* magazine, he worked for half a century with many of the era's most glamorous models, including his wife, Lisa Fonssagrives-Penn. He also made portraits (in his New York atelier and in remote locations, from Morocco to New Guinea), innovative nudes, and exquisite still lifes.

From 1950 to 1951 Penn produced his most extensive series of photographs: some three hundred studio portraits of workers

in Paris, London, and New York, all posed with the tools of their trades: a Parisian waiter standing at attention in his starched white apron; a London fishmonger palming the day's wet catch; a lanky New York arborist grasping his long-armed limb pruner. In 2014 The Met acquired sixty-four portraits from Penn's *Small Trades* series, an update of the nearly four-hundred-year-old tradition in art of representing the traditional trades (*petits métiers* or *cris*) of Paris. Painstakingly executed in platinum-palladium metals, they are a reminder of all that is great about the medium of photography. Collectively, they reveal how a master who knew what he wanted from a portrait could use a square-format camera, a simple cloth backdrop fashioned from an old theater curtain, and traditional photographic materials to celebrate and honor the daily lives of working men and women. [JLR](#)

Aaron Douglas

American, Topeka 1899–1979 Nashville

Let My People Go

Ca. 1935–39. Oil on Masonite, 48 × 36 in. (121.9 × 91.4 cm). Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift, 2015 (2015.42)

Aaron Douglas was the leading visual artist of the Harlem Renaissance, the great flowering of art, literature, and music throughout the 1920s and 1930s in New York's predominant African American neighborhood. Rendered in lavender and yellow-gold hues and flat, silhouetted forms, a style Douglas honed as a graphic artist and designer, *Let My People Go* depicts the Old Testament narrative in the Book of Exodus concerning God's order to Moses to lead the Israelites out of captivity in Egypt. Divine light, symbolizing God's command, radiates down and envelops the kneeling figure of Moses. Douglas derived the composition from a design he created in 1927 for *God's Trombones: Seven Negro Sermons in Verse*, an award-winning collaboration with writer, critic, diplomat, and social activist James Weldon Johnson (1871–1938). *Let My People Go* is one in a series of eight paintings, each based on a theme from Johnson's text. The story of Moses resonated deeply with African American communities, having been invoked by ministers, abolitionists, and politicians from the nineteenth century through the Civil Rights Movement as analogous to the struggle of enslaved Africans. Douglas, an avowed communist in the mid-1930s, interpreted this subject as an allegory of personal liberation and cultural enlightenment. RG



Alice Neel

American, Merion Square, Pennsylvania 1900–1984 New York

Dick Bagley

1946. Oil on canvas, 30 × 31½ in. (76.2 × 80 cm). Signed: on left armrest, *Neel*. Gift of Nina Baroness von Maltzahn, Betsy and Ed Cohen/Arete, A. Michael and Mercedes Hoffman, Michael and Beth Klein, Marjorie and Jeffrey A. Rosen, Familienstiftung Schultz-von Schacky (Berlin), Marlene and Dirk Ippen, Gahl Hodges Burt and Martin Indyk, Vedder family, Achim Moeller-Moeller Fine Art, 2014 (2014.456)



Alice Neel spent most of her career painting portraits of people close to her, from neighbors, friends, and lovers to other artists and art-world habitués. Richard Bagley (1920–1961) was a Greenwich Village documentary cinematographer who had made films in Korea during World War II; he later filmed in Israel during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. Neel met Bagley through her partner, the filmmaker Sam Brody, while the two men were working together on a project. In the portrait, Neel captured the sensitivity and melancholy of the then twenty-six-year-old Bagley, focusing on his eyes, with their dark shadows, his gaunt face, and the long bony fingers of his right hand. Two years after sitting for the portrait, Bagley came to prominence for his camera work on Sidney Meyers's film *The Quiet One* (1948) and, later, as the cinematographer of Lionel Rogosin's *On the Bowery* (1956). SR



Robert Frank

American, born Zurich, 1924

Santa Fe, New Mexico

1955. Gelatin silver print, 9 × 13 in. (22.9 × 33 cm). Gift of Eugene and Barbara Schwartz, 2014 (2014.745)

Robert Frank is justly celebrated for *The Americans* (1958–59), perhaps the most influential photography book published after World War II. With a lyrical introduction by Beat poet Jack Kerouac, the volume features eighty-three photographs made on several road trips across the United States in 1955 and 1956, funded by a fellowship from the Guggenheim Foundation. Frank explored the American scene from a European perspective, revealing the many anxieties lurking beneath the country's seeming prosperity. He focused his camera on racial segregation, on the developing hostility between youth culture and the status quo, on rural loneliness and urban angst, and on the pleasures and terrors of American car culture, as seen in this study of an empty roadside gas station bordering the desert. Kerouac wrote that Frank had "sucked a sad poem right out of America onto film, taking rank among the tragic poets of the world." JLR

Malick Sidibé

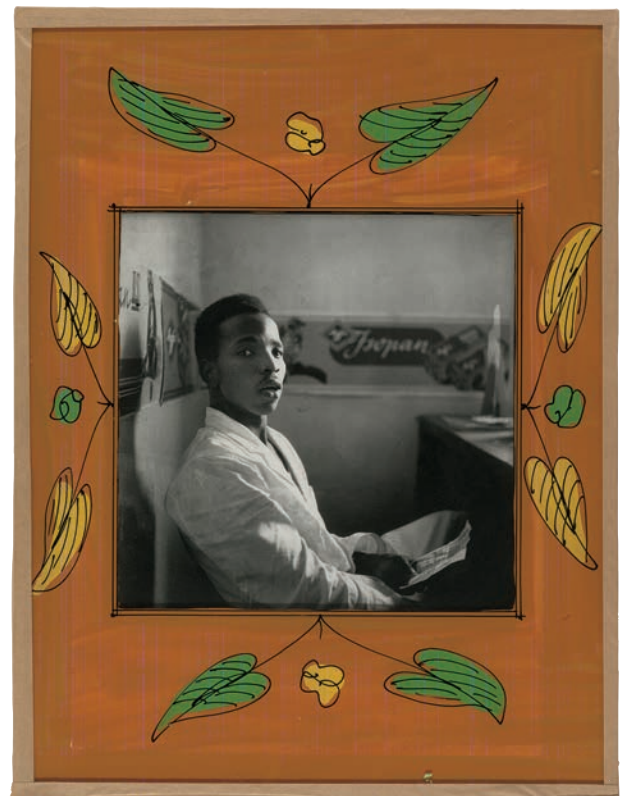
Malian, Soloba 1936–2016 Bamako

Self-Portrait

1956. Gelatin silver print, glass, paint, cardboard, tape, and string, 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (20 × 20 cm); frame, 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ × $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (40 × 30.7 × 1 cm). Gift of Jack Shainman and Claude Simard, 2014 (2014.638)

In 1962, two years after Mali gained independence from France, Malick Sidibé opened a commercial photography studio in Bamako, the nation's capital. Over the ensuing decades he made thousands of portraits of young Africans during a period of exuberant social and cultural change. On weekends he would

ride his bicycle to dance parties, weddings, and sports events, returning to the studio to develop and print hundreds of photographs of Bamako's burgeoning youth culture. "For me, photography is all about youth," Sidibé told the *Daily Telegraph* of London in 2008. "It's about a happy world full of joy, not some kid crying on a street corner or a sick person." This dynamic self-portrait was made shortly after he bought his first camera. Turning his head, the artist seems caught unaware, responding to an unseen interlocutor. The hand-painted glass frame, selected by Sidibé, was made by an artisan in Bamako. MF



Roy Lichtenstein

American, New York 1923–1997 New York

Landscape with Philosopher

1996. Oil and magna on canvas, 104¼ × 48 in. (264.8 × 121.9 cm).

Gift of Leonard A. Lauder, in memory of Evelyn H. Lauder, 2015
(2015.231)



This painting comes from one of Lichtenstein's last series, known collectively as *Landscapes in the Chinese Style*. Drawn to Chinese art from his days as a serviceman in World War II, Lichtenstein reengaged with landscape as a genre after seeing the exhibition “Degas Landscapes” at The Met in 1994. He found the tonality and atmospheric quality of Degas's monotypes especially reminiscent of Chinese landscape paintings, in particular those of the Song dynasty (960–1279), whose visual elements and compositional principles resonated with his own artistic approach.

Although Lichtenstein had made landscapes at different stages of his career, in *Landscape with Philosopher* he departed from the typical Western horizontal format and instead adopted that of the Chinese vertical hanging scroll. Using graduated dots, he masterfully evoked atmospheric effects through which forms—from the overlapping mountains in the distance to the gnarled shrubbery in the foreground—emerge and dissolve. The only element that anchors our gaze and provides scale is the diminutive figure in the lower-right corner, thus suggesting the contrast between the grandeur of nature and the relative insignificance of figure that is often found in Chinese painting. Yet Lichtenstein also radically departed from the Chinese approach, especially the spontaneity prized in Chinese brushwork, by meticulously planning his composition and through his use of “mechanized” stenciled dots. This technique, which is consistent with the artist's deliberate distancing from painterly virtuosity in his other works, is also in keeping with Lichtenstein's ironic critiques of the popular. He evokes the idea of a Chinese landscape, for example, by referencing its stereotypical orientalist imaginings and by collapsing visual elements such as the conical cap, which is meant to be read as a rice picker's hat but appears here on the head of the titular philosopher. [SW](#)

James D'Aquisto

American, New York 1935–1995 Corona, California

Archtop Guitar

Huntington, New York, 1983. Maple, macassar ebony, iron, and brass, L. 40 in. (101.6 cm). Purchase, Gary Larson and Peter Watrous Gifts, 2014 (2014.274a, b)

James D'Aquisto built this guitar in 1983 for the legendary jazz musician Jim Hall (1930–2013). Although D'Aquisto is best known for his carved archtop guitars, this instrument has a two-ply laminated maple top and a DeArmond/Guild humbucker pickup so that Hall could play it with electric amplification. Hall was admired for his warm, mellow tone, and this guitar was his main instrument for two decades, used in countless recordings and live appearances and seen with him on album covers and in publicity stills. The luthier Roger Sadowsky built Hall a copy of this guitar in 2003 and later introduced a commercial model based upon it. [JKD](#)



Ernesto Neto

Brazilian, born Rio de Janeiro, 1964

Lipzoid Spice Garden

2000. Polyamide stocking and spices, dimensions variable.

Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift, 2016 (2016.48)

Ernesto Neto is a key figure in contemporary Brazilian art. His work, which is rooted in the legacies of Minimalism and the Brazilian Neo-Concrete movement, aims to activate the viewer's mind and body through an experience of sculpture in space. *Lipzoid Spice Garden* is a floor installation that comprises three hundred small sacks of spice powder. Made of standard polyamide stockings, the sacks are filled with one of three spices: turmeric, cumin, or cloves. The overall footprint of the installation (which measures approximately 37 feet 8 inches long and 10 feet 6 inches wide) is in the shape of a snake, an organic form

whose tripartite color structure reflects that of the individual spices: dark brown (cloves), khaki (cumin), and deep orange-yellow (turmeric).

The Lipzoids were first introduced by Neto in 1996 following a period of experimentation with notions of weight and gravity in sculpture. Filled with materials such as pigments or spices, polyamide stockings create varied shapes when dropped on the floor. The different ways the fillings spread and penetrate the weave of the stockings highlight the permeability of the skin, which in Neto's work serves as a symbol of the human body. The Lipzoids can be presented individually or in groups, as seen here, where they form indoor "gardens" reminiscent of prehistoric natural landscapes. As the colors, textures, and scents of the fillings activate the surrounding space, they immerse the viewer in a field of sensory experience. [IC](#)

THE HAROLD KODA GIFT

Philip Treacy

British, born Ireland, 1967

Hat

Spring 2000 couture. Multicolored silk, synthetic organza, synthetic stretch jersey, sinamay straw, and parabuntal straw, H. 18½ in.

(47 cm), W. 18¾ in. (46.4 cm). Gift of Philip Treacy and Isabella Blow, in honor of Harold Koda, 2016 (2016.182)

Iris van Herpen

Dutch, born 1984

Dress

Fall 2012 couture. PVC, cotton, and silk, L. at center back 41½ in. (105.4 cm). Gift of Iris van Herpen, in honor of Harold Koda, 2016

(2016.185)

Raf Simons

Belgian, born 1968

For House of Dior

French, founded 1947

Ensemble

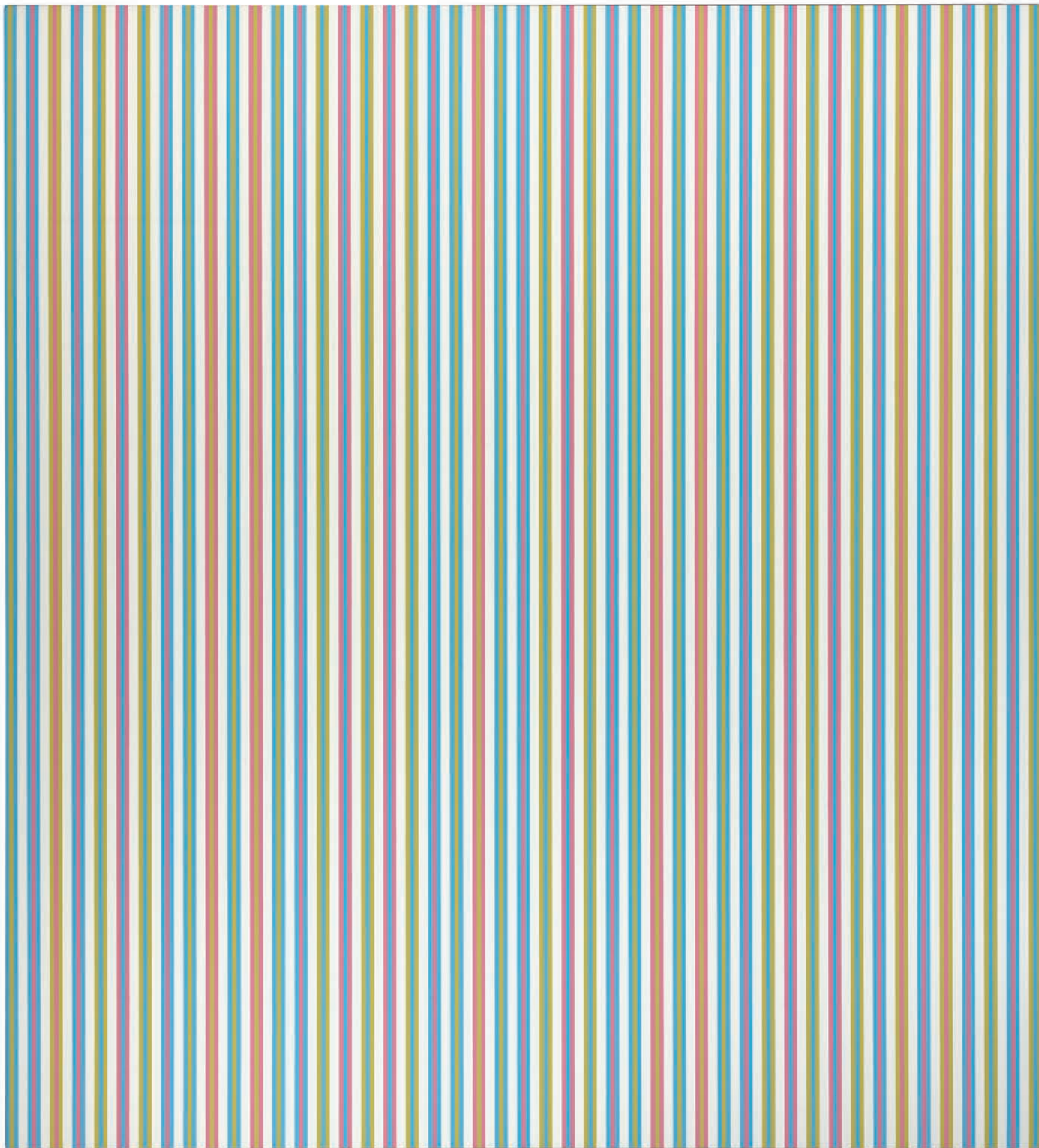
Fall 2014 haute couture. Silk, wool, cotton, leather, and metal,

L. at center back 40½ in. (102.9 cm). Gift of Christian Dior Couture, in honor of Harold Koda, 2016 (2016.256a–h)



In January 2016 Harold Koda retired after fifteen years as Curator in Charge of The Costume Institute. During his tenure Harold elevated fashion as a legitimate and meaningful form of artistic expression by organizing intellectually challenging and conceptually provocative exhibitions. If you were to ask Harold how he wanted to be remembered, however, he would respond without hesitation “the collection,” which he helped expand exponentially through a number of significant acquisitions, perhaps most notably the transfer of the Brooklyn Museum Costume Collection in 2009. Upon Harold’s retirement, and with this thought foremost in our minds, Met Trustee Anna Wintour and I approached more than thirty designers to donate works from their archives in honor of Harold’s unrivaled contributions to the study, exhibition, and appreciation of fashion. Seen here are three examples from those gifts, all of which Harold had long coveted for the permanent collection: a hat by Philip Treacy featured in the exhibition “AngloMania: Tradition and Transgression in British Fashion” (2006); a dress by Iris van Herpen, which in terms of its construction reminded Harold of a 1930s dress by Jeanne Lanvin in our collection (1986.377.1a–c); and an ensemble by Raf Simons for Christian Dior, admired by Harold for its references to the history of menswear as well as to the venerable history of the House of Dior. [AB](#)





Bridget Riley

British, born London, 1931

Elysium

1973/2003. Acrylic on canvas, 102¾ × 92⅞ in. (261 × 236 cm).

Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift, 2016 (2016.117)

In 1965 the Museum of Modern Art included Bridget Riley's painting *Current* (1964) in its blockbuster exhibition "The Illusive Eye," turning the young British artist into a figurehead of the international Op Art movement. A descendant of both geometric abstraction and the kinetic art of the 1950s, Op uses simple forms (such as circles, squares, or lines) to cover surfaces in patterns that create the perceptual illusion of movement. In her

earliest important works, Riley restricted herself to a palette of black, white, and gray, using the extreme contrast between light and dark to create paintings, such as *Current*, that seem to vibrate with energy. But in 1967—one year before winning the International Prize for painting at the Venice Biennale—Riley introduced color into her work, reflecting her interest in the color effects achieved by a variety of painters, from Titian to Seurat. Like these artists, Riley arrived at her color combinations not through mathematical calculation but rigorous experimentation, creating maquettes of color patterns to be translated into paintings by her and her assistants. The maquettes for *Elysium*, which the artist made in 1973 and recently donated to The Met to accompany the painting, reveal her sensitive exploration of the optical interplay between pastel shades of red, blue, and green alternating with white. In the realized work, the surface of the canvas is covered with vertical stripes of these colors in an irregular pattern that suggests a roiling but controlled movement. The stripes align exactly with the painting's exposed white edges, visually isolating the surface as a floating optical field. It is a modern evocation of the paradise described by the title: an abstract variant of the pastoral. [SW](#)

Paul Graham

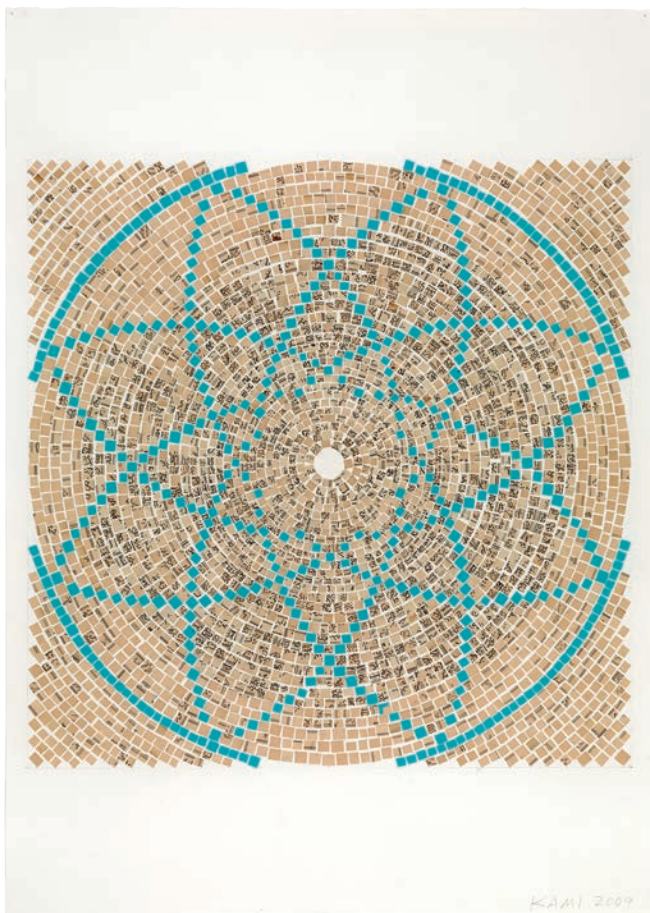
British, born Stafford, 1956

[Senami, Christchurch, New Zealand](#)

2011. Chromogenic print, 44¼ × 59 in. (112.4 × 149.9 cm). Purchase, Vital Projects Fund Inc. Gift, through Joyce and Robert Menschel and Hideyuki Osawa Gift, 2015 (2015.276)

For his 2014 exhibition “Does Yellow Run Forever?” Paul Graham created groupings out of three contemporaneous series of photographs that he was working on: one of rainbows in the Irish countryside, which he hung high on the wall; large exteriors of Harlem pawnshops, installed at foot level; and tender renderings of his partner asleep in various rooms, made during a trip to New Zealand. This photograph was acquired by The Met along with its two companions from the other series, but each can also be shown individually. The theme linking them—the rainbow, with its mythic pot of gold, juxtaposed with the glistening objects in the Harlem window display, flanking a sleeping figure—may seem obvious, even pat, but Graham's photographs transmute those clichés into constellations of deep feeling. Indeed, what he evokes is the silent inner questioning that hums beneath our consciousness: the quest for something permanent amid the illusory and devalued. [DSE](#)





Y. Z. Kami

Iranian-American, born Tehran, 1956

Endless Prayers XXVIII

2009. Cut-and-pasted papers with traces of graphite on paper, H. (framed) 45 in. (114.3 cm). Purchase, 2012 NoRuz at The Met Benefit, 2014 (2014.62)

This mixed-media collage, from a series of the same title, comprises numerous square and rectangular strips of rice paper glued into a mesmerizing concentric composition. The Persian inscriptions that appear on these strips are scanned and printed excerpts from prayer books and verses by Jalal al-Din Rumi, the thirteenth-century poet and Sufi mystic. The circular effect, at once architectural and meditative, alludes to the motion and repetitive rhythm of the Sufi celestial dance, or *sama'*. The pattern also echoes the rich variety of elaborate brickwork found in the punctured domes of medieval Persian tomb towers and brick structures, such as the Great Mosque of Isfahan. The inclusion of turquoise blue possibly refers to the glazed tilework frequently seen in Iranian architecture.

In this composition, Y. Z. Kami, who was born in Iran but is now based in New York, uses the language of Minimalism to convey an aura of meditation and tranquillity associated with prayer. Kami views these patterns as metaphors for heaven and as mandalas, or diagrams of the universe, that are as ancient as humanity. [ME](#)





Sarah Burton

British, born 1974

For Alexander McQueen

British, founded 1992

Ensemble

Spring/summer 2011. Silk, feathers, leather, and metal, L. at center back 36½ in. (92.7 cm). Purchase, Friends of The Costume Institute Gifts, 2015 (2015.69a–c)

After fourteen years assisting Alexander McQueen, Sarah Burton was promoted to creative director in 2010 following the tragic death of the house namesake. Burton's premier collection, exploring themes of paganism, nature, and English folklore, proved her ability to perpetuate the legacy of craftsmanship and creativity that has defined the house of Alexander McQueen since its founding. Relying on minimal seaming and an embellished carapace of artificial butterflies, this hourglass-shaped dress is free of any boning or internal support, adding an appropriate lightness to its silhouette. The hundreds of trompe l'oeil wings that veneer the textile ground are composed of meticulously cut, dyed, and painted feathers that have been applied by hand to emulate the distinctive patterning of the monarch butterfly, an insect whose colorful wings have proved to be an enduring muse throughout the history of art and fashion. Perhaps no visual metaphor could be more apt for Burton to deploy in her debut, as it is also a perennial motif of the house. Conjointly, the butterfly evokes a deeply rooted symbolism—particularly so in response to the extraordinary life and work of Alexander McQueen—that promises transformative renewal while remaining gloriously haunted by the ephemerality of nature. **MJH**

Tacita Dean

British, born Canterbury, 1965

JG

2013. Anamorphic 35mm film, black and white and color, sound; 26 minutes, 30 seconds. Jointly owned by The Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Purchased for The Metropolitan Museum of Art with Gift of The A. L. Levine Family Foundation, by exchange, and The Raymond and Beverly Sackler 21st Century Art Fund. Purchased for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art with funds provided by Steve Tisch, 2015 (2015.129)

Tacita Dean was formally trained as a painter, but she soon gravitated to film, which she admired for its narrative qualities and ability to register the passage of time. *JG* has its origins in the artist's unsuccessful attempt almost twenty years ago to locate Robert Smithson's landmark *Spiral Jetty* (1970) on a far-flung shore of Utah's Great Salt Lake. British novelist J. G. Ballard, reading about the related soundwork Dean made based on her search (*Trying to Find the Spiral Jetty*, 1997), began a correspondence with the artist. In a letter, he described Smithson's masterwork as a giant, radial clock, writing: "In their way, all clocks are labyrinths, and can be risky to enter." Dean herself was intrigued to discover that Smithson's library included Ballard's 1960 short story "Voices of Time," whose protagonist, a scientist, attempts to construct a large mandala in the salt flats outside the desert compound in which he works—a maze into which he eventually disappears. Aware of the interrelationships between Smithson's work and Ballard's story, Dean began to conceive of an intricate project that would elaborate these fragile links.

JG makes use of a pioneering and time-consuming collage-type technique in which areas of the film negative are masked out with hand stenciling. The film is then exposed multiple times as areas on the negative are covered and uncovered, allowing Dean to capture different spaces and times simultaneously, much as Ballard did in his writings and Smithson in his earthworks. **IA**

Kerry James Marshall

American, born Birmingham, Alabama, 1955

Untitled (Studio)

2014. Acrylic on PVC panel, 83¼ × 119¼ in. (211.6 × 302.9 cm).

Purchase, The Jacques and Natasha Gelman Foundation Gift, Acquisitions Fund and The Metropolitan Museum of Art Multicultural Audience Development Initiative Gift, 2015 (2015.366)

Kerry James Marshall's practice of revering and revising the old masters to depict the lives and history of African Americans—subjects that rarely figure in the works of art lining the walls of the world's great museums—began at an early age. As a seventh-grader in South Central Los Angeles, in the late 1960s, Marshall won a scholarship to attend a summer drawing course at the Otis Art Institute. His instructor took the class to the studio of WPA-era muralist Charles White (1918–1979), the young artist's idol. Marshall recalls being mesmerized by White's atelier, which was full of art materials and unfinished works, and credits that visit as the moment when he first imagined himself becoming an artist.

Untitled (Studio) is in part about that discovery of a black artist's workshop: a distinguished place of labor where an

allegorical catalogue of the many modes of artmaking is on display. As in Gustave Courbet's *The Artist's Studio* (1854–55, Musée d'Orsay, Paris), all the symbols and genres are present—a nude, a landscape, a portrait, a *vanitas*, and so on—and each one speaks to an aspect of the craft. Undoubtedly a masterwork of Marshall's thirty-five-year career, *Untitled (Studio)* is a majestic ode not only to the artist's occupation but also to the history and continued possibilities of painting. [IA](#)

Mark Bradford

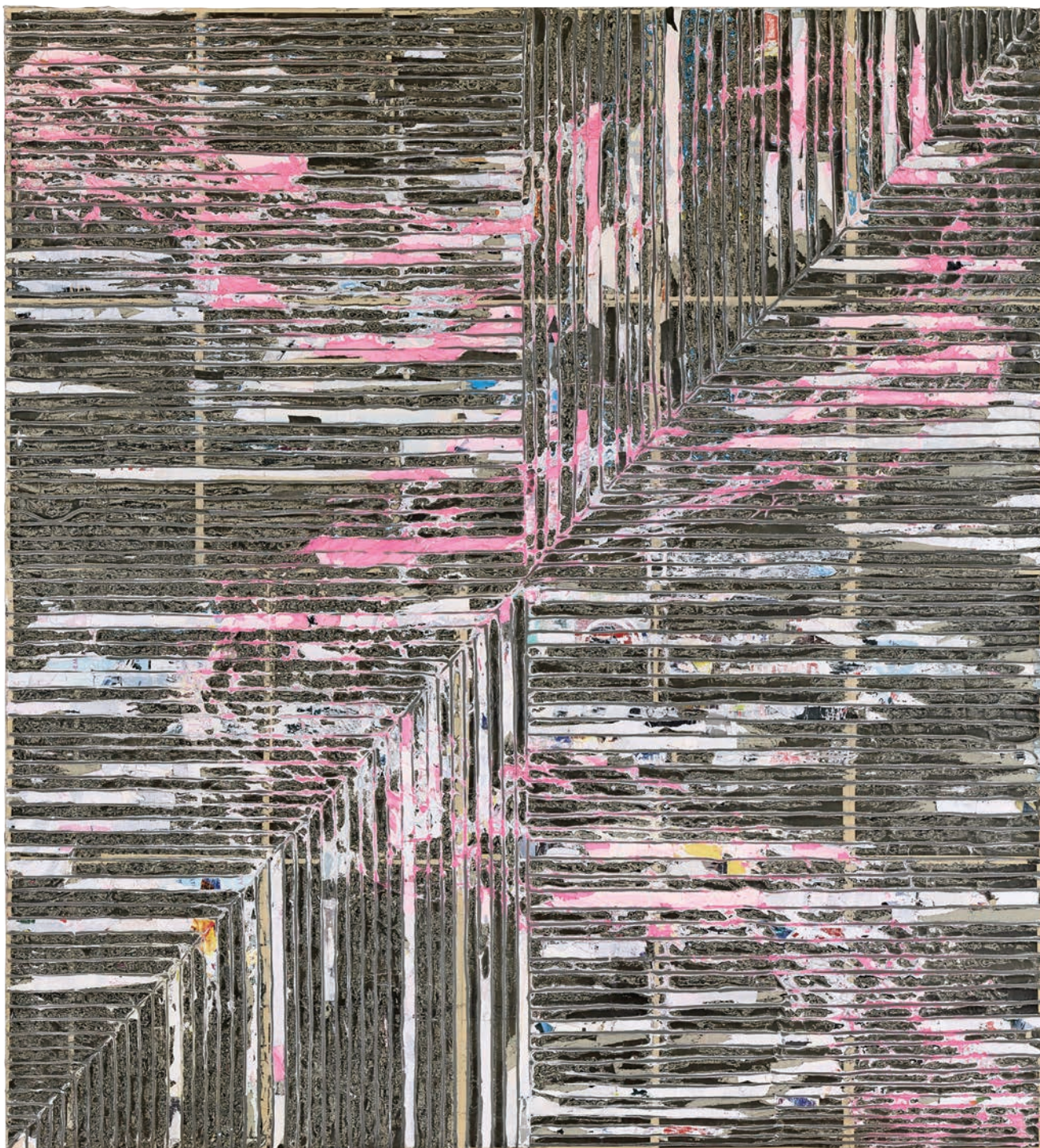
American, born Los Angeles, 1961

Crack between the Floorboards

2014. Printed and painted paper, masking tape, and acrylic media on canvas, 132 × 120¼ in. (335.3 × 304.8 cm). Purchase, Aleksandar Pesko Gift, 2016 (2016.236)

Mark Bradford finds the materials for his collages among the endless supply of advertising placards and flyers littering the neighborhood of Leimert Park, Los Angeles, where he lives and works. He layers these posters—which promote everything from payday loans and hair extensions to legal advice for immigrants—

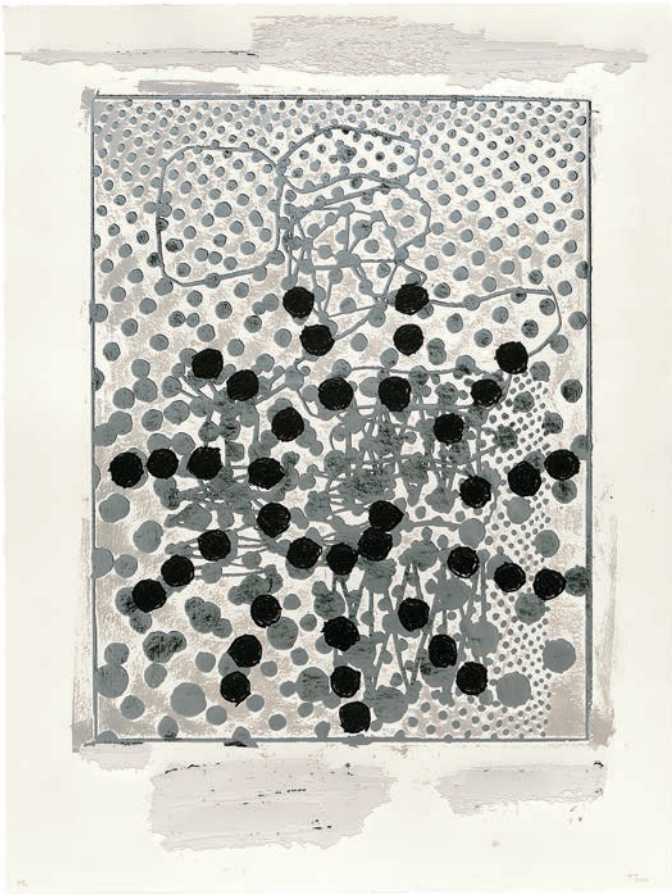




on the surface of his canvases and adds dimension to them with polyester string. He then gradually sands the layers away, uncovering swaths of bright, previously obscured color. The resulting fields are a kaleidoscopic, heavily textured mixture of abstraction, representation, and fragmentary text.

Crack between the Floorboards was inspired by one of the artist's favorite paintings, Gustave Caillebotte's *The Floor Planers* (1875, Musée d'Orsay, Paris). In Caillebotte's picture, three shirtless workers labor to refinish an apartment's wood floorboards, whose glossy sheen alternates with stripes of

smooth, paler wood where the varnish has already been stripped. Their task closely echoes Bradford's own creative process, but that is only part of the inspiration he derived from the painting. Caillebotte also plays with flatness and surface—his orthogonally forced perspective tilts the picture plane up toward the viewer—while taking a politicized (and arguably erotic) look at the body of the working-class laborer inside a bourgeois home. Bradford's careful layering of media constructs an equally evocative surface that speaks to the intertwined legacy of abstraction and figuration. [IA](#)



Terry Winters

American, born Brooklyn, New York, 1949

Atmospheres

2014. Suite of twelve screenprints on Lanaquarelle paper; each sheet, 58½ × 44 in. (148.6 × 111.8 cm). John B. Turner Fund, 2016 (2016.131.1–12)

Reflecting the artist's interest in natural history, technology, and architectural forms, the prints in the *Atmospheres* suite reveal a remarkable complexity and structural rhythm. Winters restricted his palette to an opaque black, two different whites, and multiple tones of gray, allowing the viewer to concentrate on each work's facture and intricate structure as well as the multiple links connecting the twelve prints. Winters describes these powerful works—the largest prints he has made to date and among the most complex—as “lifesize” since they correspond to the scale and vertical orientation of the body. The suite's title derives from a 1961 work by Hungarian composer György Ligeti, best known for his dense, “micropolyphonic” compositions that reject melodic and rhythmic conventions by absorbing individual, distinctive elements into composite structures. Winters evokes visually what Ligeti described as a “densely woven cobweb” of sound by using diverse marks and

multiple networks of cell-like structures. To add to the impenetrability of the images, Winters layered impressions from numerous screens (some printed up to thirty-eight times for a single print) and employed a viscous ink normally reserved for printing Braille type, creating a sense of materiality and texture unusual in screenprints. [JF](#)

John Galliano

British, born Gibraltar, 1960

For Maison Margiela

French, founded 1988

Ensemble

Spring 2015 Artisanal. Silk, cotton, synthetic, leather, and metal, L. at center back 79½ in. (201.9 cm). Purchase, Friends of The Costume Institute Gifts, 2015 (2015.540a–g)

John Galliano accepted the role of creative director at Maison Margiela in 2014, five years after the retirement of founding designer Martin Margiela. This A-line coat from Galliano's debut Artisanal, or haute couture, collection is made of hand-sewn buckram appliquéd with black cotton lace and coated with black acrylic resin. It is finished with antique cotton calico cuffs, clear plastic patch pockets with deep three-pointed flaps, a bustle of brown shredded silk tulle and lace, black lacquered conch shells, and strings of chandelier crystals. Accessorized by nude, padded stockings worn through at the knees, the ensemble—inspired by a threadbare doll that is losing her stuffing—represents Galliano's and Margiela's shared interests in the aesthetics and techniques of deconstruction and bricolage. Galliano's method of layering new and repurposed fabric and objects foregrounds the garment's construction, a process he describes as “ripped to reveal.” His skillful use of materials and conflation of references—from the eighteenth-century pocket flaps and sleeve ruffles to the late nineteenth-century bustle—signify the enduring importance of narrative and historicism in his work and recall his earliest designs of the 1980s and years of ingenuity as creative director at Christian Dior. [AG](#)

Viktor & Rolf

Dutch, founded 1993

Dress

Fall 2015 couture. Synthetic, cotton, and wood, L. 45½ in. (115.6 cm). Purchase, Friends of The Costume Institute Gifts, 2015 (2015.632)

Is fashion art, or is art fashion? That was the question ostensibly posed by the audacious Dutch designers Viktor Horsting and Rolf Snoeren (Viktor & Rolf) in their autumn/winter 2015–16 haute couture collection. Staged as a piece of performance art in the context of a museum-cum-runway, it comprised a series of progressively more “painterly” gold-framed “canvas-dresses”



appliquéd with digitally printed, fragmented images of Dutch Golden Age paintings from the Rijksmuseum. This piece depicts Johannes van Haensbergen's *Portrait of a Woman* (1670–1700).

Since their debut collection, in 1993, Viktor & Rolf have tirelessly pursued their ambition to reconcile the sibling rivalries seemingly intrinsic to art and fashion. Despite the fact that the latter is still tainted with commerce and ephemerality (a bias that can be equally applied to art), the designers operate on the



premise that art and fashion share similar if not identical impulses. In this context, the question advanced by Viktor & Rolf in their autumn/winter 2015–16 haute couture collection is not as facile as it might first appear. Rather, it points to their continued determination to emphasize consonance between art and fashion and to promote an art (singular) without obsolete hierarchies and pejorative classifications—one that is defined instead by candor, criticality, and contemporaneity. [AB](#)

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