



Creating Global Understanding

World Languages and Cultures
and University Museums



Ibis, 800 BCE, Egyptian. Wood, bronze, gesso, and remains of gilding. Gift of Ann and Henry Brunnier. In the Ann and Henry Brunnier Collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. 5.1.2ab

Front Cover: *Dolores, a Warrior for All Living Beings*, 2018 by Favianna Rodríguez (American, b. 1978). Digital print.
Gift of Women in French. Women in French is a scholarly association established in 1978 and whose goal is the promotion of the study of French and Francophone women authors, artists, filmmakers, and intellectuals. In the Art on Campus Collection, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. U2019.230

“As makers humans have consistently created for beauty, need, or experiment and while each culture adds their own unique vision to what is made, they are all creating. Seeing and understanding those connections allows us to grow and become conscious of those outside of our own cultures.” -Adrienne Gennett, curator

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Introduction

by Adrienne Gennett, Associate Curator, University Museums

Many of the most significant and impactful exhibitions at University Museums are those that directly interact with the faculty and students of Iowa State University. *Creating Global Understanding: World Languages and Cultures and University Museums* is a wonderful example of how University Museums strives to work closely with faculty to utilize the permanent collection as a way to enhance the education and experiences of students on this campus.

The World Languages and Cultures department consists of eight language sections (American Sign Language, Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish), Anthropology, the American Indian Studies program, Classical Studies, International Studies, the U.S. Latino/a Studies program, and World Film Studies. The diversity of cultures not only studied, but represented within the faculty, lent itself perfectly to an exhibition that explored the diversity within University Museums' permanent collection. Participating faculty members wrote interpretative labels for their chosen work of art. Each label exhibits the great variation that exists when interpreting art, they are personal and subjective, but stem from each individual's interests, areas of study, or particular life experiences. Some focus on the imagery, some on the form and color, others on the history, and a few explore the personal connections the faculty member found with the work of art. All bring further insight and understanding to the specific artwork, but also help to highlight the many connections that can be found amongst all of the art that is part of the exhibition. Art and the creation of art transcends cultural barriers, it is universal to all cultures, both historical and contemporary, and continues to change as culture itself evolves.

The importance for University Museums of using the permanent collection to teach visual literacy cannot be overstated and that mission can only be facilitated by having meaningful connections with faculty from all over campus and the various colleges. Visual literacy allows students to decipher what they see into tangible thoughts and expressions, allowing for greater critical thinking skills in the long term. The different majors or courses of studies all benefit from a student's ability to better articulate what they see, rather than just what they have been told. The hope for an exhibition such as *Creating Global Understanding* is to be a starting point where faculty have given their interpretations, but now students can also add their own ideas to the conversation.

Finally, the art on exhibition also displays the many connections that flow through diverse cultures. As makers humans have consistently created for beauty, need, or experiment and while each culture adds their own unique vision to what is made, they are all creating. Seeing and understanding those connections allows us to grow and become conscious of those outside of our own cultures. To understand that while we are all very different, there are aspects of our world that are remarkably similar. Many of the students on the Iowa State campus, not just within the World Languages and Cultures department, will travel nationally and internationally during their time in college. This exhibition aims to help students to start the process of becoming global citizens, traveling the world with eyes open to constantly learn from other cultures and other makers while also connecting their own cultural identities to those that they encounter.



Detail of *Plaque of Apollo and the Nine Muses*, possibly early 19th century, by Wedgwood (Staffordshire, England, founded 1759–present). Jasperware. Gift of Ann and Henry Brunnier. In the permanent collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. 2.8.134

“Countless writers, playwrights, poets, sculptors, architects, and other artists from the Medieval period through today have found inspiration in the works of art produced before their own times. Part of being a global citizen today means knowing the past and reflecting on its impact on today. We learn about the values of different cultures and grapple with how that knowledge brings clarity to the future.”

-Dr. Rachel Meyers, Assistant Professor of Classical Studies



Le Pardon, 1914 by Gaston Woedstad (Belgian, 1886–1950) and Mauritus Langaskens (Belgian, 1884–1946), Wool. Gift of Ann and Henry Brunnier. In the Ann and Henry Brunnier Collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. 10.7.1

American Indian Studies

June 2019



***America in the Making: Lewis and Clark*, 1938**

Newell Convers Wyeth (American, 1882–1945)

Oil on hardboard

Gift of John Morrell and Company, Ottumwa, Iowa. In the permanent collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. UM83.16

These two works of art interest me because they are in perfect dialogue with each other.

N.C. Wyeth's painting is typical of the "inclusion" of Native people into an American history that was designed to exclude them. Sacajawea is showing the way to Lewis and Clark and is thus opening the country for them, giving it to the Americans, as is the role of "good Indians" in American history. In the series containing this particular painting—made for a popular calendar—Wyeth represented the twelve most important moments of American history. The symbolic character here is unmistakable (and it is that symbolic aspect expressed here that has made Sacajawea one of the few American Indians still remembered and taught in American history). What we witness is the voluntary transfer of the West from Native peoples to the United States. None of what we see is historically accurate, although Wyeth's realistic style imprints the image in our minds as if it were.

Sacajawea did not talk with Lewis and Clark. She talked with Charbonneau, her husband, who spoke in French to one of the expedition's men, who translated to English for Lewis and Clark. Sacajawea did not wear a beaded dress while walking through the mountains. Lewis and Clark did not wear fur trapper or cowboy dress. Sacajawea did not literally show them the way, and she had no power to open Native lands to the Americans. In fact, she had no power. She was a young woman, probably a former captive, married to a French fur trader and had just given birth to another child while being taken on an arduous journey without having been asked. But none of these historical inaccuracies matter, because they all need to be true for the overarching narrative of "American history." This is a realistic painting depicting a myth, so overpowering in its aesthetic power of conviction that the scene depicted is taken at face value, as a historically accurate depiction, by most of its audience.

Looking at the painting is to look at the inner workings of Manifest Destiny as it has been defined and is still defining how Americans see their country's history and its place in the world. Good Indians realized that the future would not include them and gave their land to the Americans who accepted it on the behalf of a brighter future and in the name of humanity

as such. All of this only works because and as Native peoples are excluded from history and historical agency, and thus from the present, except as stereotypical symbols fulfilling their assigned roles.

Quick-to-See Smith's painting is an effort to bring Native people and their experiences back into this history and into the present, as real people. The background of the painting is a perfectly modernist work of art, but it is overlaid by traditional Native art forms, influenced by ledger art, winter counts, and other traditions. The work of art refers to the Ghost Dance, a syncretic religion that spread throughout indigenous North America in the late 1880s. Far from simply being a historic phenomenon as many people think, killed off with the massacre at Wounded Knee, however, these religious beliefs and practices are still alive in some Native communities.

The Ghost Dance (really there were and are many different iterations of this spiritual belief, but Native diversity is often compounded into singularity) was in the late 1880s centered around the practice of dancing in order to gain visions of a future that saw the reunification with dead ancestors and relatives along with the restoration of traditional livelihoods and peoplehoods. The situation on many reservations at the time was desperate, with people dying of starvation and exposure. Heavily influenced by Christian ideas of the Messiah and the Last Judgment, the Ghost Dance religion was an attempt to rectify the situation. As a symbol, the Ghost Dance for many Americans is an expression of the foolishness of Native people, believing that their version of the world held any value against American "progress". For Native people, it is a symbol of American oppression and real genocide.

By bringing modernity and tradition together, Quick-to-See Smith gives her viewer an opportunity to think through some very important questions. This painting, however, is also a statement of fact: Native peoples are modern and contemporary, and that does not require that one forget one's history or traditions—it might even require that one keeps them in mind. Here we have a rejection of a common mythical American history that excludes Native peoples. The audience is asked questions, rather than being presented with answers. How would and does the United States react to a movement like the Ghost Dance today? What does it mean to be modern? Are we allowing indigenous people to be modern? What was the role of Native peoples in American history, and what was the role of American people in Native histories?

Both paintings present the audience with versions of history. One, on the background of a readily readable grandiose American landscape that builds upon and reinforces a nationalistic narrative of manifestly destined progress, the perhaps unfortunate but nevertheless necessary and unavoidable changing of the guard that made "America". The other, on the background of a modernistic, abstract landscape, to be interpreted and imagined by the individual viewer, presents questions of historical narratives and of the meanings of the pieces that together make America. The two paintings stand together in a dialogue. I would suggest that this dialogue is initiated and carried by the second painting, but the ultimate question here might be if the first painting wants to allow any real dialogue to happen.

Dr. Sebastian Braun
Director, American Indian Studies Program
Associate Professor of Anthropology



Ghost Dancer, From the Ghost Dancer Series, 1981

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith (American, b. 1940)

Pastel on paper

Gift of the artist, in honor of Helen Schuster and John Weinkein, faculty members at Iowa State University. In the permanent collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. UM82.8



Pot, 1930s

Maria Montoya Poveka Martinez (San Ildefonso Pueblo, New Mexico, 1887–1980) and Julian Martinez (San Ildefonso Pueblo, New Mexico, 1879–1943)

Blackware pottery

Gift of Margaret Griffin Groll. In the permanent collection, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. UM82.27

Maria Martinez was born in the Rio Grande Valley's San Ildefonso Pueblo, New Mexico in 1887 and died there in 1980. She is perhaps the most famous female Native American artist of the 20th century, a true matriarch of her Pueblo, and is a well-known ceramicist celebrated for her blackware pottery.

Martinez was taught at a very young age how to throw pots by her aunt, Tia Nicolasa, and continued to produce pottery until 1970. Revitalizing Pueblo pottery traditions, Martinez's creative process and artistic development was directly influenced by the shapes, patterns, and colors found in historic pottery of the San Ildefonso Pueblo. The San Ildefonso Pueblo was established c. 1300 in the region north of modern day Santa Fe and the several hundred residence are Tewa-speaking.

Martinez's blackware pottery style was created around 1908 after her husband, Julian Martinez, brought home some shards of ancient blackware pottery found among the ruins of Pajarito Plateau and excavated by the School of American Research, where he was employed. Also influential in the access Martinez had to historic pottery was New Mexico archaeologist Dr. Edgar Hewett, then director of the Laboratory of Anthropology, Santa Fe, who was studying the blackware pot shards of the 17th century. Maria tried to revive the ancient technique of making blackware for many years however her blackware pots ended up being denser and thicker walled, never reaching the thinness produced by the ancient Pueblo people.

Blackware vessels, with glossy and matte designs of stylized, almost modern, images such as feathers, were traditionally used as water jars and food storage. The unique black color is achieved by the Martinez family by using a fire reduction method for pottery firing. This method reduces the amount of oxygen available in the kiln, and by smothering the fire often with cow or horse dung, the pottery is carbonized.

Blackware was uniquely attractive and stood out against the traditional pottery landscape of red clay colored and polychrome pots. Matte designs were most likely decorated by Maria's husband Julian until his death in 1943 and then by other family members thereafter. Designs were created by burnishing the surface of the pot and may incorporate the *avanyu* or water serpent, simple geometric patterns, geographical features such as rivers, naturalistic symbols or eagle feathers, as seen on both of the objects in the exhibition.

"I just thank God because [my work is] not only for me; it's for all the people. I said to my God, the Great Spirit, Mother Earth gave me this luck. So I'm not going to keep it." –Maria Martinez

Maria went from selling her pottery wares for modest prices to being an entrepreneurial visionary for her people and the sales of traditional native crafts and art to the public/tourist market. The artisans transcribed to Martinez's method of valuing their time and talents when pricing their wares and crafts for sale thus helping to revive their struggling economy.

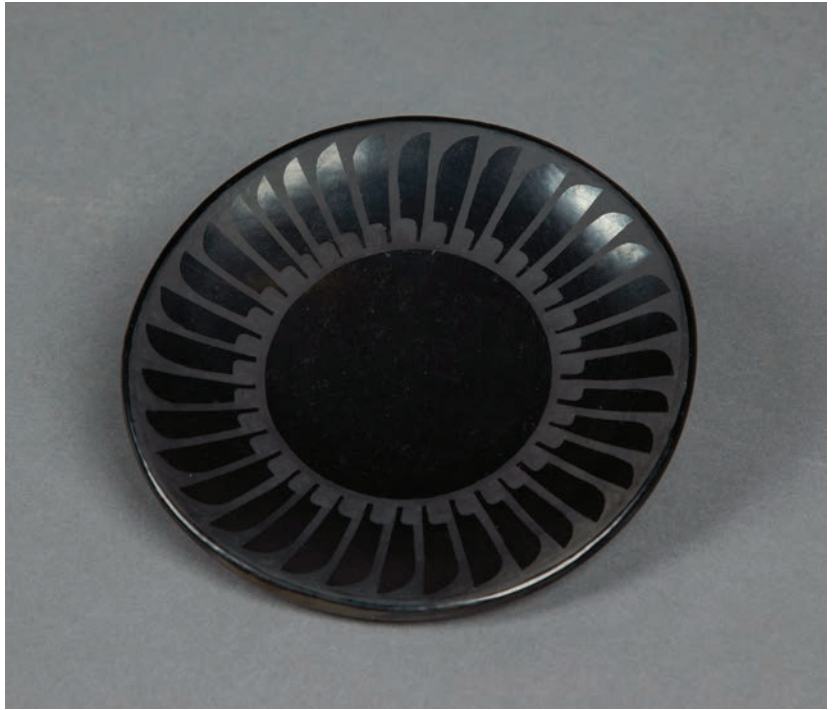
She was awarded a National Endowment for the Arts grant in 1973 to fund her workshop in New Mexico. Shortly thereafter, Martinez had her own solo exhibition at the Smithsonian's Renwick Gallery in 1978. Examples of Martinez's pottery are found in public and private collections internationally. Her work and teachings inspired future generations of her own family, including three generations she taught personally, several of whom still produce pottery at the San Ildefonso Pueblo. Over her lifetime, Maria collaborated not only with her husband, but also with her sons, Popovi Da and Adam, and her daughter-in-law, Santana who decorated the small plate in this exhibition.

The multi-generational craft industry in San Ildefonso Pueblo (*Po-woh-ge-oweenge*, "Where the water cuts through") continues with fervor today. Of the 19 Pueblos, San Ildefonso is most sought after for their prized blackware vessels and paintings.

The University Museums' permanent collection contains Navajo weaving, Native basketry, sculpture, prints and pottery from the Northeast, Southwest, Midwest, Pacific Northwest and tribes of Canada. Much of the collection was obtained pre-1940 by Iowa State College faculty on research trips. The amassed collection was part of the Applied Arts Department's teaching collection. When the Applied Arts Department was dis-banded in favor of the College of Design, the object teaching collections were transferred to the University Museums.

The University Museums' permanent collection will be enriched in the next year through a gift of several hundred objects including pottery, basketry, textiles, jewelry, and kachina figures from collector and benefactor Joyce Tomlinsen Brewer. Joyce, an Iowa State graduate, spent her life collecting in the Albuquerque, New Mexico area and became a discerning collector and supporter of Native crafts, art, and people. This gift will not only enhance the existing Native art collection, but further the story of blackware pottery from San Ildefonso Pueblo with over 40 additional blackware vessels.

Allison Sheridan
Collections Manager, University Museums



Small Plate, 1943-1954

Maria Montoya Poveka Martinez (San Ildefonso Pueblo, New Mexico, 1887–1980) and Santana Martinez (San Ildefonso Pueblo, New Mexico, 1909–2002)

Blackware pottery

Gift of Carol Grant. In the permanent collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa.

UM2005.292

Chinese



Set of Four Hanging Scrolls (*Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall*), 1924

Cai Xuexi (Taiwan, 1884–)

Ink and paint on paper

Gift of Drs. David G. Topel and Jay-lin Jane Topel and Mr. and Mrs. Tung-Hsiang and Chih-Fei Cheng. In the Topel and Cheng Art Collection, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. UM2014.256–259

Living through the colonial rule of Japan in Taiwan (1895–1945), Cai Xuexi (1884–) was mostly a self-taught artist. After graduating from public school in 1901, he became a clerk in the colonial government and meanwhile taught himself painting. In 1910, he studied painting with a Japanese artist (川田墨凤). Ten years later, Cai opened his own private art school Xuexi Art Studio 雪溪画馆, and mentored Guo Xuehu (1908–2012) in his school, who later became an influential artist, but the ending of Cai's own life is unclear.

As an artist he had diverse influences from the arts of the West and Japan focusing on the realistic portrayal of social and everyday life, in addition to the highly formalized aboriginal literati traditions that highlight the symbolic expressions of the artists' inner feelings and cultural identity. However, Cai did not integrate the influences to create a new style of his own, but rather retains the different traditions respectively to serve different audiences. With the Western and Japanese style,

he successfully received institutional recognition by entering into the famous semi-official Taiwan Art Exhibits. With the traditional Chinese style, which he valued the most, he catered to the tastes of the local market and his friends.

Finished in 1924, the four hanging scrolls presented embody a typical Chinese style that has taken centuries to mature. The hanging scrolls usually come in even numbers (4, 6, 8, 12, etc.) to display side by side on the walls of large inner spaces. The themes and motifs of a scroll set are usually interrelated. They could either be *shanshui* (山水, landscape), *huaniao* (花, flowers and birds), or *renwu* (人物, figure painting), etc., that express either an elitist ideal or a blessing, or both, depending on the market. A time dimension could also be added. These four scrolls are an example showing the flowers and birds in the four seasons.

A single example of Chinese painting, as can be seen in Cai's artwork here, often consists of three elements: 1. The image itself. 2. The inscriptions (in black) that take up the empty spaces intentionally left by the artist. 3. The seals (in red) that serve as a signature and a way to express the intent and taste of the artist. The inscriptions, which themselves could be fine calligraphy works, could be a poem or notes on the contexts for understanding the painting. These elements mutually illuminate and complete each other, and should be considered as integral and indispensable components in appreciating the artwork.

Chinese painting has been heavily influenced by Daoist philosophy which prefers nature to the humanity. If the landscape painting often provides a panoramic view of nature, the flowers (often the focus) and birds painting tends to provide a close-up view of nature. Meanwhile, in most scrolls the natural objects are not the choice of the artists' free will, as they have acquired certain cultural meanings throughout history.

The flowers and birds in the four seasons created by Cai are a mixture of the representation of natural beauty and the expression of cultural meanings. Reading together with the poems on the paintings, these paintings could be an expression of the artist's sorrow and nostalgia for the lost homeland, as well as his endeavor to retain his pure cultural identity. In terms of techniques, the artist mainly relies on *xieyi* (写意, the freehand brushwork, which is favored by the literati artists that highlights the "writing of the intent" of the artist and downplays the faithful representation of the objects). Occasionally, he also applies the techniques of *gongbi* (工笔, meticulous and refined).

Representing the spring, and with its dominant shape and vibrant colors, the peony became popular beginning in the Tang Dynasty (618–907). It is regarded as the "king of all flowers", the "color of the nation." The Song Dynasty scholar Zhou Dunyi (1017–1073) calls it "the rich and noble of flowers." With these auspicious implications, the peony was regarded as the national flower during the Ming and Qing (1369–1911) era. A recent survey shows that people in China prefer to identify it as the formal national flower.

Summer is represented by lotus, which is rooted in the mud but is pure and beautiful itself. Lotus has long been included in folk songs. Probably because of the influences of Buddhism, it becomes the symbol of the uncontaminated beauty and purity against the polluted surroundings, or the Buddha himself. The cranes in the painting have been the carriers of the fairies and thus became the icon of longevity, loyalty and nobility.

Representing the fall, chrysanthemums are associated with the famous East Jin hermit-poet Tao Qian (365–427), who abandons his official post and returns to search for his genuine self in nature. Tao has a famous poem on chrysanthemums. Beneath the calm and retired appearance lies a spirit of resistance. In addition, the two birds (crested myna) also demonstrate a maverick attitude.

Plum trees are probably are the only trees that blossom in the winter in most places of China. Appreciation of the plum flowers can be traced back to the Han Dynasty (206 BCE–220 AD), and then becomes increasingly popular in later time. Besides their natural attractions, the plum flowers symbolize a resilient attitude toward the harsh environment, and a pure spirit unyielding to external pressures. The plum flower is the national flower of the Republican China (Est. 1911).

Dr. Tonglu Li
Associate Professor of Chinese

Set of Four Calligraphy Hanging Scrolls, 1990s

Shuxin Zheng (Chinese, b. 1944)

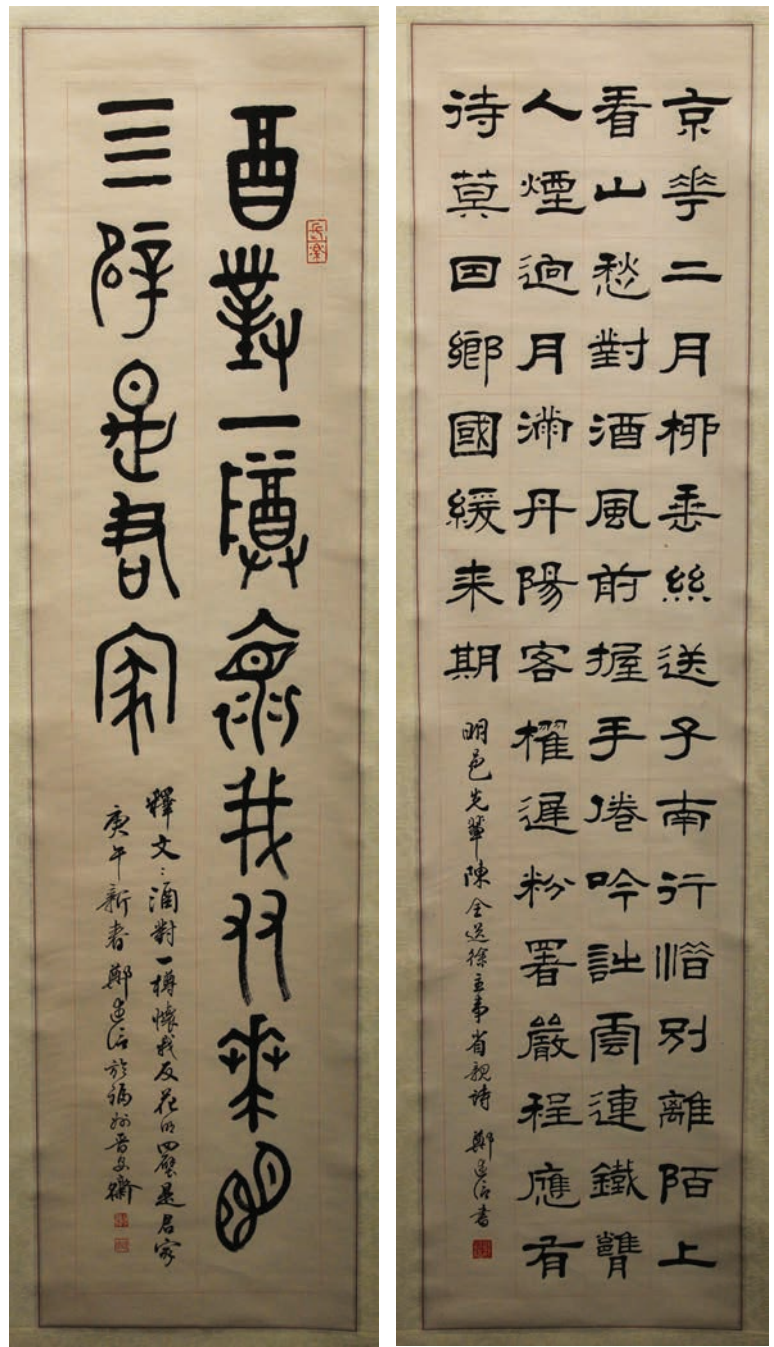
Ink on paper

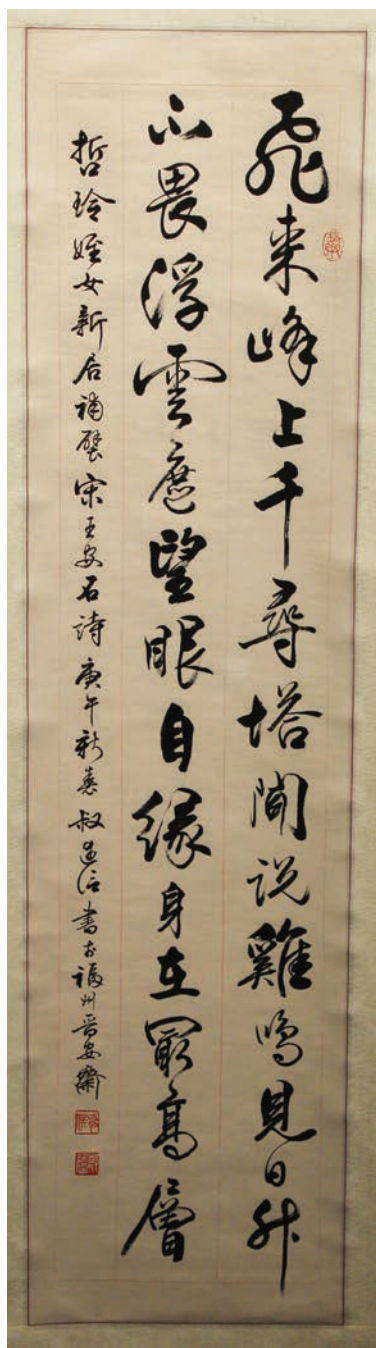
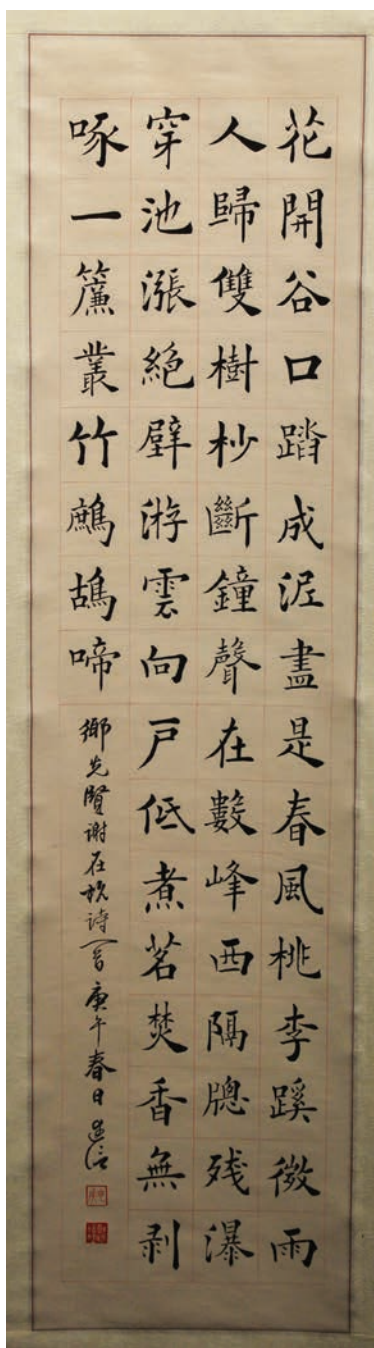
Gift of Drs. David G. Topel and Jay-lin Jane Topel. In the Topel and Cheng Art Collection, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. UM2017.153–156

Chinese calligraphy (書法 *shufu*, way/method/law of writing) is a form of aesthetic expression widely practiced and highly valued in China and across East Asia since ancient times. It became a mature form of art during the 3rd and 4th century, when people started to view writing as a way to express one's inner self. Sharing similar tools with ink wash painting (水墨畫 *shuǐmòhuà*)—brush, ink, paper and ink stone, Chinese calligraphy conveys more than the meaning of written words. As a form of social interaction, successful calligraphy also features “energy in motion” and “time and rhythm in shifting space,”¹ giving symbolic expression to artists' personality, emotions and feelings, and even their sense of moral integrity.

Chinese calligraphy takes diverse forms and styles, which have evolved over time. The earliest known form of Chinese writing is Oracle Bone Script (甲骨文 *jiǎgǔwén*), or writings on animal bones or turtle plastrons, from about 3600 years ago. It developed into Bronze Inscriptions (鐘鼎文 *zhōngdǐngwén*) when written script was cast or engraved on ritual bronzes. By the latter half of the 1st millennium BCE, Seal Script (篆書 *zhuànshū*), including Large Seal Script and Small Seal Script, became common, with the Qin (221–206 BC) variant becoming the standard after Qin unified China. The Clerical/Official Script (隸書 *lìshū*) from the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 AD) was created to make writing more efficient, and it remains popular today. As its successor, the Standard/Regular Script (楷書 *kǎishū*) resembles the clerical style in graphic forms, but with some of the more curling strokes in the clerical script straightened out. With the easy-to-read Semi-cursive Script (行書 *xíngshū*) at the one end of abbreviation and the hardly-legible Wild-cursive Script (狂草 *Kuángcǎo*) at the other, Cursive Script (草書 *cǎoshū*) provides artists more freedom of expression and creativity.

These four scrolls present both the different artistic styles of Chinese calligraphy along the above historical timeline and some of its general functions. The artist is Zheng Shuxin (鄭述信 born 1944). He is a member of Chinese Calligraphers Association, the most prestigious national organization on calligraphy. Zheng also holds, at the provincial level, the office of a Vice President at Fujian Calligraphers Association. He serves in the capacity of a consultant for many local institutions of calligraphy education and promotion. His creations have appeared in many national calligraphy exhibitions and won numerous awards at calligraphy competitions, the most notable of which was the Fujian Province Calligraphy Silver Award. He is also internationally recognized with participation in calligraphy events co-hosted by China and other East Asian countries. You may see his calligraphy carved in stone when you visit some of the cultural sites around China. Many examples of his art in





the collection Five Clouds Calligraphy have circulated among calligraphy lovers and have been collected by relevant institutions in China.

Written in the ancient script of Large Seal, the first scroll is a couplet expressing endearing thoughts about a friend. Composed of the characters selected from among the five hundred engraved on the famous Maogong Ding (毛公鼎), a ceremonial vessel from the period of the King Xuan (828–782 BCE) of the Zhou Dynasty (1046–256 BCE), the couplet has long been an object of reverence and imitation. Zheng Shuxin's presentation of the couplet here, very close to the original in form and in spirit, shows contemporary creativity rooted in and modeled after that of the antiquity.

The second scroll in Clerical/Official script registers a poem written by an official that recounts his reluctance to part with a friend. The official happened to be Ma Duo (马铎 1366–1423), a famous fellow countryman of the calligrapher, who came first in the highest level of the Imperial Examination in 1412. Six hundred years apart, the two men from Changle, Fujian share much in common. If the poet official of the past is known for being a filial friend, his contemporary admirer complements his sincerity with the refined orderliness of his calligraphy.

The third scroll is a beautiful demonstration of the Regular/Standard style, which matured during the Tang Dynasty (618–907). It is not surprising to find hints of Tang master Ouyang Xun in this work of art since a calligrapher's training usually starts with learning from/copying a particular master. Zheng's choice of poem, again from a Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) fellow countryman, shows that his reverence of Chinese cultural tradition goes as far as taking on the aesthetic tastes of the ancient men of letters, especially their love of seclusion in nature and satisfaction with such a simple joy as having a nice cup of tea.

The last scroll was Zheng Shuxin's gift to his niece Zheling when she moved into a new house in 1990. The Semi-cursive Script is most appropriate for the occasion because, in addition to the good wish implicit in the poetic expression of "being at the top of the world," this work seamlessly integrates different styles of Chinese calligraphy, and the combined effect of intelligibility and aesthetic appeal is itself a celebration of life's pragmatic artistry, dynamic energy, and innovative beauty.

Burckhardt, O. "The Rhythm of the Brush" *Quadrant*, Vol. 53, No. 6, (June 2009) pp. 124–126. A review-essay that explores the motion of the brush as the hallmark of Chinese calligraphy.

Dr. Aili Mu
Associate Professor of Chinese

Classical Studies



Ibis, 800 BCE

Egyptian

Wood, bronze, gesso, and remains of gilding

Gift of Ann and Henry Brunnier. In the Ann and Henry Brunnier Collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. 5.1.2ab

This small statuette, of a wading bird known as an Ibis, presents something of a mystery. The Ibis was associated with the Ancient Egyptian god Thoth, patron deity of the Middle Egyptian town of Hermopolis, and of the arts of writing, science, hieroglyphics, and magic. In one popular Ancient Egyptian conception of the afterlife, Thoth oversaw the weighing of the heart, where the deceased's heart was weighed against a feather representing truth and justice, and recorded the outcome. To discern what the function of this figurine might have been, and its connection to Thoth and the afterlife, we must look a little deeper, seek out and apply more information, as is only appropriate when dealing with the god of wisdom and knowledge.

Statuettes similar to this one are not uncommon in Egyptian collections around the world. These other statues often use mixed media materials, such as this example, but are more often made of a wooden body, sometimes gilded. Attached to this body are the neck and head, legs, and sometimes tail, of bronze or copper. In one stunning example belonging to the Brooklyn Museum, the appendages are silver, though these may be later additions to replace lost originals. Interestingly, the body of University Museums example does not appear to be solid wood. The gilding is wearing away in several areas to reveal what looks to be a woven textile beneath. For information on what this might mean for this figurine, let's consider the fascinating practice of animal mummification in Ancient Egypt.

The Egyptians did not apply their knowledge of preserving bodies only to humans. The tombs of well-off individuals might contain the mummies of animals that contemporary society would consider pets, or more often of working animals that would be of practical use in the afterlife. There were even what are called "victual mummies," the dressed and then mummified carcasses of food animals such as water fowl. Far more common than any of these, however, were the mummies of animals that were donated to temples up and down Egypt, as votive offerings of thanks or supplication to a particular god. Most famously, cat mummies were offered to Bast, a feline goddess shown in the form of a lioness or a domestic cat.

The production and sale of these animal mummies to pious temple goers became a thriving industry in the Late Period, and thousands of such mummies are known. The purchase of a whole animal mummy was not within everyone's budget, however. We have also found numerous "mummies" that consist of some token, such as a stick or stone, wrapped in linen and presented as the animal in question. (Whether these were "fakes" designed to fool a purchaser who thought they

were getting the real thing to offer to the god, or simply an acceptable budget offering, is not clear.) The mummies would sometimes be found in wood coffins, sometimes simply in their linen wrappings.

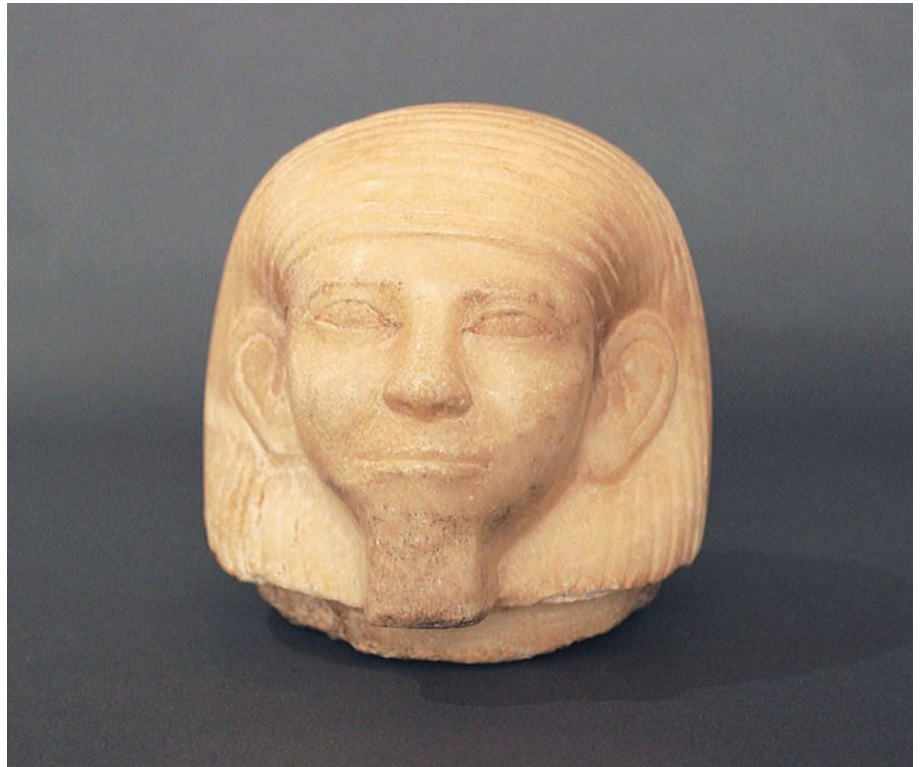
What does all this mean for this Ibis? Certainly, several of the smaller wood-and-copper Ibises in other collections are thought to have originally served as decorations or handles for the lid of the coffin of a mummified Ibis given to the god Thoth at Hermopolis, or one of his other temples. It may be that this statuette was once attached to just such a coffin lid. Even more intriguingly, the Brooklyn Museum Ibis mentioned previously, with the silver head and feet, is in fact itself a wooden coffin, hollowed out inside with a door running along the back, containing the tightly bundled mummy of a small, young bird. The University Museums Ibis may be an example of a mummy, either an animal itself or perhaps more likely a token such as an ibis feather, that was gilded and fitted up as a statuette. Further study of this piece, such as CT scanning, would give us the knowledge to better understand this mystery.

Finally, the ibis crouches down (some other examples are standing), likely meant to evoke a nesting position. It references the creation myth of ancient Hermopolis, in which Thoth lays the egg of the world on the primordial creation mound. This would have had deep associations for the Ancient Egyptians with life and death, birth and rebirth in the afterlife. Whether the ibis is a coffin decoration or mummy itself, it was intended by its original Ancient Egyptian giver to express a hope in new life, and a trust in a divine source of knowledge and wisdom. To be good citizens in today's globe, let us strive to seek out and apply knowledge to understand the world better, to hope in the possibility of new and better things even in the face of struggle, and to withhold judgment about someone, or something, until we have a better idea of what is inside.

Dr. Jessica Moore
Lecturer of Classical Studies

Imset (*Imseti*) Canopic Jar Lid, 1500 BCE
Egyptian
Alabaster (Travertine)
Gift of Ann and Henry Brunnier. In the
permanent collection, Brunnier Art
Museum, University Museums, Iowa State
University, Ames, Iowa. 6.1.1

Ancient Egypt was likely one of the first civilizations to believe in an afterlife. Beliefs relied heavily on the preservation of the soul, *Ka*, and the body, *Ba*. Within this belief system lie the roots of the embalming and mummification practices used to preserve an individual's body for use in the afterlife. Vessels, known today as canopic jars, were core components in these practices to contain the internal organs of the deceased. The term canopic jar was given to these funerary objects by modern Egyptologists.



There would typically be four canopic jars per mummified body—one with the head of a baboon (*Hapi* or *Hapy*) for the lungs, the head of a jackal (*Duamutef*) for the stomach, the head of a falcon (*Kebechsenef* or *Qebehsenuef*) for the intestines, and one jar, like this one, with a human head (*Imset* or *Imseti*) for the liver.

This lid depicts Imset, a god illustrated by the human head and always associated with funerary rites and practices. Imset was one of four sons of the god Horus. The earliest form of Isis was considered Imset's mother-like protector. The liver in ancient Egypt was seen as the place in the body containing emotion, a quality that would be needed in the afterlife of the mummified person. After death, the person would present their heart in the Hall of Truth to be weighed by Thoth on golden scales against the feather of *Ma'at*. If the heart was heavier than the feather, it was devoured by *Ammut*; if the heart was lighter, the deceased had passed the judgement and was justified in moving on to the afterlife. The afterlife, *A'aru* (The Field of Reeds), according to ancient Egyptians, was a divine place without illness, pain or suffering.

This canopic jar lid is made of Travertine (Egyptian alabaster) which was viewed as a sacred mineral in ancient times. Travertine was quarried in Alabastron, Egypt and was frequently utilized in the creation of canopic jars. Once the liver was excised from the body, it would be packed in natron, an agent for preservation, and wrapped in linen. Natron would have been sourced from salt flats in Egypt and was used to dry out and prevent bacteria from compromising the organ and the body to be mummified. Natron was also used for centuries in ancient Egyptian glass making and as "Egyptian blue" in ceramic glazes (faience). Several examples of both glass and ceramic objects using Natron are in the University Museums' permanent collection.

In polytheistic ancient Egypt, symbolism and iconography were heavily relied upon for many reasons; to teach about the individual deities and their roles, to protect the pharaohs on their trip to the afterlife, and in funerary rites and rituals. This Imset lid to a canopic jar captures the devotion to the gods, the reverence for the body, and the veneration for a life after in the Field of Reeds. Primary source objects like this canopic jar lid help bring history to life, transporting viewers to a time of mummies and the spiritual beliefs of the lives of ancient Egyptians.

Allison Sheridan
Collections Manager, University Museums

View from under the portico of the Temple of Dendera, 1848

From D. Roberts, *Egypt & Nubia*, London 1846–49,
vol. II, plate 69.

David Roberts (Scottish, 1796–1864)

Tinted folio size lithograph (two tints)

Gift of Bertha and Edward Waldee. In the permanent
collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa
State University, Ames, Iowa. UM86.580

Egypt, with its exotic and fantastical ancient temples and tombs, has long been a subject matter for historians, archeologists, and artists alike. The land of the pyramids, sphinx, hypostyle halls with towering columns, necropolis and mastaba intrigued ancient Greek historians such as Herodotus (c. 484–c. 425 BCE) and motivated expeditions led by Napoleon in 1798 and many explorers to follow. The allure of these lands also inspired artist David Roberts to document his journey in 1838 down the Nile River and across the sand-strewn realm nearly a century before Howard Carter, funded by the 5th Earl of Carnarvon, began his expeditions eventually discovering the famous tomb of King Tut.



In his day, Roberts was a well-respected and practicing artist before launching his 11-month journey to Egypt and the Holy Land making on-site drawings and paintings. After his return to London, the works of art he created were skillfully turned into lithographs by Louise Haghe (Belgian, 1806–1885) and published by F. G. Moon in multiple series from 1842 to 1849 including the three volume *Egypt & Nubia* series from which this work of art is part of.

This lithograph finely represents the Hathor Temple at the Dendera Temple Complex in Egypt near the modern Nile River town of Dendera (*Dandarah*). The site may have held cult centers for centuries previous however the Pharaoh Nectanebo I (380–362 BCE) started the construction on the existing complex of buildings in the late Ptolemaic period. The hypostyle hall pictured in this work of art, a roofed structure supported by massive carved columns, was built in the Roman period under Tiberius (42–37 BCE) and Queen Cleopatra VII (69–30 BCE) who wrapped up construction (there are several carvings of her and her son within the complex.) The temple was dedicated to the goddess Hathor often referred to as the “mistress of the sky”.

Hathor was seen as motherly, the feminine consort to several male deities and represented joy, sexuality, love, beauty and the performing arts of music and dance. She is often depicted with large horns, a representation of the cow venerated in ancient Egyptian culture, with a sun disk in between the horns and a cobra snaked around the disk. Mythology has her marrying Ra, the king of gods, and thus becoming the motherly protectorate of all pharaohs. Though worshiped throughout Egypt she rose to prominence in the Fourth Dynasty. There were many smaller temples dedicated to Hathor, however this temple in her honor was certainly the most prominent and is today considered by many one of the finest temples in Egypt.

In this work of art, you can see the depiction of Hathor’s face as the capital to each of the columns, the notable feature chosen by Roberts to set the scene. Those columns are in reality 56 feet high and would have been richly painted in blues, reds, greens and yellows. Upon closer inspection, the lithograph has carried through some of the blue tinting to represent the hues present on the actual temple. Likely the blue coloration used on the temple was Egyptian blue, which is considered to be the oldest synthetically produced pigment in the world and also the most commonly used blue pigment in ancient Egypt. Although much of the pigment on the exterior has been deteriorated by the elements, richly carved and colored interior rooms, columns, and ceilings remain for visitors to experience today.

Archeologist, Egyptologists, conservators and scientists continue to study the temple complex at Dendera unraveling the meaning and secrets held within its walls. Roberts’s skillful ability to thoroughly capture so many of the ancient sites in detail has helped to preserve and document the art and designs of ancient Egypt. The images Roberts painted create a snapshot in time, enabling scholars to catalog the changes since the 1830s when he explored and diligently documented the architecture.

Editions and reprints of Roberts images remain popular today, though the original printed editions from the 1840’s remain fairly limited. Roberts’ works of art are present in many well-known collections including the Victoria & Albert Museum in London; the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York; and the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. The University Museums at Iowa State has five additional prints in the permanent collection by Roberts—from the *Egypt* series: *Edfou November 24, 1838*; *Hall of Columns at Karnak, Thebes*; *Portico of the Temple of Edfou, Upper Egypt Nov. 23, 1838*; and from the *Holy Land* series: *Remains of a Triumphal Arch at Petra* and *The holy tree, Metereah*.

Allison Sheridan
Collections Manager, University Museums

These two vases are referred to as cylindrical lekythoi (lekythos in the singular). Lekythos in ancient Greek generically meant “oil or perfume vessel,” although today archaeologists and art historians use this term to describe a particular shape that were produced in a wide range of sizes and used to contain and carry perfumed oil. The two vases seem to be products of painters working in the heart of Classical vase painting, Athens. In ancient Athens there were numerous pottery workshops consisting of groups of potters and painters; many painters and their workshops have become known to us either because they signed their work or because they repeatedly used idiomatic design elements that allow us to recognize their work or that of their students. Since the surviving signatures of painters are men’s names, scholars tend to refer to all vase painters as “he.” Where signatures are absent, identified painters have been given names that are based on repeated themes in their work, modern places names where their work was first identified.

Lekythoi were produced in the main painting styles in which vases were decorated with figures and/or ornaments in ancient Athens: black figure, where the majority of each decorative element was painted on and fired black, while the background was unpainted and left the natural reddish color of the clay (as in UM2013.651); white ground, created by adding a thin layer of white clay, really more of a cream color, to the surface of the vase, on top of which additional decoration was painted, usually in black (see 2.1.4); and red figure, where the figures and ornaments were primarily the reddish color of the clay and the background was painted in and fired black. By early in the 5th century BCE, red-figure vase painting had largely replaced the black-figure technique as the most popular, but production of black-figure cylindrical lekythoi nevertheless continued to be very strong. This may have been in part because many black-figure cylindrical lekythoi, and all white-ground lekythoi, were used in funerary activities, apparently mostly by women, and the vast majority have been found in burials as grave offerings.



Lekythos with Satyrs dancing with Goats, 490–460 BCE

The Athena Painter of Athens

Red-ground, Black-figure

Gift of M. Burton Drexler. In the permanent collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. UM2013.651

Smallish cylindrical lekythoi made in Athens during the first half of the 5th century BCE, like the two in this exhibition, were exported across Greece, around the Mediterranean Sea, and even to regions of the Black Sea, where demand remained high for these relatively inexpensive vases from the most famous production center in the Greek world at this time. While demand was primarily driven by Greeks, including those (or their ancestors) who had colonized areas far from their homeland, non-Greeks were also consumers. As is often the case with goods in today’s globalized world, affordability and international markets spurred demand and large-scale production of these lekythoi and sustained the continuation of the more traditional black-figure technique.

The larger lekythos was decorated with imagery that is so far unique to this painter: a pair of satyrs each dancing with a goat that stands on its hind legs and flanks a central satyr, toward whom the goats and other satyrs all look. Both dancing satyrs have placed their drinking horns on the ground at their feet, while the third satyr is in the center front of the vase and plays the pipes (double aulos). Satyrs, imaginary creatures who in 5th century BCE Greece were represented as amalgams of human men and horses, were companions and followers of the god Dionysus, the god of wine and intoxication. Satyrs were usually pictured in contexts relating to Dionysus, who was also concerned with the theater and closely associated with the development of Greek comedy and tragedy. Perhaps as a result, satyrs played a key role in ancient theater, too. In Classical

Athens, tragic performances were followed by what was called a satyr play because the members of its chorus dressed like satyrs. These satyric dramas often included low-brow humor and irreverence and it is possible that the scene on this lekythos references one from a lost satyr play.

The work of the Athena Painter has been identified by the addition of tendrils to the palmettes—five in number around the shoulder—and a completely black neck; he often depicted original subjects in the main scene and this is one such example. The Athena painter began painting in the black-figure style (on a reddish-clay ground), as seen here, and moved to the white-ground technique later; as a result, this would likely be one of the painter's earlier works. Based on the shape of this lekythos and the style in which it is decorated, it can be dated to 490–460 BCE. The main scene is very similar to a white-ground lekythos (illustrated below) that is also attributed to the Athena Painter.

The smaller lekythos is decorated in the white-ground style. The body of this lekythos is white-ground and, although it is difficult to see, decorated with rows of patterns that wrap around the vase: a Greek key running rightward at the top, and lattice or checker patterns that frame a tendril with ivy leaves and berry clusters. Pattern lekythoi were decorated with rows of patterns instead of figural scenes and included various floral or geometric motifs, or a combination of both; they were made in large numbers.

This lekythos appears to be a product of the workshop associated with the artist referred to as the Beldam Painter. The Beldam painter is known for his pattern lekythoi, one of his specialties, and also for framing central decorative motifs with bands in a checker pattern. If one looks closely at this lekythos, small dotted berry clusters—another feature of the Beldam Painter's style—are visible interspersed between the ivy leaves. These features, and his tendency to make ivy tendrils the central decoration on pattern lekythoi, allow us to attribute this vase to the Beldam Workshop, if not the Beldam Painter himself.

White-ground lekythoi are not found in domestic contexts and were specifically produced as grave offerings. This one may have been intended to be placed with the deceased during the burial process or as a subsequent funerary offering at the grave. The white-ground technique was first applied to lekythoi around 500 and continued to be used until about 400 BCE, while the Beldam Painter worked from about 470–450 BCE.

Sources:

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Ivy Pattern Lekythos, 470–450 BCE

The Beldam Painter of Athens
White-ground, Black-figure
Gift of Ann and Henry Brunnier. In the Permanent
Collection of the Brunnier Art Museum,
University Museums, Iowa State University,
Ames, Iowa. 2.1.4



Hercules Figure, 500–100 BCE

Roman

Bronze

Gift of Ann and Henry Brunnier. In the Ann and Henry Brunnier Collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. 4.1.2

The nude male figure stands with weight distributed between both feet. In his right hand, raised up to the height of his head, he wields a club, and over his left forearm a rigid lion skin is draped. Because of these two attributes, the figure can securely be identified as Herakles, represented in attack mode.

Herakles was the son of Zeus and Alkmene, conceived during one of Zeus' many affairs. Zeus' wife Hera, hostile because of her husband's dalliances, sent two serpents to his crib to kill baby Herakles, but he demonstrated his power by strangling them. Hera later caused Herakles to suffer a fit of madness in which he killed his wife Megara and their children. In order to be purified of this deed, he sought the oracle of Delphi where he was instructed to serve Eurystheus for twelve years. During that time, Heracles accomplished his famous twelve labors.

Killing the fierce lion ravaging the town of Nemea was said to be his first great exploit. Herakles fashioned a club to attack the lion, and wrestled the beast to subdue it. After this feat, the club and lion skin became his most recognizable features. They are symbols of his strength and perseverance in defeating this monster, who was invulnerable to the weapons of mortals.

Small bronze figurines of deities were produced in great quantity to fulfill the market demand, especially at sanctuary sites around Greece where hundreds of examples have been found. The Greeks learned much about metalworking from the Egyptians, and, by at least the 5th century BCE, they widely employed bronze for crafting statues. Using the lost-wax method for statues as well as for utilitarian objects made the process more efficient than carving stone since foundries could re-use their molds to produce a large batch of bronze objects or figures.

The Etruscans, who inhabited areas of Italy starting around 900 BCE, were also great metalworkers and produced small statuettes, everyday objects, as well as large-scale statuary in bronze. The Romans learned techniques from both the Greeks and the Etruscans to create their own bronze statues and figures, weaponry, and other commonplace objects. Though the character Herakles originated in Greek mythology, the Romans adopted him into their own pantheon of gods and heroes and called him Hercules. Roman followers of the Stoic philosophy revered Hercules as a beacon of steadfastness and an exemplar of moral virtue. The Roman Stoics believed that self-reliance and endurance were of primary importance.

Statuettes of Herakles were widely produced by the Greeks in a variety of postures and poses. In fact, Herakles was a common subject on all types of artwork, weaponry, jewelry, and architectural sculpture. Athenian artists painted vases with the hero engaged in his labors and pursuits with the gods. Romans continued their own production of goods representing the famous hero. Sometimes they depicted him wrestling the Nemean lion, and other times they showed the hero at rest

holding the apples of the Hesperides, which he fetched during one of his labors. Numerous statuettes represent Hercules in the same pose he holds in the figurine from the University Museums permanent collection.

Though Herakles has been a character in stories for millennia, what he represents as a hero still resonates today. He was a son of Zeus, king of all gods, yet Herakles had to struggle to overcome obstacles, many of which were exacerbated by Hera's envy and desire for revenge. Herakles had to persevere to accomplish his goals. His story is a lesson for anyone today: no matter who your parents are or where you come from, you must face challenges and conflicts to make your own life. Becoming a global citizen today means forging your own path despite difficulties. While you will not slay literal monsters, you may have to overcome political, cultural, or financial barriers to achieve your objectives.

Dr. Rachel Meyers
Assistant Professor of Classical Studies



Plaque of Apollo and the Nine Muses, possibly early 19th century
Wedgwood (Staffordshire, England, founded 1759–present)
Jasperware
Gift of Ann and Henry Brunnier. In the permanent collection, Brunnier Art Museum,
University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. 2.8.134

The Muses, the nine daughters of Zeus and the titan Mnemosyne (“Memory”), were the patron goddesses of artistic and intellectual activity. The canonical account of their number and their parentage is ancient even by Greek standards, appearing as early as the time of Hesiod (7th century BCE). Hesiod also provides what became the recognized list of their names—Urania, Clio, Euterpe, Terpsichore, Polyhymnia, Erato, Melpomene, Thalia, and Calliope—and their earliest association with the god Apollo, depicted in this plaque standing between Euterpe and Terpsichore (notice the bow leaning against his pillar). Beginning in about the 2nd century BCE, individual Muses began to be associated with specific areas of artistic endeavor and to be depicted with particular signature items. Urania, with her globe and compass, is the Muse of astronomy. Clio, carrying a pen and scroll, is the Muse of history. Euterpe, the Muse of lyric poetry, carries an *aulos* or double flute. Terpsichore, the Muse of dance, is playing a lyre, as is Apollo beside her. Polyhymnia, the Muse of religious hymns and oratorical eloquence, leans thoughtfully against a pillar. Erato, the Muse of love poetry, plays a *kithara*, a larger relative of the lyre. The Muses of

drama, Melpomene and Thalia, each carry a mask and another identifying item: Melpomene, patron of tragedy, wields a club, reflecting the violence of her genre; her sister Thalia carries a shepherd's crook, a reference both to the rustic origins of comedy and to the original meaning of her name ("Blooming"). Calliope, the Muse of epic poetry, carries a wax writing tablet as usual and some other unknown item—perhaps a scepter. Note, too, the size of Calliope, who stands straighter and taller than any of her sisters. This conveys visually Calliope's status as leader of the Muses, and patron of the most prestigious type of artistic activity. The specific nature of the relationship between these gods and artistic production varies from story to story. Sometimes, the Muses serve as sources of information, transmitting facts or ideas from far away or long ago to which the artist, as a mere mortal, would not otherwise be privy. At other times, the Muses provide not the what but the how of artistic endeavor, granting mortals the skill to do their work skillfully and beautifully. But most commonly and most enduringly, the "inspiration" provided by the Muses is not an infusion of content or of skill, but more in the nature of a religious calling. Hesiod expresses that he was working as a shepherd when the Muses appeared to him, gave him a staff of authority (like Calliope is carrying perhaps), and directed him to sing the stories of the gods, starting and ending with the story of the Muses themselves. It is this role in which the modern idea of the "muse" was constructed, a person who provides an artist with the necessary strength to make their art, and who is often a main subject of that art. This plaque demonstrates how the ancient Muses, and Greek and Roman mythology more generally, have continued to serve as "muses" long after the end of Graeco-Roman antiquity. For the global citizen of today, such figures born from ancient memory can be the key to understanding the art and ideas of the present, and can provide inspiration for creating the wisdom of the future.

Dr. Alexander Hall
Assistant Teaching Professor of Classical Studies & Latin

Jug, 1789

Wedgwood (English, founded 1759)
Rosso antico with black basalt
Gift of M. Burton Drexler. In the
permanent collection, Brunnier Art
Museum, University Museums, Iowa
State University, Ames, Iowa. UM2013.593

This small jug is an example of the *rosso antico* style produced by the Wedgwood pottery manufactory, founded in the 18th century in Staffordshire, England by Josiah Wedgwood. Red clay of Staffordshire was employed by various potters starting at the end of the 17th century for common objects such as teapots, jugs, and bowls. Wedgwood loved to experiment with potting materials, glazing colors, and body shapes. He adapted the traditional red clay pottery and called it *rosso antico* ('ancient red' in Italian). This style, as well as many shapes and designs, was strongly influenced by ancient Greek and Roman art. At the time Wedgwood pottery was being developed, scholars were exploring the ancient tombs of Etruria (approximately the area of modern Tuscany) and the extensive archaeological finds within them. Hundreds of ceramic vessels in dozens of shapes and sizes were excavated and brought into private collections and museums. These vases, thought to be of Etruscan manufacture since they were, after all, deposited in Etruscan tombs, were decorated with scenes of Greek mythology and everyday life and a variety of design motifs. When Wedgwood founded his new workshop, he named



it Etruria because of these finds. The name was kept even when it was determined that the ceramics with the black and red figures were produced in mainland Greece and Greek colonies in southern Italy and were, therefore, not of Etruscan origin.

Rosso antico pottery was often decorated with black bas-relief, as on this particular jug, to adopt the appearance of the Greek red-ground wares with black figures. A stiff triangular leaf design surrounds the shoulder of the jug. Small figures and symbols encircle the neck, with a somewhat stylized scarab beetle occupying the center of each broad side. The figures might have been intended to mimic Egyptian hieroglyphics, as each symbol is reminiscent of ancient Egyptian designs. Wedgwood was influenced not only by Greek and Roman art but also by Egyptian art. Much of the *rosso antico* with black reliefs in Egyptian style can be dated to the early 19th century, inspired by Napoleon's 1798 campaign to Egypt. For the English and other Europeans in the 18th and 19th centuries, Egypt held the allure of the exotic. After Napoleon's campaigns, manuscripts with illustrations of the ancient remains of Egypt circulated in England. It appears that the Wedgwood wares were produced through consultation of such illustrated manuscripts and not directly from any particular source. This method explains why the motifs on Wedgwood pottery are reminiscent of Egyptian art but do not repeat any exact object.

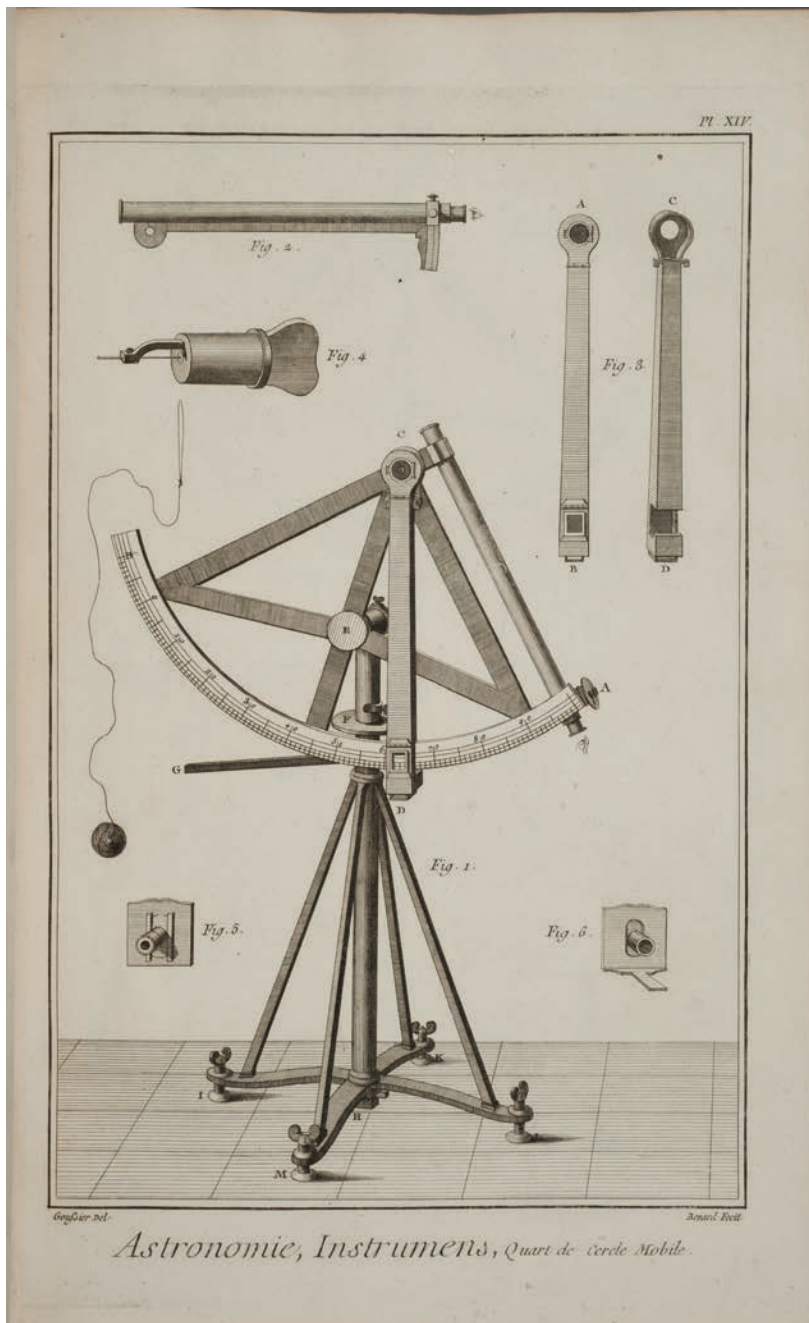
The black figures and symbols were applied with the black basalt that Wedgwood developed, creating a bas-relief form of decoration. Ancient Greek pottery was produced with a very different method. The black figures and design were not painted on. Rather, artists used a clay slurry, or slip, to paint figures and then a sharp implement to delineate details, such as facial features or musculature. The areas covered by slip turned black at high temperatures in the kiln. The iron-rich clay around Athens produced, after the complete firing and cooling process, a very deep orange color. Wedgwood likely saw examples of Greek black-figure painting but developed his own methods for creating vessels that combined ancient aesthetics with contemporary design. Such pottery not only allowed Wedgwood to experiment with production techniques but it also provided sought-after goods for his upper-middle class English clientele, many of whom had undoubtedly gone on their Grand Tour and would have desired something with antique flair, especially if they had been unable to afford a true antiquity in Italy or Greece.

This Wedgwood jug is a reminder that artists frequently are inspired by earlier art. In fact, the Greeks themselves were influenced by works of art from Egypt and the Near East, resulting in what art historians call their "Orientalizing period." The Romans looked to the Greeks when constructing temples and carving portraits. Countless writers, playwrights, poets, sculptors, architects, and other artists from the Medieval period through today have found inspiration in the works of art produced before their own times. Part of being a global citizen today means knowing the past and reflecting on its impact on today. We learn about the values of different cultures and grapple with how that knowledge brings clarity to the future.

Dr. Rachel Meyers
Assistant Professor of Classical Studies



French



The *Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (*Encyclopedia, or Reasoned Dictionary of Sciences, Arts, and Crafts*) was published between 1751 and 1772 by a group of some of France's leading philosophers. The collection is regarded as one of the most famous examples of Enlightenment thinking and its intent was to change the way people think and to expand access to knowledge. The 17-volume work contains detailed engravings and in-depth entries that cover everything from philosophical questions to how to construct mechanical devices for use in daily life. Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d'Alembert were the original editors; articles from experts cover science, medicine, physics, religion, and political theory, with Voltaire, Rousseau, and Montesquieu among the best-known contributors. The project was considered controversial due to the radical decision to organize the work based on human reason rather than religious teachings or accepted understandings of nature. This humanistic approach went against governmental and Church power structures of the time. The work was temporarily suppressed several times and some of its contributors were arrested. By including varying viewpoints and veiled sarcasm in the entries, Diderot was able to push the work through to publication. The *Encyclopédistes* are frequently identified as Enlightenment philosophers whose ideas are seen as paving the way for the French Revolution. Their approach to making knowledge accessible to all became the basis for future educational projects around the world.

Dr. Melissa Deininger
Lecturer of French

***Recueil de planches, sur les sciences, les arts libéraux, et les arts mécaniques, avec leur explication ...*, 1762–72**

Denis Diderot (French, 1713–1784)

Paris, Briasson etc.

Iowa State University Library Special Collections and University Archives. AE25 En185 plates, vol. 5

Cup and Saucer, 1789

Sèvres Porcelain Manufactory (French, founded
1738–present)

Porcelain

Gift of Ann and Henry Brunnier. In the Ann and
Henry Brunnier Collection, Brunnier Art Museum,
University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames,
Iowa. 2.7.3ab



This simple Cup and Saucer represents significant aspects of French history and culture. It was created by the Sèvres Porcelain Manufactory, one of the most important French porcelain factories. The manufactory was founded in 1740, first in Vincennes, and moved to a larger location at Sèvres in 1756.

The manufactory had always been supported by the monarchy, which helped to secure its status among the wealthy French nobility and internationally. Louis XV came to completely own the factory by 1759 and Sèvres would produce numerous royal table settings and decorative objects, along with diplomatic gifts for royalty, aristocracy, and ambassadors from around the world.

Made of soft-paste porcelain, this Cup and Saucer is a beautiful example of the high quality in design, decoration, and material that Sèvres was and continues to be known for. While true or hard-paste porcelain was first made in Europe by the Meissen manufactory in Germany during the early 18th century, Sèvres became best known for their soft-paste porcelain with brilliant, unique colors that were developed and the exceptionally high quality of painting found on the wares. While also a porcelain body, soft-paste was created when continental Europeans were seeking the formula that made Chinese hard-paste or “true” porcelain so thin, strong, and lustrously white. It is simply a slightly weaker form of porcelain that does not need such a high firing temperature. Yet Sèvres excelled in this material, and were renowned for the beauty of their creations.

The imagery on the Cup and Saucer is a unique representation of a moment in French history, a witness to one of the most tumultuous times in the country. The dark blue ground is embellished with gold decorative motifs and writing, while the main imagery has been created *en grisaille* or in muted tones of grays and white. The three men depicted on the cup were ambassadors sent by Tipu Sultan, the ruler of the Kingdom of Mysore in Southern India. The ambassadors arrived in 1788 with orders to obtain French support to help oust the British from India, who were a constant threat to Tipu and his father before. Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette had created a society of aristocracy in Paris that was excited by the exoticism that these three men represented. They were paraded around the city and its surrounds, including the Sèvres manufactory, causing crowds and excitement wherever they were found. In response, various works of art were made to document their visit, some to represent the historic nature of their visit, while others were purely driven by money-making schemes. This Cup and Saucer is an example of a high-end souvenir, representing the three ambassadors with their names written in gold and on the saucer, a collection of imagery that was thought to represent the foreign land of India, including a group of hookahs, palm trees, and turbans.

The ambassadors failed in much of their mission, as France was already on the precipice of economic crisis and the upheaval of the entire society. It is believed that Tipu Sultan murdered the three because of their failure and Tipu himself would die in 1799 during yet another battle with the British. The Cup and Saucer are a recording of a moment in history and a time in French culture that would no longer exist within a year, making it much more than a simply beautiful ware to drink one's tea or coffee from.

Adrienne Gennett
Associate Curator, University Museums

Theatre Sganarelle Moliere Costume

"Doctor in spite of himself", 1860

Grandville (French, 1803–1847)

Aquatint and etching

Gift of John C. Huseby. In the permanent collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. UM94.54

The Doctor in Spite of Himself, a play by Molière (1622–1673): "I believe I would become a doctor for the rest of my life. This is the best craft of all; for whether you cure or make worse, you always get paid". Sganarelle. (Act III, Scene 1)

England has Shakespeare. France has Molière. In the opening scene of *The Doctor in Spite of Himself*, Sganarelle, a poor woodcutter, quarrels with his wife and ends up beating her. She vows to take revenge on him and orchestrates a plot that forces Sganarelle to admit his new identity: a knowledgeable doctor in spite of himself.

Clothes do make the man: dressed in a physician's clothing, Sganarelle becomes a very well regarded, highly considered, and respected individual. He is constantly praised even when he prescribes eccentric remedies. The woodcutter-turned-doctor realizes that his new vocation is more profitable than cutting wood.

Through this play, Molière not only exposes how appearances can be misleading, but he also implicitly ridicules 17th-century medicine. He criticizes a conservative field that is still centered around "moods" and "temperaments" instead of acknowledging the latest discoveries. Because of these weaknesses, sick people tend to be credulous in Molière's eyes and, thus, cannot recognize that Sganarelle is a charlatan.

"Today everyone is a doctor in spite of himself": a friend of mine who is a doctor likes to joke about how, thanks to the internet, "everyone has become today a doctor in spite of himself. People practice self-healing or recommend to others treatments based on online articles". During consultations, he sometimes sees patients who are convinced of having a specific illness because they have read about the symptoms online. "In a certain sense, they would want me to confirm that their 'self-diagnostic' is right!"

Jean-Pierre Taoutel
Senior Lecturer of French & Arabic





***Saint John the Baptist Preaching*, 1962**
 Auguste Rodin (French, 1840–1917)
 Foundry: Georges Rudier Foundry
 (French, founded 1952)
 Bronze
 Gift of the Iris and B. Gerald Cantor
 Foundation. In the Art on Campus
 Collection, University Museums, Iowa
 State University, Ames, Iowa. U2009.13

It is often said that this sculpture in bronze is *plus grande que nature*, meaning “larger than life” or possibly even “over the top.” This was Rodin’s first sculpture following the *The Age of Bronze* controversy (1877), where critics accused the sculptor of having cast the figure of a life-size nude male from a living model! Rodin vigorously denied the accusations, and *Saint John the Baptist Preaching* is often offered as proof against the accusations and a demonstration of Rodin’s talents in sculpting the human form in great detail. Rodin’s decision to depict the saint without clothing was shocking at the time, but it allowed him to better capture his subject’s forward movement of walking and action of talking. (Notice the contractions of the very visible and finely detailed muscles, especially in the limbs and neck.) Many art historians and critics note the nakedness and attention to movement as Rodin’s desire to represent the human condition and its shared everyday actions of walking and talking. Reportedly, Rodin

found inspiration for the physical form upon seeing an Italian peasant named Pignatelli whose “rough and hairy” appearance immediately made Rodin think of Saint John the Baptist, whom Rodin saw as a man of nature and a visionary.¹ These intentions are fitting to the Romantic Period (the period to which Rodin belongs) in which artists strived to engage spectators by appealing to common emotions and experiences through dramatic effects created by expression and movement.

1. Dujardin-Beaumetz, François (1913). *Entretiens avec Rodin (Interviews with Rodin)*. Editions du musée Rodin.

Dr. Stacey Weber-Fève
 Associate Professor of French

Miniature Pitcher, c. 1900

Daum Frères (French, founded 1878–present)

Glass

Gift of Ann and Henry Brunnier. In the Ann and Henry Brunnier Collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. 3.7.28

As an art lover and an ISU faculty since 2012, I have attended many of the University Museums' exhibitions and events. In fall 2016, I was both surprised and delighted to see an Alsatian character on display, Gänseliesel or Lison aux oies (Lizzie of the Geese in English) on the Daum Frères miniature pitcher. In my French home region, Alsace, Gänseliesel is a beloved and enduring character featured on countless household or tourist objects. This has been an ongoing trend since the 19th century, making her (along with the stork or the headpiece she wears) one of the region's symbols. Oddly enough, there is very little information available about Gänseliesel's history. I called the Librairie Oberlin, a bookstore in Strasbourg (the capital city of Alsace), that specializes in the history and culture of the region. They did not have anything available. A quick online search yielded close to nothing either. Gänseliesel may have been a princess punished to live as a geese herder for her vanity or a princess in disguise to escape harm.

Despite this lack of history, if you ever travel to Alsace, you will find Gänseliesel everywhere: as a statue in parks or towns, on shop signs, on china, on postcards, in books and you can even purchase keychains or nametags with her image. I myself own several of her avatars, some of which are on display in this exhibition. From my paternal grandparents, I inherited the bronze figurine purchased in the 1960s at one of the major tourist and pilgrimage sites for Catholics in Alsace, Mount Saint Odilia. For my wedding, we were gifted a ceramic Dutch oven with her image. Although without her geese, she is used as character for political satire in *Jetzt Het's Gschält* (Someone rang the doorbell, 1997, also meaning "something happened" figuratively). My daughter loves *Les Bretzels d'Alicette* (2013), a story featuring a mischievous little girl who, to redeem herself, invented the soft pretzels (it is not a German treat but a French one! And yet another Alsatian symbol). While not called Liesel, a pet goose accompanies Alicette throughout the narrative. You can also see on display a Christmas Ornament and a car sticker that says "Maidele à bord" or "Little Girl on board."

The book *Mon village* by Hansi, has been reprinted since 1913, including on the annual calendar based on the artist's work on the Dutch oven. As an illustrator, Hansi was a stark champion of Alsatian culture, especially since the region had been lost to Germany in 1871. To him, Gänseliesel also became a symbol for the "Frenchness" of Alsace which he hoped to see returned to France. It did, at the end of World War I. As a matter of fact, Alsace, a border region, changed nationalities five times over the course of two centuries. Therefore, Gänseliesel is a character common to both France and Germany, so you may find many renditions of her across the French border. Her most famous avatar is a statue in the town of Göttingen.

Dr. Michèle A. Schaal
Associate Professor of French



The figure of Liesel gained popularity in Germany during the mid to end of the 1800's though there is one mention of an earlier use of the goose and a girl (see Monheim below), the classic figure is, as Dr. Schaal wrote, the statue in Göttingen.

The bronze Gänseliesel statue (Paul Nisse and design by H. Stoeckhart) in Göttingen was produced as part of a city competition in 1898 to replace a lion statue in the city marketplace. The winner was the "Tugendbrunnen" (virtue fountain and the Liesel statue only won second place. However, it was much loved by residents and they decided to take two statues from the competition. Gänseliesel was erected in 1901 and became a symbol of the city, as well as important initiation figure for the university there. All freshmen were required to kiss Liesel their first semester at the University of Göttingen. This became such a noisy (probably drunken) tradition that the city banned the kissing eventually. However, despite the ban, students completing their doctorate still attempt and manage to wrangle a kiss.

The city of Monheim (near Düsseldorf) had a similar figure (a girl with a finger on mouth next to a goose) on their city shield since 1791. This was probably an allusion to the city seal which bears the words "NOCET ESSE LOCUTUM" (or Geschwätz schadet, meaning gossip is harmful).

Other cities erected fountains with Liesel and a goose (for example Berlin, Kreischa) after the one in Göttingen. A couple were earlier: the goose girl statue in Vienna was inaugurated in 1866 at the poultry market and Hannover placed a bronze goose girl at the street, "An der Goseriede" (along the goose swamp) in 1898.

As to origins of the figure... I found a reference to a "Gänsemagd" (goose girl) in the Brothers Grimm's collection of fairy tales, a false bride plot. The original is rather bloody since a horse has its head cut off so he will not reveal the exchanged identities. The figure may have been attached to Bertrada of Laon (the mother of Charlemagne—whom the French claim is French but the German's claim is a German (Karl der Große), in short he is an important figure for both) whose nickname was "Berta the Broadfoot". But there is no real evidence to substantiate this connection.

In 2001, the newspaper in Göttingen sponsored a competition to write a Gänseliesel fairy tale. The winner was Sabine Lebensieg. Finally, Göttingen now has a modern new fairy tale that explains who the figure is and "why" there is a statue of her in Göttingen: Once upon a time there was a poor family with three daughters. The youngest one saves the family from poverty by working in disguise as a boy herding the geese. She ends up marrying the King who loved Liesel so much that he had this statue erected. The new fairy tale is fiction and not based on historical persons or legends, but it sells well to the tourists who visit Göttingen where the Grimm brother's worked as professors.

Beth Martin
Associate Teaching Professor of German





***Le Pardon*, 1914**

Gaston Woodstad (Belgian, 1886–1950) and Mauritius Langaskens (Belgian, 1884–1946)

Belgian

Wool

Gift of Ann and Henry Brunnier. In the Ann and Henry Brunnier Collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. 10.7.1

The title, while being but three syllables and a single noun, is loaded with meaning and possibility: *Le pardon*, forgiveness. Who is asking for this forgiveness and from whom? Is it one woman to the other, begging forgiveness for a lover's spat? Are the two women asking to be pardoned by 1920's French society for their intimacy and love? How about the artists? Perhaps they are beseeching their subjects for their voyeurism. Do we, as the viewers, need to ask for forgiveness from the subjects as well? Are we complicit in this voyeurism, labeling and shaming?

With a storm surrounding the two women, and the lovely framing created by the highlighted center, fruit, flowers and trees, the place of their embrace appears as a respite. It is lovely and calm in there. Such that perhaps this pardon is a space of reclamation and liberation - a taking back of monikers and shame that transforms the injury into resistance and recreation. This moment belongs to them. *Le pardon*, however, belongs to many.

Neysa Goodman
Lecturer of French



***Beauvais Vase*, 1932–1959**

Lalique (French, founded 1888–present)

Glass

Gift of Ann and Henry Brunnier. In the Ann and Henry Brunnier Collection,
Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. 3.7.25

Ever since I became a faculty at Iowa State University in 2012, I have integrated the Iowa State University Museums collections in nearly all my classes. In FRNCH 302 (French Grammar and Writing) specifically, the final exam project is titled “Le musée est à moi!” (the Museum is mine!). In groups of three to four, students get to pick from the permanent collection a work of French or French-inspired art. On the final exam day, we meet at one of University Museums gallery spaces where the chosen objects are set up as in an exhibition. Students play the role of Museum tour guides by providing biographical and technical information, as well as their own interpretation of the chosen work of art. Several students have reported that this was one of the most exciting final exams they have ever taken, despite the work involved. Being out of a traditional classroom and working on artwork that truly liked motivated them and somewhat alleviated the stress generated during finals week. The *Beauvais Vase* has been a student favorite—as have all Lalique objects—and has been featured in nearly all final FRNCH 302 exams. Students chose the vase as, to them, it illustrated French culture and its luxury industry particularly. This statement still proves to be true. Lalique is one of the oldest luxury brands in France and has created many iconic glass works of art, ranging from perfume bottles to statues. To this day, owning a piece by Lalique is a way to assert one’s social status and one’s love for decorative arts.

Dr. Michèle A. Schaal
Associate Professor of French



Bridal Cup, 1700–1750

German

Silver

Gift of Ann and Henry Brunnier. In the permanent collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. 4.6.10

Wedding traditions in German-speaking areas often involve a challenge for the couple to show their readiness for marriage and to prove that their love can overcome any obstacle. One traditional “German life-skill test” used to help a family assess whether a bride was capable of managing basic household tasks was the “bread test.” In order to prove she was ready for marriage, a potential bride was asked to hold a piece of unsliced bread against her chest and to cut several fresh slices from the loafsawing toward herself with a large bread knife. If she cut herself... she might not be ready for marriage—or even survive long enough to get married! Other “tests” for a couple involved showing their families that they could work well together. To do so, a wedding couple might be presented with a task such as cleaning up a pile of broken porcelain at a “Polterabend” or drinking out of wedding cups (“Doppelbecher” or “Brautbecher”). They had to drink a toast from these complicated cups without spilling the contents.

The three bridal cups in University Museums' permanent collection are examples of this

“double-cup” toasting custom. This tradition probably dates as far back as the 13th century, but the story developed into a legend in Nürnberg (Nuremberg) Germany during the 16th century. It is a classic tale of love, devotion and ingenuity: Once upon a time, there was a young noblewoman named Kunigunde, who fell in love with a goldsmith. Unfortunately, Kunigunde’s father wanted his daughter to marry a nobleman. The girl was broken hearted when her father said he would not allow her to marry the man she loved. She became so ill, that her father relented and said he would allow Kunigunde to marry the tradesman IF he was skilled enough to produce a cup from which two people could drink at the same time without spilling a drop. The father was sure the smithy would not be able to produce such a cup, but as love would have it, the couple overcame this challenge. Within days, the love-smitten goldsmith had sculpted a cup of gold portraying a young girl with a wide skirt holding a small cup over her head. Both the skirt and the bucket of the sculpted work could serve as cups and the skillful artisan had designed the vessel so that the two could swivel, allowing both bride and groom to drink from it simultaneously. The challenge was met, Kunigunde married the goldsmith and the two lived happily ever after.

While the legend described above involves a goldsmith in Nürnberg and a metal chalice, artisans in many areas of central Europe designed similar marriage cups. These three cups, donated to University Museums by Ann and Henry Brunnier, demonstrate how prevalent this tradition was and how it has endured for centuries: one cup in the collection was produced in the early 1700's while the other two were created at the end of the 1800's. Nürnberg is also quite a distance from Silesia (today part of Poland) where two of the cups were manufactured—so this tradition was not merely a custom practiced in a narrow geographic region. The visual variety of the cups also illustrates how the craftsperson could vary materials and address the couple's preferences to produce a very individual object. In this collection, we have one intricately worked bridal cup made of silver, another made of brass combined with a lovely glass and enameled skirt and a third simple bridal cup made of glass draped in gilded metal.

Artisans today are still making such cups to give to newlyweds. They are popular wedding gifts. Numerous wedding websites urge couples to drink from bridal cups to emulate the 'love, faithfulness, and hope' shown by the couple from Nürnberg. This is a tradition that has survived and continues today.

Beth Martin
Associate Teaching Professor of German



Marriage or Bridal Cup, c. 1880–1890
Fritz Heckert (Silesia, 1886–1923)
Glass, gilded metal
Gift of Ann and Henry Brunnier. In the permanent collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. 3.6.96



Marriage or Bridal Cup, c. 1880–1890
Fritz Heckert (Silesia, 1886–1923)
Glass with enameled metal, brass
Gift of Ann and Henry Brunnier. In the permanent collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. 3.6.95



Pilgrim Bottle, c. 1710–1715

Meissen (German, founded 1710–present)

Johann Jacob Irminger (German, active dates 1710–1720)

Glass, brass

Gift of Ann and Henry Brunnier. In the Ann and Henry Brunnier Collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. 2.6.2

The idea of a “pilgrim bottle” evokes images of religious pilgrimages associated with long travels to distant lands. Early pilgrim bottles (which have been traced to ancient Rome) served a practical function by transporting liquids for the journey and carrying consecrated water on return; however, by the sixteenth century they were increasingly acquired for their decorative appeal. This stoneware pilgrim bottle, designed by Johann Jacob Irminger (1635–1724) during the early days of the Meissen Porcelain Manufactory, may suggest the robust materials associated with the early pilgrim bottles that had to withstand long journeys. Yet, its style reflects the decorative and representational functions of the object and its links to the Meissen name, which was subsequently associated with costly porcelain.

Beyond their practical function in sustaining pilgrims during travel, pilgrim bottles became symbolic “containers” for narratives that are linked to travel, trade, and “exotic” cultures (e.g., porcelain bottles from China).¹ As pilgrim bottles became increasingly desirable as decorative commodities for presentation in the home, rather than for actual pilgrimages, they were found in collections of domestic items and heirlooms that would showcase the owner’s taste, social status, or wealth. Thus, the significance of the pilgrim bottle is closely linked to its functional use, but also to its image and representational value.

Like a souvenir, a pilgrim bottle could anchor or reactivate memories of past travels, but also reinforce aspirations for future travel. In this regard, the bottle, like other travel objects (either functional or decorative) contributed to the *Vorfreude*, i.e., joy of anticipation, prior to a trip. Pilgrim bottles, like this example, likely remained in the home as a container for perfumes and oils, and may have also been found among possessions that their owners associated with travels (e.g., books, paintings, or decorative objects). During the late seventeenth and eighteenth century, notions of travel were not only inextricably linked to colonization but also increasingly emerged in the popular imagination, e.g., as stories of exploratory expeditions to “uncharted” lands.

Although this pilgrim bottle predates widespread travel by the bourgeois class in Germany, during the late eighteenth century onward, a decorative pilgrim bottle could reinforce the growing importance of secular “pilgrimages” as part of social status. For example, the owners of the bottles may have traveled to the “secular waters” of spas, for curing their ailments. In Germany, “taking the waters” in spas such as Wiesbaden or Baden-Baden was associated with social status and wealth, and spas became increasingly popular and accessible destinations for the bourgeoisie. As noted, the consecrated waters that were originally transported in the early pilgrim bottles were also supplanted by “secular waters” such as perfumes and (curative) oils. The nexus of “waters” (consecrated, curative, cosmetic, or fragrant) and notions of “travel” that may be associated with the pilgrim bottle suggest its multiple uses and meanings, e.g., as an allegorical vessel for historical narratives and personal stories. While the owners of pilgrim bottles may have appreciated the traditions associated with the bottles, as well as their decorative appeal, by the late eighteenth century they were also pursuing new forms of travel and “pilgrimages” that increasingly relegated the pilgrim bottle to the past.

1. Robert Finlay, *The Pilgrim Art: Cultures of Porcelain in World History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010).

Dr. Mark W. Rectanus
University Professor of German

Symphonion Disc Box #252424, 1895–1905

Symphonion Musikwerks

(German, 1885–1930)

Wood, glass, metal, paper

Gift of Donald E. Larew to the Farm House Museum. In the Farm House Museum Collection, Farm House Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. UM2011.431

Music that travels with us is not new. Long before cell phones and wireless earbuds, streaming services, Bluetooth speakers, iPods, portable CD players, and Walkmans, there were music boxes. While the long history of automated music boxes dates to bell towers in the 16th and 17th centuries, the key innovation took place in the late 18th century. Swiss watchmakers applied their skills to pocket-sized music boxes, which featured a rotating cylinder that plucked a metal comb to produce a tune. As these boxes grew larger and more sophisticated, they added other musical accompaniments and played more songs on the same cylinder. This technology began very small, grew to accommodate more features, and ultimately returned to a portable size with greater musical selection. The *Symphonion Disc Box* with interchangeable metal disks offers an excellent example of this.



Founded in Leipzig in 1885, Symphonion Music Works developed the disk box and disks that would only play on their devices. A few years later, two of the company's workers left to start their own company, Brachhausen & Riesner. Their firm would eventually become Polyphon Music Works, also of Leipzig. There was so much demand for these music boxes that within a few years, both companies employed hundreds of employees. Symphonion grew from 25 workers in 1885 to 600 in 1893. Polyphon had 500 workers in 1895 and almost 800 by 1899. Leipzig was a center of automated instrument production from 1880 to 1930. Hundreds of models of automated instruments were produced there and exported during this time. Some notable ones include: self-playing accordions, mechanical zithers, automated drums, mechanized string instruments, player pianos, and piano orchestrions, which recreated ensembles.

After co-founding Polyphon Music Works in 1889, Gustave Brachhausen travelled to America in 1892 and established the Regina Music Box Company shortly thereafter. As the market for music boxes expanded and competition grew, the new American company fared exceptionally well. However, by the beginning of the 20th century, disk boxes gave way to newer technological advancements such as the gramophone, which was also developed in the late 1880s and had a German-American connection. In 1887, the German-born Emil Berliner received an American patent for his gramophone recording system, which had the advantage of both recording and playing back sound. Berliner founded the United States Gramophone Company in 1893. In addition to his invention, he established recording studios, sold phonographs, and manufactured millions of records worldwide. His media savvy and knack for business contributed greatly to the music business as we know it today. The Regina Music Box Company and its predecessors, on the other hand, had seen their heyday. Understanding that the future was not in the disk box business, Regina started selling vacuum cleaners, initially without success, but eventually found its niche.

While the technology of the *Symphonion Disk Box* was eclipsed by Berliner's precursor to the modern record player, the automated music box nevertheless holds an important place in the genealogy of portable music. Just as records and record players have made a comeback in the age of digital music, so too have interchangeable music boxes. They remain popular with collectors and music box aficionados around the world. One can even purchase newly manufactured disks to play on old or refurbished machines. Everything old is new again.

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<http://www.emil-berliner-studios.com/en/chronik0.html>

Dr. William Carter

Associate Professor of German



Game (*Anchor Blocks*), c. 1911

F. AD. Richter & Co (German, 1869–1913)

Quartz, chalk, linseed oil, metal, booklet, wood box

Gift of Louise Hauge. In the permanent collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. UM2005.35a-aaa

Advertised as “The Toy the Child Like Best,” *Anker (Anchor) Stone Building Blocks* have remained popular with children and adults worldwide since the 1880s. The all-natural blocks are made of quartz, chalk, and linseed oil. Plans are also included in the basic set so the builder can create 60 designs, ranging from gates and portals to a courthouse or Turkish bazaar. By adding more components, one can build more elaborate designs. In fact, the company is currently offering a Gropius construction set to honor the 100th anniversary of Bauhaus design.

Playing with building blocks is not new, but the educational value of such play has been credited to Kindergarten founder Friedrich Fröbel. Wooden block sets were popular during the middle of the nineteenth century; however, they were limited by the material. Gustav and Otto Lilienthal improved upon the idea using artificial stone. Alas, like many good ideas, the inventors did not capitalize on their invention. In 1880, the Lilienthals sold their new building block concept to Friedrich Adolph Richter

(1846-1910). Richter was the son of a banker, and started making money as a teenager. By his early twenties, he had opened his own store and saw the future in advertising. He also understood the value of a good education. Although he did not finish high school, he did purchase a doctorate in chemistry from a fake university—the University of Philadelphia—in 1875. Before entering the toy market, Dr. Adolph Richter sold questionable pain remedies and textbooks. He used his printing operation to market, advertise, and even endorse his own products. Despite government crack downs on patent medicine, business was booming. Richter expanded his business by opening a factory, a fraudulent pharmacy, and a mail order operation to sell his products. In addition to pharmaceuticals and toys, Richter also sold chemicals, music boxes, gramophones, records, chocolate, soap, bath products, and even opened a spa. He died one of the richest men in Germany in 1910.



After acquiring the building blocks from the Lilienthals, Richter displayed them at exhibitions and earned numerous awards, which he then used for advertising. He also saw the potential market for hobbyists and started selling special sets in 1887. The first honored Pope Leo XIII and was exhibited in the Vatican. Other sets included a bridge set, a large castle, a large Romanesque church, a large bridge, a large fortress, and a large gothic church. Notable creations for special events or by individual builders include: a model of Buckingham Palace with 30,000 stones, the Wartburg, the Leipzig railway station, the Washington National Cathedral, Independence Hall, and the Singer Building in New York. Anker enthusiasts could purchase loose blocks and accessory figures to fill out their design ideas. A consummate salesman, Richter published ringing endorsements of his Anker blocks by customers from various countries, including Thomas Edison and President Grover Cleveland.

In the age of the internet, virtual reality, and video games like Minecraft, what can we learn from a set of *Anker Stone Blocks* from the early twentieth century? First, toys that encourage creativity bring not only joy but also stimulate the mind. Albert Einstein, Walter Gropius, Erich Kästner, Walter Benjamin, and Bill Clinton were fans of the building blocks. Second, toys and hobbies are big business, as Friedrich Adolph Richter understood. He was ahead of his time in terms of multinational marketing, advertising, and vertical integration. It certainly paid off for him, but his sons squandered their inheritance and the family business shuttered in the early 1960s. Finally, money isn't everything. Enthusiastic Anker Stone builders helped the company restart production in the 1990s. More recently, the company has returned to Rudolstadt, where the factory was founded, and is run by the city's Workers' Welfare Association. Their online store offers everything for the modern Anker enthusiast.

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Dr. William Carter

Associate Professor of German



***Untitled*, 1983**

Ulfert Wilke (German-American, 1907–1987)

Acrylic on canvas

Gift of Friends of the University Museums, Brunnier Art Museum Collection, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. UM84.55

Ulfert Wilke (1907–1987) was an internationally recognized painter, calligrapher, and museum director who was associated with the Abstract Expressionism movement. Wilke was born in Bavaria, Germany and immigrated to the United States in 1938. He is known for his large canvas paintings and detailed lithographs that were inspired by calligraphic writing. Wilke was intrigued by written language and much of his artwork was derived from his abstract interpretations of the shapes, colors, and meanings of writing that he found in all languages, including the poetry and ancient engravings of Asia and the Middle East. During his stay in Kyoto, Japan Wilke lived in a monastery and studied Japanese Zen calligraphy. He was a passionate art collector and was the founding director of the University of Iowa Museum of Art.

As Wilke's biography suggests, this *Untitled* work of art from his later years reflects an ongoing interest in calligraphy and the signification of written language (i.e., words as signs and symbols), which could be expressed in abstract shapes and forms. While many artists assign "Untitled" to their works, in this case *Untitled* may draw the viewer's attention to words, letters, or texts as images and signs that have no fixed meaning; they can activate the viewer's imagination and assume their own abstract meanings. The markings in *Untitled* appear as traces or fragments of calligraphy, script, or individual letters

that may have broken apart, e.g., from a menu of fonts on a word processor. The lines and small shapes in the background emerge as remnants of cutouts that are floating in space. These fragments give the overall composition a sense of buoyancy, but also fragility, as “floating signifiers” that could, at any moment, disintegrate.

Untitled also suggests the interplay of cohesion and fragmentation that simultaneously references shifts from concrete, figurative images to abstract dimensions of languages and their signification. In doing so, Wilke’s painting opens up a world of graphic inscriptions and cryptograms that are informed by non-Western aesthetics and that intersect with experiments of contemporary artists such as Steffani Jemison. Referring to her own artwork, Jemison has remarked: “I am thinking about whether the concept of translation has any meaningful relationship to the activity of drawing or to the drawing object. I am thinking about what happens when writing is decoupled from communication, or when it is deliberately encoded.”¹ This seems to capture Wilke’s *Untitled*, as a cryptogram that has been informed by the artist’s experience across diverse cultures. Thus, the work creates an imaginary space that entangles cultural codes, languages, and signifying practices.

In a similar sense, Wilke’s work of art also resists the appropriation of language and words as a function of design, e.g., the uses of language and signs as logos for brands and promotion. The designation *Untitled* challenges attempts to “name” art or to commodify language. This act of refusal is also evident in Wilke’s earlier series of lithographs *Without Words* (1977). In the resistance to appropriation, naming, and representation, *Untitled* challenges viewers to reflect on the fragments of language that they encounter in communication with each other in everyday life, including the accelerated fragmentation of visual and virtual landscapes. However, Wilke’s artwork also suggests imaginary, alternative signs and meanings that flow between the concrete and the abstract.

1. Stefanni Jemison, “Drafts: Stefanni Jemison on the Stroke, the Glyph, and the Mark. Introduction by Huey Copeland,” *Artforum* 57, no. 8 (2019): 148–153, here 150–151.

Dr. Mark W. Rectanus
University Professor of German

Russian Studies

***Icon of the Mother of God of Tolga*, n.d.**

Russian

Wood, gold leaf, gold thread, beads,
semi-precious jewels

Gift of Ann and Henry Brunnier. In the
permanent collection, Brunnier Art
Museum, University Museums, Iowa State
University. 12.14.1

"And God said, Let us make man in our
image, after our likeness" (Genesis 1:26)

Fifty years ago, the use of the word icon brought about visions of Hollywood stars, high fashion, and impactful artists with a lasting legacy. Today, the term icon is associated with a digital picture on the screen of a computer, iPad or smart phone. In the high-tech world we live in, the historic ecclesiastical term icon is often lost. But, in fact, googling the definition of icon (in Greek *eikon*), the first option references "a painting of Jesus Christ or another holy figure, typically in a traditional style on wood, venerated and used as an aid to devotion in the Byzantine and other Eastern Churches."

Iconography is a common thread throughout many of the world's religions. Beginning in ancient times, icons have visually symbolized religious teachings, deities, experiences and practices. In Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches, icons are prolific, utilized as both a means of instruction and a means of divine inspiration. In history, the veneration of icons led to a division in the Byzantine Christian world beginning in 730 AD. After much debate at the Second Council of Nicea (787 AD), between the iconoclasts (the destroyers of icons) and the iconodules (venerators of icons) the use of icons was upheld by Empress Irene and the council as an integral part of Christian teachings. Today, many symbols and icons of Christianity are readily recognizable such as the Cross, the Madonna and Child, and specific Saints and teachings.

Icons are primarily objects of religious reverence, reflection and inspiration. They are also, on a more secular level, exquisitely crafted works of art often using gold and silver, along with precious and semi-precious stones. The art of the icon has persevered for centuries because of geographic isolation and distinctive religious traditions that have contributed to the continuance of their creation and veneration. In Russia, the basic techniques and materials of icon painting have remained the same as they were handed down from one generation of icon painters to another. The images portrayed on individual icons nearly always follow established historical types of Byzantine art. Russian icons are typically stylized images of saints painted on a wooden panel. A cover, or *oklad*, is created from *repoussé* metals such as silver, copper and brass that is then adorned with semi-precious and precious stones, often creating a sense of depth and richness as seen in this icon.



In Russia, icons can be found in both churches and in homes and range in scale from small to large multi-part screens called iconostasis (*ikonostas*). The most recognizable icons are connected to religious miracles often named for the city or geographical feature near which the miracle occurred. In the case of the representation in this icon, the Most Holy Theotokos appeared in 1314 near the Tolga River in Yaroslavl to St. Prochorus.

In the University Museums's permanent collection there are two additional smaller icons, one Russian and one Italian that illustrate this important historic form of religious art.

Allison Sheridan
Collections Manager, University Museums



Kovsh, 1896–1908

Fedor Ivanovich Rückert (Russian, 1840–1917)

Assay master: Ivan Lebedkin

Gilded silver and enamel, cabochon-cut carnelians and green jades

Gift of Ann and Henry Brunnier. In the Ann and Henry Brunnier Collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. 4.14.4

While most would recognize the name Fabergé, creator of the celebrated bejeweled and enameled eggs, many are unfamiliar with the scope of the decorative arts industry of enamelware in Russia. The University Museums' permanent collection contains fine examples of enameled objects including boxes, eggs, cases, cups, trays, spoons, lampadas, a poesy holder and more. The three objects in this exhibition, all from Moscow, showcase the high quality work of three of the most well-known firms and artists beyond the house of Fabergé.

Vitreous enamel objects begin with a glass, ceramic, or in this case, metal base. To the base shape is fused metal wiring formed into elaborate designs. The wiring creates cells or cloisons that are then filled with powdered glass and fired at over 750 degrees Celsius. The powdered glass melts, fusing onto the substrate, and eventually hardens into a solid surface. The technique was discovered by the ancient Egyptians and used historically in China, Japan, Greece, the Roman Empire, Middle East and India.

Moscow was the epicenter of high-end silversmith and enamel firms. German born Fedor Rückert, was the only Moscow silversmith whose mark also appeared on Fabergé's objects. Though Rückert had his own firm and workshop of over 40 workers from which he created and sold his enameled wares, Rückert began working for Fabergé in 1887. This collaboration is known because he presented Fabergé a vase in 1912 commemorating their 25-year working relationship.

Rückert's shop was honored with commissions for the imperial family of Russia. Often he combined traditional Russian and emerging Art Nouveau motifs and forms as can be seen in this Kovsh. Rückert was seen as an innovator in enamelwork as well as a harbinger of traditional *Usolsk* design—shading the enamel in polychrome within the individual cloisons. The kovsh shape represents a dipper, ladle or vessel for drinking mead and often has a boat-like bowl with a figural handle. Metal kovshi (plural for kovsh) rose in popularity in Russia in the mid-fourteenth century however wooden kovsh had been used centuries previous. Highly decorative kovsh, such as this one, would have been reserved for special ceremonies. Rückert's firm, like many, closed during the Russian Revolution of 1917.

Like Rückert, Gustav Klingert, a Muscovite also originally from Germany, worked for the house of Fabergé. In 1865, he established the Gustav Klingert Firm in Moscow with 200 employees. The firm was awarded bronze medals at the Paris World Exposition in 1889, an international showcase for the decorative arts. Just four years later, at the Chicago Columbian Exposition in 1893 he was noted as one of the most important enamellers of the time. The firm began to export its wares overseas with distribution by Tiffany & Co., New York. The firm remained in business until 1917.

Like the teapot in this exhibition, Klingert was known for the use of turquoise and cobalt blues to outline and highlight the shape of his metalwork and intricate floral and scrollwork designs of the enameling.



Teapot, 1893

Gustav Klingert Firm (Russian, 1865–1916)

Gilded silver and enamel, mother-of-pearl finial and insulators

Gift of Ann and Henry Brunnier. In the Ann and Henry Brunnier Collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. 4.14.13



Demitasse Cup and Saucer, c. 1900

Maria V. Semenova (Russian, life dates unknown, active 1896–1917)

Gilded silver and enamel

Gift of Ann and Henry Brunnier. In the Ann and Henry Brunnier Collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. 4.14.6ab

Creator of the demitasse cup and saucer, Maria Semenova, was the daughter of Vasiley Semenov—an established silversmith, and was an important silversmith and enameller in her own right. After his death she inherited his workshop hiring up to 100 workers and from 1896 to 1904 and began the production of enamels.

Her work was unique compared to her contemporaries in the male dominated field and was considered to have a feminine gracefulness that was atypical of older Russian enamels. The Semenova demitasse cup and saucer on exhibition are fine examples of her distinctive style, one influenced by the Art Nouveau styles of Europe. With flamboyant floral designs and colorful arabesques, this cup and saucer set exemplifies the hallmarks of Semenova's work.

The permanent collection at University Museums has two additional works of enamelware by this important female silversmith; five objects by Rückert; and six objects by Klingert including a remarkable and delicate *plique-a-jour* enamel charka.

Allison Sheridan
Collections Manager, University Museums

Spanish



America in the Making: Francisco Vasquez de Coronado, 1938

Newell Convers Wyeth
(American, 1882–1945)

Oil on hardboard

Gift of John Morrell and Company, Ottumwa, Iowa. In the permanent collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. UM83.20

N. C. Wyeth's *America in the Making* series includes 12 dramatic paintings designed to depict the most inspirational and patriotic events in the history of the United States. Commissioned in 1940 by the Morrell Company of Ottumwa, Iowa for a calendar, Wyeth's series includes images from the early explores like Francisco Vázquez de Coronado to the Mayflower Compact of 1620 to significant figures such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Abraham Lincoln.

Wyeth's *Francisco Vasquez de Coronado* recalls the Spanish explorer's journey from Mexico through much of today's Southwestern United States before reaching the Great Plains. Coronado was born in 1554 in Salamanca, Spain, and traveled to New Spain (Mexico) in 1535 as part of the entourage of the Viceroy, Antonio de Mendoza. He was named governor of New Galicia, a province in northwest Mexico, where he came to amass great wealth. Following a long line of Spanish conquistadors and explorers, Coronado sought riches and prestige in the same way that Cortés and Pizarro did before him: through the conquest of indigenous peoples across the Americas. Inspired by tales of fabulously wealthy civilizations to the north, in 1540 Coronado led an expedition in search of the mythical Seven Golden Cities of Cibola. He explored territories along the west coast of Mexico to the Gulf of California before heading through what is now Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and Oklahoma and reaching the Great Plains in Kansas. Along the way, they battled and befriended several Indian groups, and became the first Europeans to set eyes on the Grand Canyon, but none of the lands they encountered produced the

precious metals they pursued. Disappointed that the fantastic stories of gilded cities were false, the expedition returned to New Spain in 1542. The journey was deemed a failure and triggered Coronado's personal bankruptcy, and officials criminally charged him for atrocities committed in the crown's name. With the help of highly-placed friends, Coronado was cleared of the charges but removed from the office of Governor anyway. He then moved to Mexico City to work in the city council until his death in 1554.

Surrounded by some of the 300 Spanish soldiers on horseback and one of the four Franciscan monks that made the journey, Wyeth's painting depicts Coronado and his men as enterprising explorers. Vivid blues and whites convey the clear desert sky and an absent but all-pervading sun offers the sensation of high temperatures leading to perpetual exhaustion and thirst. Along with the dust clouds and sparse vegetation, Wyeth strikingly represents the grueling desert landscape that marked the most arduous portions of Coronado's expedition. The painter's masterful ability to bring authenticity and stirring detail to the subject—from the proud upright posture of Coronado and his men to the desolation and intensity of the land—evokes both respect and fear as the soldiers are at once shown to be hardened men with an adventurous spirit while their battle gear recall the brutalities committed against several Indian groups in the founding of the U.S. Similarly, absent from the image are any of the 1,000 Tlaxcalan Indian allies that played a key role in Coronado's expedition. To that end, Wyeth's *Francisco Vasquez de Coronado* can be considered an idealized and highly stylized visual piece meant to celebrate the great events leading to the founding of the U.S., just as the original commission had hoped for.

Dr. Chad M. Gasta
Department Chair & Professor of Spanish
Director of International Studies



Penitents—In the Shadow of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, 1930

Jay Norwood Darling (American, 1876–1962)
Etching and aquatint

Gift of the J. N. "Ding" Darling Foundation. In the permanent collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. UM82.195

According to the dictionary, Penitentes were "members of local sects of flagellants among the Spanish of New Mexico and Colorado who practiced self-castigation and other cruel rites, including crucifixion until 1896, during Holy Week. Though condemned by the church, Penitentes still exist in some places and carry on their practices in secret."

Jay Norwood Darling (1876–1962), also known as Ding Darling, was an American cartoonist for the *Des Moines Register* and the *New York Herald Tribune*, among other newspaper outlets, and his honors include winning two Pulitzer Prizes (1924, 1943). Besides his well-known career as a cartoonist, Darling was also an advocate for the conservation of wildlife and nature, which led him to help establish the National Wildlife Federation. Although his conservation work is not directly reflected in this print, the spectator can see a wink to an interest in indigenous

nature through the presence of the *Sangre de Cristo* Mountains in the backdrop, which are located in southern Colorado and northern New Mexico, the territory known for many penitent sects.

The origin story of the penitents and the subject of the print theme dates to the Spanish Middle Ages. Every year during *Semana Santa*, a millenary tradition and an important time of religious festivity in Spain known as Holy Week, thousands of anonymous *penitentes* appear in the streets in honor of their religious brotherhoods (*Cofradías* and *Hermandades*). Dressed as *Nazarenos* (as an act of imitation of Jesus when carrying his cross), they take part in processions following a tradition that dates back to the 13th century. Modeling Christ carrying the cross, some of the penitents bear shackles at their ankles, and wear a tunic with an open space on the back where they flagellate themselves with thick ropes. Their self-flagellation reflects a practice of mortification of the flesh that began in the Middle Ages meant to symbolize the Flagellation of Christ (as a part of the Passion prior to the Crucifixion). Other penitents carry a cross (sometimes up to 150 pounds) and a crown of thorns upon their heads—such as the scene depicted in Darling’s print. Whatever act they decide to take on, each *penitente* has their own personal reasons for choosing to commemorate penitence through the trajectory of Christ’s crucifixion as a means to abide by a promise or to plead for divine help.

The name of the mountains and title of the print, *Sangre de Cristo*, (Blood of Christ) likely refers to the colors of the mountains at dawn and dusk when the sun, hanging low in the sky, offers a red earthy tone that is similar to blood. The colors also may connect to the Spanish origins of the *penitentes* tradition in that region. More specifically, the print may reflect the customs of *The Brothers of the Pious Fraternity of Our Father Jesus the Nazarene* in New Mexico, a sect that continued their rituals in seclusion and isolation from other major religious communities in the region. After Mexico’s independence from Spain in 1821, Franciscan, Dominican, and Jesuit missionaries from Spain were dismissed, and the remaining secular priests rarely visited such outposts as those found in New Mexico, which allowed various sects to continue their rituals unabated.

What is also striking about the print is the astonishing similarities to the work of the Spanish painter, Francisco de Goya (1746–1828). Goya, whose dark period emphasized out-of-focus silhouettes against darkened backgrounds to depict the horrors of myth and life, is quite similar to the technique Darling employs in *Penitentes*. Goya’s influence can be seen in the not-so-well-defined silhouettes that walk behind the *penitentes*. Darling’s depicted group of followers clearly resembles Goya’s *Disasters of War*, *Caprichos*, and *Disparates* which were created as part of the so-called Black Paintings period.

Dr. Julia Domínguez
Associate Professor of Spanish



San Tuadio de Guadalupe, Guanajuato,
c. 1925

Lowell Houser (American, 1902–1971)

Woodblock print

Gift of Mary Meixner. In the permanent collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. UM97.135

A contemporary of Grant Wood, Lowell Houser was an artist who held a residence here at Iowa State from 1937–1938 while working with Grant Wood and other artists to complete the murals now hanging in the Parks Library. In addition, he was also a student of Mayan and Aztec culture, becoming enamored with the debates surrounding Mexican national identity in the 19th and 20th centuries. The woodblocks prints, *San Tuadio de Guadalupe* and *Lalgesia: Chichen Itza*, on the one hand reflect Houser’s firsthand



***Lalgtesia, Chichen Itza*, c. 1925**

Lowell Houser (American, 1902–1971)

Woodblock print

Gift of Mary Meixner. In the permanent collection, Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. UM97.135

experiential engagement with the cultural memory of Mexico and on the other, reflects his understanding of how Mexico should be understood as a mixture of cultural identities and memories.

More particularly, the print, *Lalgtesia, Chichen Itza* depicts the main temple at Chichen Itza, the ancient capital of the Mayans, who occupied the Yucatan Peninsula from 2000 BCE to 1597 when the Spanish conquered the Itza city of Nojpeten. While many of the cities were destroyed by the Spanish, beginning in the 19th century, Mexican archaeologists visited the Yucatan region in Southern Mexico in order to uncover Mexico's indigenous history and grapple with the impact of Mayan culture upon Mexico's newly formed nation. Indeed, it is because of these expeditions, among many other factors, that Maya is still spoken today and remains a key linguistic element in the Spanish language.

The second print, *San Tuadio de Guadalupe* is a temple in honor of the Virgin of Guadalupe or the Lady of Guadalupe, considered by Mexican culture to be the patron saint of the *mestizo*, or those Mexicans who possessed both indigenous and Spanish bloodlines due to intermarriage between the groups during the 15th through the 17th centuries. More specifically, this temple celebrates the miracle of the Lady Guadalupe visiting Juan Diego in 1531 asking him in Nahuatl to build a shrine on the hill of Tepeyac. This linguistic and religious mixing present in the prophecy made her an optimal choice for proponents of Mexican independence in the 18th century, such as Fray Servando Teresa de Mier, to make the Lady Guadalupe an emblem of Mexican mestizo identity that would help define the new Mexican nation state.

At the end of the day, beyond reflecting Houser's time spent learning in Mayan and Aztec culture, I would argue that these woodblocks force American viewers to consider whether these works of art should be considered part of the Western canon alongside American and European cultural production.

Dr. James Nemiroff
Lecturer of Spanish

U.S. Latino/a Studies

***Street Scene, Guanajuato*, c. 1925**

Lowell Houser (American, 1902–1971)

Woodblock print

Gift of Mary Meixner. In the permanent collection,
Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums, Iowa
State University, Ames, Iowa. UM97.136

In the U.S. Latino/a Studies course, “Iowa Latino/as and the Immigration Experience,” students begin to see the impact of the Latino/a community in Ames and other Iowan towns in ways they may have overlooked previously. A mural painted by Lowell Houser, *The Evolution of Corn*, stretches across the back wall of the U.S. Post Office in downtown Ames. The left side of *The Evolution of Corn* depicts a Mayan man with the Rain God and Sun God shown in the background to represent the relationship between the Mayans and corn. The right side of the mural instead portrays a farmer with scientific objects in order to show the relationship of Iowa farmers to corn. Connecting the two men is a large cornstalk, painted in the middle of the mural, to which they are both tending. The mural demonstrates Houser’s passion for Mayan culture while also confirming his Midwest roots. Houser was born in Chicago, Illinois, but grew up primarily in Ames, Iowa. He is a graduate of Ames High School and both studied and taught art classes at Iowa State University. While studying at the Art Institute of Chicago (following his initial studies at I.S.U.), Houser met Everett Gee Jackson, an artist known for his painting *Serra Museum*



Tower, San Diego that is owned by the Smithsonian American Art Museum. The two artists traveled together to Mexico and lived in cities including Guadalajara, Guanajuato, Oaxaca, and Mexico City. During Houser’s time in Mexico, the young Midwesterner drew inspiration from the paintings and murals of famous Mexican artists including Diego Rivera and José Clemente Orozco. Houser’s woodblock print, *Street Scene, Guanajuato*, is a depiction of a typical street in Guanajuato during the Depression Era. The woodblock shows houses appearing to be stacked on top of one another, all with adjoining balconies. Guanajuato, in particular, inspired Houser as the city is home to many narrow streets and alleyways. The intersections of the streets, balconies, and alleys gave the town the nickname “Callejón del Beso” or “Alley of the Kiss” because the balconies of the homes are so close together that neighbors can almost kiss each other. Houser created quite a few woodblock prints, like *Street Scene, Guanajuato*, but also painted and glass murals and watercolors.

Sophia Wignall
ISU Student

Dr. Megan Myers
Assistant Professor of Spanish and U.S. Latino/a Studies



***Homenaje a Selena*, 2000**

Anita Rodriguez (Hispanic-American, b. 1941)

Lithograph

Gift of Diane Greenlee for the Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women in Politics. In the Art on Campus Collection, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. U2003.33

Anita Rodriguez's *Homenaje a Selena* was featured in the 1999 exhibition *Expanded Visions: Women Artists Print the American West* curated by the Women of the West Museum. It was one of the four prints dealing with multicultural women's identities. While the skeleton is an almost universal symbol of Death, its significance and meaning varies from one culture to another. As Rodriguez explains in the original description for her print, Death is not as fearful an event in Latin American cultures as compared to Western white cultures. On the contrary, it is the object of many celebrations, including *homenajes* or altars to the deceased. Rodriguez's print is a tribute to Selena, a Tejana singer who was killed by the president of her fan club when she was at the height of her fame in the mid-1990s. More importantly, before her death, Selena was on the verge of bridging Anglo- and Mexican-American cultures through her music. Rodriguez wanted to pay tribute to the singer by using the Latin American tradition of the skeleton and by representing the singer as the dynamic artist she was. Dynamic is also a word that may be attributed to art at large. Indeed, *Homenaje a Selena* may also be read through another lens as it mirrors the tradition of the memento *mori*: skeletons were featured dancing around or with laypeople and prominent figures such as kings. These illustrations, prints, or intaglios were reminders that death did not spare anyone, regardless of their gender, age, or social class. Rodriguez, thus, pays tribute to Selena yet also reminds us that, even if it should not be dreaded, Death remains a universal experience, something that awaits us all.

Dr. Michèle A. Schaal
Associate Professor of French



International Women's Day, 8 March, 2011, 100 Years, 2011

Favianna Rodríguez (American, b. 1978)

Poster

On loan from the collection of Michèle Schaal.

Favianna Rodríguez is an Oakland-based American artist and activist, who self-identifies as a queer Latina with Afro-Peruvian ancestors. Her dynamic career as a political poster designer, cultural organizer, and interdisciplinary artist has received numerous awards and honors from prestigious Foundations such as the Chicana Latina Foundation in San Francisco, the Belle Foundation, and the Center for Cultural Innovation in Los Angeles. In 2008, she was named one of the US's leading visionaries by UTNE Magazine. Her vibrant designs aim to inspire bold activism and resistance to oppression against minorities and women. Recently, she designed the colorful packaging for Ben and Jerry's ice cream flavor Pecan Resist. This design countering the Trump administration received an award of \$25,000 from Ben and Jerry's, which was donated to Color of Change, Honor the Earth, and the Women's March.

Rodríguez' focus on women's issues is prominently displayed in her production of more than one poster for International Women's Day. Exemplarily, her March 8, 2011 poster celebrating the 100 year anniversary of International Women's Day centers her commitments to environmentalism, immigration, feminism, and social justice through

the juxtaposition of images honoring indigenous motherhood, multiracial activism, and women's solidarity. The images throughout the print recall 1960s mobilization, contemporary women's marches, and the powerful figure of the earth mother.

The central image, composed of bold lines, features a face that looks straight at the viewer. Does she challenge? Does she stand with conviction? Her gaze harbors dignity, and her posture expects respect. The carved-like features are reminiscent of pre-Columbian statues; the image suggests a Native woman's gaze, empowered by colors of the earth, and a nose that could be a knife, a weapon. The viewer feels her strength and defiance. Underneath, a digitally enhanced image displays a woman screaming into a microphone/tape recorder. She has a voice that is visible by her position. Along the right side, a muted blue (sky or turquoise under water?) features other women screaming—advocating, no doubt—for their right to be heard, to be present, and to be respected. This tableaux gives faces to the theme, "Women, Unions, Rights. Power," and honors the long history of International Women's Day, which both celebrates women's achievements and calls all to action for gender parity.

Dolores, pain in Spanish, is a highly symbolic print. For me, when I hear the name, I think of the elder women in the family who had been christened María Dolores. They were strong women who did not fear the pain of a hard life and felt the blessings of the Virgin Mary guide their trials, tribulations, and joys. Their most repeated prayer, "Dios te salve María, Llena eres de gracia, Bendita Tú eres entre todas las mujeres...." devotedly recited as their fingers pressed time worn rosary beads in candle lit churches to give them calm and strength to start each new day with acceptance, gratitude, and optimism.

Dolores could refer to the pain of living, of child birth, or even to the pain of losing the planet as we know it. As I look at the image, I see a woman (*madre del universo*? An African descendent deity such as Yemaya or Ochun? Or the revered Incan Pachamama?) wrapping her arms around the small sphere of the earth. I can imagine her chanting a prayer or a song from a long ago ancestor. Nature surrounds her. The animal next to her might be a deer and thus represent regeneration, piety, devotion, and in Christian stories, that God is taking care of his/her children. Favianna's now famous butterfly which insists that migration is beautiful, floats above a tropical leaf on the upper right hand side. This could remind the viewer that the earth keeps turning round and round, and the mother's faith in life will never give up. The strength of women is honored, as guardians of memory, cultivators of culture, and negotiators of change.

The image, titled *Dolores*, embodies femininity and feminism in my mind. Yet, as I stare at it, I lose the certainty of this figure as female, and see this image as a fluidly gendered being embracing the world from the spirals of motion and emotion that shape the figure of the body.

The primary colors, with lines that recall the fullness of a Botero sculpture, and/or the passion of a Cuban or Haitian primitivist painting, suggest continuity and survival. Nature is in full bloom and the world, held by a loving figure, is still full of hope and possibility.

As in all artwork, the interpretations are personal and shifting. What did we just learn today that we could apply to our reading of this image?

The 2018 giclée print is described by the artist as a work of art dedicated to the life of the civil rights activist Dolores Huerta. It was commissioned by the Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity at Stanford University. Dolores Huerta has long been an inspiration for me. At the age of 89, she is still actively fighting for human and civil rights. She spoke enthusiastically at the Hilton Des Moines on September 20, 2019. Dolores Huerta chose a public path of resistance when she partnered with Cesar Chavez to co-found the National Farmworkers Association (later the United Farm Workers). Interestingly, history raised Chavez to prominence, despite the fact that her intelligence in words and strategy grounded the work they did together. It is time that her memory and voice receive the due place in history they deserve. The original work of art at Stanford, and now the giclée version that is part of University Museums collection donated by Women in French academic association, proves that Dolores occupies a central place in the history of women's fights for rights, remembrance, and survival. Dolores is a person ardently advocating for a world of equality and health for all living beings. The blue animal on to her side, which then looked like a doe to me, is actually, the artist tells us, a traditional Xolo dog. I was glad to have read the description after I imagined the significance of this work of art within my own frames of reference. For me, this print now holds personal memory (the women in my family who resorted to prayer to be in this world), historical meaning (Dolores Huerta who resorted to strikes to change this world), and political meaning (the bold colors affirm that it is critical to fight for this world). How do your own points of reference make this dynamic work of art meaningful to you?

Dr. Lucía M. Suárez
Director of U.S Latino/a Studies
Associate Professor of Spanish & USLS



***Dolores, a Warrior for All Living Beings*, 2018**

Favianna Rodríguez (American, b. 1978)

Digital print

Gift of Women in French. Women in French is a scholarly association established in 1978 and whose goal is the promotion of the study of French and Francophone women authors, artists, filmmakers, and intellectuals. In the Art on Campus Collection, University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. U2019.230



Detail of *Beauvais Vase*, 1932–1959 by Lalique (French, founded 1888–present). Glass.
Gift of Ann and Henry Brunnier. In the Ann and Henry Brunnier Collection, Brunnier Art Museum,
University Museums, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. 3.7.25

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