

Exhibition Schedule: Fall/Winter 2018



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Above: *Simmon: A Private Landscape (#1)*; Hosoe Eikoh (b. 1933); Japan, 1971; gelatin silver print; purchase and partial gift from Gloria Katz and Willard Huyck and purchased through the Freer|Sackler acquisitions fund in honor of Julian Raby, director emeritus of the Freer Gallery of Art and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, S2018.2.82

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

Japan Modern: Photography from the Gloria Katz and Willard Huyck Collection

September 29, 2018–January 21, 2019

Resource: [exhibition website](#)

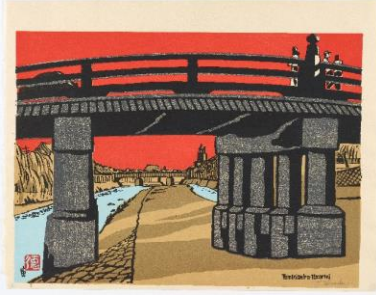
Celebrating the Freer|Sackler's recent acquisition of a major Japanese photography collection, this exhibition features iconic works dating from the 1920s to the 1980s. Whether capturing evocative early landscapes or the gritty realities of postwar Japan, these photographs focus on Japanese artists' search for a sense of place in a rapidly changing country. The images highlight destinations both rural and urban, in styles ranging from powerful social documentary to intensely personal. A selection of photobooks and experimental films adds to this multifaceted exploration. Complemented by *Japan Modern: Prints in the Age of Photography*

FREER|SACKLER



Office of Marketing and Communications
Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery

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Japan Modern: Prints in the Age of Photography

September 29, 2018–January 21, 2019

Resource: [exhibition website](#)

When photography arrived in Japan in the mid-nineteenth century, traditional woodblock printmakers were forced to adapt their craft to keep pace with the new medium. In the decades that followed, major upheavals—a new system of government, a devastating earthquake, and the onset of world war—continued to influence Japanese prints. This exhibition explores Japanese artists' reactions to the challenges of modernity from the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth century. It first examines the collapse of the traditional woodblock-printmaking industry in the face of the printing press and photography. Then, it traces the medium's resurrection as an art form, through which printmakers recorded scenes of their changing country in striking new ways. Complemented by *Japan Modern: Photography from the Gloria Katz and Willard Huyck Collection*

Sanjō Bridge; Tokuriki Tomikichirō (1902–2000); Japan, Showa era, 1954; woodblock print; ink and color on paper; on loan from the Ken and Kiyo Hitch Collection, LTS2017.3.27, Image courtesy of Kyoto Tokuriki Hangakan, Inc.



Shaping Clay in Ancient Iran

September 8, 2018–September 2019

Resource: [exhibition website](#)

Potters in ancient Iran were fascinated by the long-beaked waterfowl and rams with curled horns around them. This exhibition of ceramics produced in northwestern Iran highlights animal-shaped vessels as well as jars and bowls decorated with animal figures. These ceramics, the most common objects to survive from ancient Iran, date from the Chalcolithic period (5200 BCE–3400 BCE) to the Parthian period (250 BCE–225 CE). Their distinct shapes and lively decoration illustrate the creative attempts of potters to experiment with clay and to lend originality and even whimsy to utilitarian vessels thousands of years ago.

Tripod ewer; northwestern Iran, Iron Age I–II, 1350–800 BCE; burnished earthenware; Gift of Joan and Frank Mount, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, S1994.14



A Glimpse of Ancient Yemen

August 18, 2018–August 18, 2019

Resource: [exhibition website](#)

Frankincense and myrrh, the fabled aromatics, have long been associated with south Arabia (modern Yemen), which the Romans called *Arabia Felix* (Arabia, the Prosperous). Caravans transported the luxury commodities to the Mediterranean world and the Indian subcontinent. Timna and other cities along the trade routes prospered and became known for their artistic production, such as fine alabaster figures and impressive metalwork. This long-distance trade with the Greeks, Romans, and Persians also introduced new artistic and cultural traditions to ancient Arabia, a once-vital area now marred by war and destruction.

A Glimpse of Ancient Yemen highlights a small selection of objects that were excavated from the region by the pioneer archaeologist Wendell Phillips and his team in 1950 and 1951.

Lion with rider; Yemen, Kingdom of Qataban, Timna, 75 BCE–50 CE; bronze; gift of the American Foundation for the Study of Man (Wendell and Marilyn Phillips Collection), Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, S2013.2.77.2

ONGOING EXHIBITIONS IN THE SACKLER



Encountering the Buddha: Art and Practice across Asia

Through November 29, 2020

Resources: [press release](#); [images](#)

Visitors can step into a Tibetan Buddhist shrine, linger at a Sri Lankan stupa, travel with an eighth-century Korean monk, and discover remarkable objects in *Encountering the Buddha*. The exhibition draws upon the museums' collections of Buddhist art from Afghanistan, India, Southeast Asia, China, and Japan. By exploring new narratives and technologies, *Encountering the Buddha* invites visitors to reconsider Buddhist practices and concepts of beauty.

Detail, The Tibetan Buddhist Shrine Room from the Alice S. Kandell Collection; photograph: 2010; objects: Tibet, China, and Mongolia, 13th–20th century; mixed media; gifts and promised gifts from the Alice S. Kandell Collection



Resound: Ancient Bells of China

Through mid-2020

Resources: [press release](#); [images](#)

The Sackler Gallery holds an unrivaled collection of ancient Chinese bells, including six bells of different sizes from the same set. In *Resound*, modern technology allows visitors to “play” these bells cast in the Bronze Age, explore music and sound theory, and listen to contemporary compositions that were written for the ancient set and were specially commissioned for this exhibition.

Bell (*bo*) with birds and dragons, from a set of four, China, Shanxi province, State of Jin, Houma foundry, Eastern Zhou dynasty, late Spring and Autumn period, ca. 500–450 BCE, Purchase—Charles Lang Freer Endowment, Freer Gallery of Art, F1941.9; Two bells (*bo*) with felines and dragons, possibly from a set of four, North China, Eastern Zhou dynasty, late Spring and Autumn period, ca. 550–500 BCE, Gift of Arthur M. Sackler, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, S1987.274, 307; Bell (*bo*) with felines and dragons, China, Shanxi province, State of Jin, Houma foundry, Eastern Zhou dynasty, late Spring and Autumn period, ca. 550–500 BCE, Gift of Arthur M. Sackler, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, S1987.282



Subodh Gupta: Terminal

Through February 3, 2019

Resources: [press release](#); [images](#)

Internationally acclaimed artist Subodh Gupta transforms familiar household objects, such as stainless steel and brass vessels often found in India, into wondrous structures. The Freer | Sackler features the artist’s monumental installation *Terminal*. Composed of towers of brass containers connected by an intricate web of thread, *Terminal* converts the readymade into a glimmering landscape. Ranging from one to fifteen feet tall, the spires recall architectural features found on religious structures such as churches, temples, and mosques.

Image courtesy Hauser & Wirth Gallery

ONGOING EXHIBITIONS IN THE FREER



A Perfect Harmony

Ongoing

Juxtaposing American and Asian art is a legacy of the founder of our museum, Detroit industrialist Charles Lang Freer. He believed in a universal language of beauty that resonated across time, space, and cultural diversity.

Freer's taste in American art was formed in the Gilded Age, but he favored refinement over ostentation. In the 1890s, works by Dewing, Tryon, Thayer, and especially Whistler were admired—and sometimes criticized—as highly refined works intended for connoisseurs. By focusing on a small group of stylistically similar artists, Freer ensured the paintings in his collection “speak” to one another and reward repeated viewing by revealing “new beauties.” Look, and look again, to appreciate shared aesthetic harmonies and subtle differences.

Freer disdained the avant garde abstraction that transformed American art after World War I. He forbade additions to his American collection after his death in 1919, and it remains a time capsule of Gilded Age aestheticism. Nevertheless, it was through American art of his own time that Freer developed the habits of quiet contemplation and intelligent comparison that he hoped to share with future generations of museum visitors.

Breakfast in the Loggia; John Singer Sargent (1856–1925); 1910; oil on canvas; Gift of Charles Lang Freer, Freer Gallery of Art, F1917.182



The Peacock Room Comes to America

Through 2018

Before the Peacock Room became a work of art by James McNeill Whistler, it was the dining room in the London mansion of Frederick Leyland. Its shelves were designed to showcase the British shipping magnate's collection of Chinese blue-and-white porcelain. Whistler completely redecorated the room in 1876 and 1877 as a “harmony in blue and gold.” Leyland was far from pleased with the transformation and the artist's fee. He quarrelled with Whistler, but he kept the room intact.

Charles Lang Freer purchased the room in 1904. He had it taken apart, shipped across the Atlantic, and reassembled in his home in Detroit, Michigan. There, he gradually filled its shelves with ceramics collected from Syria, Iran, Japan, China, and Korea. For Freer, the Peacock Room embodied his belief that “all works of art go together, whatever their period.”

Whistler's extravagant interior has been on permanent display since the Freer Gallery of Art opened in 1923. Located between galleries of Chinese and American art, the Peacock Room remains a place where Asia meets America.

Harmony in Blue and Gold: The Peacock Room; James McNeill Whistler (1834–1903); 1876–77; oil paint and gold leaf on canvas, leather, mosaic tile, and wood; Gift of Charles Lang Freer, Freer Gallery of Art, F1904.61



Engaging the Senses

Ongoing

As our experiences become increasingly mediated by digital technologies, direct sensory perception and appreciation of the world have become all the more important. The sound of a voice, the glimpse of a painting, the taste of food, the touch of fabric, the scent of a flower—all stimulate the senses. According to classical and Arab philosophy, the five outer senses—sound, sight, taste, touch, and smell—are directly connected to the inner senses that define us as human beings: understanding, imagination, and memory.

Some works, such as manuscripts of the Qur'an, were made in the service of the faith and were frequently recited and viewed in public. Other creations were intended for personal enjoyment and contemplation. As artists, objects, and ideas moved across the Islamic world—a vast geographic span from Morocco and Spain to the islands of Southeast Asia—certain formal and sensory features spread across borders. Still, every region, province, and even city developed its own artistic language with rich sensory resonances, many of which are explored in these galleries.

Bowl; eastern Iran, Samanid period, 10th century; earthenware painted under glaze; Gift of Charles Lang Freer, Freer Gallery of Art, F1957.24



Looking Out, Looking In

Ongoing

Many of the powerful emperors of China's last dynasties—the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1912)—were patrons, collectors, and casual practitioners of the arts. They used art to legitimize and glorify their rule. It served many functions: for state rituals, for expressing piety, to dazzle palace visitors, to build diplomatic relations, and for personal pleasure.

The emperors' officials oversaw the palace painting academy, imperial porcelain factory, and numerous other workshops. Their artists creatively reworked earlier traditions, which bolstered the emperors' legitimacy by showing their command of China's long history.

Many emperors supported international trade with Japan and Korea, Southeast Asia, the Himalayas, and the Indian subcontinent as well as the Islamic world and Europe. These exchanges helped shape the development of Chinese art, especially in the early fifteenth-century and eighteenth-century courts emphasized in this gallery.

While the Ming and Qing courts followed many of the same practices in government and art, the Ming emperors were native Chinese, and the Qing rulers were not. Heirs of Manchu chieftains who swept into China on horseback from the north, the Qing emperors embraced all things Chinese, but also steadfastly maintained their own traditions.

Dish with copper-red glaze; China, Jiangxi Province, Jingdezhen, Ming dynasty, Xuande mark and period (1426–35); porcelain with copper-red glaze; on the base, a six-character cobalt-oxide (blue) reign mark under colorless glaze; Purchase—Charles Lang Freer Endowment and Friends of the Freer and Sackler Galleries, Freer Gallery of Art, F2015.2



Setting the Bar

Ongoing

China's Song dynasty established many prototypes in government, society, and the arts. A system of schools and examinations for entering public office led to an efficient, centralized government headed by the emperor but staffed by well-educated commoners. Emerging as a class of scholar-officials, who were both artists themselves and consumers of art, these men looked to ancient tradition as a source for moral principle and creative inspiration.

At the same time, a spirit of inquiry and close examination of nature led to advances in art and science. Widespread gains in literacy and disposable income also stimulated growth in the arts.

Elegance and refinement in form, line, and color characterize the visual arts of China during the Song dynasty. As new technology enhanced ceramic production and the number of kilns rose, fresh approaches to decoration developed. The rise of ink painting paralleled a taste for monochrome ceramic glazes. A multitude of other painting styles and techniques emerged as well, with a strong preference for realistic detail, modulated colors, and individualized faces and postures.

Sixteen Luohan; Fanlong (act. mid-12th century); China, Southern Song dynasty, mid-12th century; handscroll, ink on paper; Purchase—Charles Lang Freer Endowment, Freer Gallery of Art, F1960.1



Center of the World

Ongoing

Located in northwest China, Chang'an (modern Xi'an) served as the gateway to the so-called Silk Road, overland trade routes that linked the prosperous Tang empire with Central, West, and South Asia. Foreign merchants joined Buddhist missionaries, diplomatic envoys, translators, craftsmen, entertainers, and other skilled immigrants to transform Chang'an into a cosmopolitan city. This wealthy, worldly hub offered a ready market for exotic imports, including silver and gold objects, delicate glassware, and even grape wine. To meet accelerating demand for stylish goods, local artisans translated foreign designs into a Chinese style.

Of all the travelers to Chang'an, the most successful group came from the distant kingdom of Sogdiana, located far to the west in modern Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. These Persian speakers seamlessly connected the cultural realms of China and Iran. While some traders and artisans traveled back and forth across Asia, others settled in China, where they helped fuel a fashion for Central Asian culture. One Sogdian community leader who died in China chose to be buried in a Sino-Sogdian manner and commissioned the funerary couch on view in this exhibition. Over time, the Sogdian population was gradually absorbed into Chinese society. Today, the Sogdians are regarded as a lost people.

Wine cup with elephant heads on ring handle; Central Asia, Sogdiana, probably Uzbekistan, early 7th century; hammered silver with mercury gilding; Gift of Charles Lang Freer, Freer Gallery of Art, F2012.1



Promise of Paradise

Ongoing

Siddhartha Gautama, a prince born some twenty-five hundred years ago, is recognized as the Historical Buddha, or “Awakened One.” His enlightenment freed him from the cycle of rebirth, and his teachings became Buddhism’s foundation.

The religion spread at a phenomenal pace. By 100 CE, missionaries had taken the Buddha’s teachings from his birthplace in South Asia to China. Within a few hundred years, Chinese Buddhist thinkers and translators were expanding the canon, also making it available to believers in Korea and Japan.

Buddhism’s rapid evolution transformed China’s artistic landscape. To modern eyes, Chinese Buddhist sculpture from the sixth through the eighth century is among the most appealing in the history of art. As explored in this gallery, the period produced massive cave sites, grand temples, and monumental stone figures, as well as smaller images for domestic altars.

The buddhas, bodhisattvas, and disciples in this exhibition were made to inspire and guide believers on their spiritual path. Their beauty imparted the promise of paradise.

Buddha, probably Pilushena (Vairochana), with the Realms of Existence and other Buddhist scenes; China, probably Henan Province, Northern Qi dynasty, 550–77; limestone; Purchase—Charles Lang Freer Endowment, Freer Gallery of Art, F1923.15



Art and Industry:

China’s Ancient Houma Foundry

Ongoing

The largest bronze foundry complex from antiquity was excavated at Houma in northern China in the mid-twentieth century. At the two-acre site, archaeologists discovered evidence of extremely sophisticated manufacturing techniques. Fragments of reused clay models, master pattern blocks, and decorated clay molds indicate the adoption of ceramic pattern transfers to cast ornamented bronze objects. Using pattern blocks to increase the speed and volume of production without sacrificing quality was an astonishing innovation. Their presence proves foundries at Houma operated with a specialized workforce and a division of labor.

The facility was established around 585 BCE by the rulers of the State of Jin, who remained its chief patrons for about 150 years. Houma produced ornamented objects with complex, abstract designs, inlay, and what is now considered to be the earliest pictorial narratives in China. More than half of the objects featured in this exhibition were made at Houma. Other pieces illustrate the factory’s long-lasting influence and legacy that extended into the Western Han period (206 BCE–9 CE).

Wine container in the form of a bird with dragon interlace; China, Middle Eastern Zhou dynasty, ca. 500–450 BCE; state of Jin, Houma foundry; bronze with gold inlay; Gift of Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer, Freer Gallery of Art, F1961.30



Afterlife: Ancient Chinese Jades

Ongoing

A construction boom in China more than a century ago resulted in new railways and factories—and the accidental discovery of scores of rich ancient cemeteries. Buried in these tombs for thousands of years were jewelry and ritual objects, all laboriously crafted from jade. When Charles Lang Freer acquired many of them, their precise age was unknown. The modern science of archaeology was not practiced in China until 1928, when the Smithsonian sponsored its introduction. With the advent of archaeology came a better appreciation of the evolution of ancient Chinese mortuary culture and China's art history.

Today we know these jades represent the earliest epochs of Chinese civilization, the late Neolithic and early Bronze Age. Many came from the prehistoric burials of the Liangzhu culture (circa 3300–2250 BCE). These Stone Age people flourished in a large, fertile region between the modern cities of Shanghai, Hangzhou, and Nanjing. The graves they left behind now function like time capsules, providing insight into the dynamic character of ancient Chinese civilization during life and after death.

Halberd; China, Liangzhu culture, late Neolithic period (ca. 3300–2250 BCE), Erlitou culture, ca. 1800–1600 BCE; jade (nephrite); Gift of Charles Lang Freer, Freer Gallery of Art, F1919.13



For Love of Place

Through November 4, 2018

Japanese landscape paintings on folding screens had religious and political purpose as early as the eleventh century. Surrogates for the land, these works were employed in rituals to secure the realm's prosperity.

Throughout ensuing centuries, "place" remained a favored theme for screen paintings. Artists depicted specific sites with historical or traditional significance. Classical poetry, often deeply linked to particular locations, also provided subject matter.

While some artists continued to depict identifiable locales, more generic depictions of place became prevalent in the seventeenth century. Vast new architecture required interior design schemes featuring sizeable screens and sliding-door panels. These landscapes often evoked general settings rather than individual locations. Their thematic ambiguity invited reflection, reverie, and an openness to varied interpretations that mimicked responses to poetry.

On view during spring and summer, this gallery's selection of snow-themed paintings suggests one way that these works may have been used: to create an ambience of heat-deflecting cool.

Blossoming Plum and Camellia in a Garden; Kano Kōi (d. 1636); Japan, Edo period (1615–1868); six-panel screen; ink, color, and gold on paper; Gift of Charles Lang Freer, Freer Gallery of Art, F1902.21



Spreading the Word

Through November 4, 2018

For centuries after the Historical Buddha's death, his followers continued to share his teachings, the dharma. Crossing land and sea, disciples, monks, and pilgrims carried the dharma from its origins in India across Asia. Even before the teachings were in written form, the talks and sermons of these charismatic messengers planted the seeds of Buddhism in distant cultures. Over a thousand years later, in the sixth century, monks from Korea and China brought the dharma to Japan.

This exhibition highlights a few of the devout Buddhists who were revered for their roles as teachers, scholars, and patrons of Buddhism in Japan. Among them is a prince who was later worshiped as an incarnation of a bodhisattva. These religious leaders also include priests who journeyed vast distances to seek great teachers, to introduce Buddhist schools from China, and to express spiritual ideas through scholarship, calligraphy, and painting. Their movement across borders created particular synergy between Chinese and Japanese literature, art, architecture, and tea drinking, a practice that began in Zen monasteries to aid meditation.

Iron Flute; Kōgetsu Sōgan (1574–1643); Japan, Momoyama or Edo period, early 17th century; hanging scroll; ink on paper; Purchase—Charles Lang Freer Endowment, Freer Gallery of Art, F1981.12



Imperfectly Beautiful: Inventing Japanese Ceramic Style

Ongoing

Holding a bowl to drink freshly whisked green tea—this is the central experience of the Japanese tea ceremony (chanoyu). Until the late sixteenth century, Japanese tea drinkers viewed Chinese ceramics as the ideal: standardized, symmetrical, and impeccably glazed. But as the innovators of chanoyu began to emphasize individuality, they turned to local potters for fresh interpretations of tea ceramics. New traditions were born.

As taste and opportunity converged, chanoyu participants and potters collaborated on creating a new kind of tea ceramic. Turning away from the impersonal, wheel-thrown form, they favored bowls that looked handmade. They sought vessels that communicated the feel of the potter's hands on the soft clay and the fire's kiss on the flowing glaze. Such bowls conveyed a message from the maker to the user through sight and, especially, touch. These early experiments sparked an approach to clay that still inspires many potters and tea drinkers today.

Vase; Japan, Iga kilns, Momoyama period, 1590–1615; stoneware with wood-ash and iron glazes; gold lacquer repairs; Gift of Charles Lang Freer, Freer Gallery of Art, F1898.451



In the Shadow of an Apocalypse

Through October 28, 2018

Japan was a nation under siege in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, living out an apocalypse foretold in Buddhist teachings. The Mongols swept across Asia and, by the late 1200s, attempted to invade Japan. Natural calamities and plagues underscored the sense of end times.

In this tumultuous period, Japanese Buddhists turned to their faith for protection, compassion, and order. An explosion of iconography responded to those needs. Whether painted or sculpted, Buddhist works reassured believers with visions of compassionate protectors and fierce guardians. New production techniques offered such images an intensely heightened realism.

Mandalas, diagrams that depict an invisible yet foundational spiritual order, offered a sense of structure amid chaos. The most familiar examples are two-dimensional compositions of concentric squares, circles, or other patterns. Sculptures were arranged in similar patterns to create three-dimensional mandalas of almost theme park-like proportions. Several works in this exhibition were once part of such ensembles.

Aizen Myoo; Japan, Kamakura period, 1293; wood with color and gold; Purchase—Charles Lang Freer Endowment, Freer Gallery of Art, F1974.21.1a–b



The Beginnings of Buddhism in Japan

Through October 28, 2018

The two objects in this exhibition exemplify the birth of Buddhism in Japan. In 552, the Korean kingdom of Baekje sent the Japanese court sacred texts (sutras) and a gilt bronze sculpture, thought to be similar to the one on view.

The Japanese, whose native gods did not have visible forms, were impressed by images of Buddhist deities and stories of their powers, as related in the sutras. Early adopters of Buddhism at court built temples and sponsored ceremonies, lectures, and the copying of sutras. In the mid-eighth century, Emperor Shōmu mandated a nationwide system of official temples. He also commissioned a more than fifty-foot-tall gilt bronze sculpture of the cosmic Buddha for the Tōdaiji temple in Nara, the imperial capital. The sutra segment in this exhibition is traditionally called Ōjōmu (Great Shōmu) in the emperor's honor.

The Buddha at Birth (Tanjōbutsu); Japan, Asuka period, 7th century; gilt bronze; Gift of Sylvan Barnet and William Burto in honor of Yanagi Takashi, Freer Gallery of Art, F2005.9a–b



Rediscovering Korea's Past

Ongoing

Today we admire the translucent gray-green celadon glaze on Korean ceramics of the Goryeo period as one of the great achievements of world potters. It is startling to realize that once this ware was all but forgotten. In Korea a millennium ago tastes changed. Other styles of ceramics replaced celadon in temples, palaces, and homes of the elite.

In the late nineteenth century, long-respected tombs of royal figures and nobility from the Goryeo period (935–1392) became vulnerable to looting. Celadon and other cherished possessions of the deceased, preserved as burial offerings, were plundered and sold in the antiquities market. American doctor and diplomat Horace Newton Allen witnessed this rediscovery while he lived in Seoul from 1884 to 1905, and he formed his own sizeable collection of celadon, it seems, from objects on the open market.

Charles Lang Freer purchased Allen's collection in 1907. This large acquisition sparked Freer's deep interest in this distinguished Korean ware. In turn, Allen, Freer, and other early collectors inspired generations of scholars to clarify the styles and dating of Goryeo celadon. Archaeologists have now identified and excavated the kiln complexes at Gangjin and Buan, which produced the finest celadon wares during the Goryeo dynasty.

Ewer; Korea, Gangjin or Buan kilns, Goryeo period, mid-13th century; stoneware with copper-red pigment and white slip under celadon glaze; Gift of Charles Lang Freer, Freer Gallery of Art, F1915.50



Body Image

Ongoing

The human body, particularly the beautiful body, is central to artistic expression on the Indian subcontinent. Through the body, artists express fundamental beliefs about the nature of being, social ideals, gender roles, and hierarchies of power, both earthly and divine.

The subcontinent, which extends from Pakistan eastward to Bangladesh and from Nepal southward to Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka, has long been culturally and religiously diverse. By grouping and juxtaposing masterpieces from the museum's collection, this exhibition explores concepts and aesthetics of the body. The first room considers the perfect bodies of the Hindu gods before turning to the Indian courtly body as site of both pleasure and power. The rear gallery introduces the enlightened bodies of Buddhist and Jain traditions, as well as divine conceptions that transcend physical form.

If the artworks themselves invite the sheer joy of looking, the theme of the body provides a portal for appreciating how India's extraordinary culture is woven from distinctive but interrelated traditions. On a personal level, these works compel us to reconsider how our own ideals of beauty and gender, including the ways we hold, adorn, or modify our bodies, are shaped by our cultures.

Shiva, Lord of Dance (Nataraja); India, state of Tamil Nadu, Chola dynasty, ca. 990; bronze; Purchase—Charles Lang Freer Endowment and funds provided by Margaret and George Haldeman, Freer Gallery of Art, F2003.2

ADDITIONAL ONGOING EXHIBITIONS

[*Feast Your Eyes: A Taste for Luxury in Ancient Iran*](#)

[*Gods, Companions, and Devotees*](#)

[*Power in Southeast Asia*](#)

[*The Power to See Beauty*](#)

[*Xu Bing: Monkeys Grasp for the Moon*](#)