Mount Holyoke College Art Museum

FALL 2004

French Landscape Painting

Asian Art

LETTER

THIS FALL, our third in renovated and expanded quarters, the Harriet and Paul Weissman Gallery features a visually stunning and conceptually inspired installation. *Valenciennes, Daubigny, and the Origins of French Landscape Painting* reminds us that no nation has made landscape a more important part of its cultural heritage than France. In addition to the two magnificent paintings by Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes and Charles-François Daubigny from the museum's permanent collection that are focal points in the installation, the exhibition brings together more than 80 paintings and prints from throughout the Northeast to trace the depiction of landscape from the late Renaissance to Impressionism. The project enhances our understanding of objects that we regularly see in our galleries while also contributing to scholarship by taking a revealing new look at salient moments in the history of French landscape.

Additionally, the exhibition provides an opportunity for the museum to continue its fruitful collaborations with the Weissman Center for Leadership and the Liberal Arts as well as a number of other departments and programs across campus. Throughout the academic year, our collective focus will be on water. A series of events, exhibitions, courses, and outreach activities, collectively titled "Water Matters," is exploring the political, environmental, and cultural meaning of water.

Without it, humankind and the planet Earth would cease to exist. Water is the most vital element of life and of creative and spiritual expression. Artistic renditions of water affirm our connection to it, just as water's place in the world determines our existence. As former World Bank Vice President Ismail Serageldin has pointed out, "Many of the wars of this [20th] century were about oil, but the wars of the next century will be about water."

Water has also served as a subject for artists in a broad variety of manifestations. One of the touchstone paintings in *The Origins of French Landscape* is an exquisite and eloquent example. Daubigny's *The Water's Edge, Optevoz* depicts a body of water just outside the village of Optevoz, not far from Lyon in southern France. The painting is on one hand a naturalist rendering of an unassuming detail of the rural countryside and on the other a portrait of a small body of water that had economic significance regionally and deep cultural resonance nationally as a reminder of France's agrarian heritage.

I hope you will come to the museum to see the show and stay tuned for more compelling water-related exhibitions and programs in the spring.

MARIANNE DOEZEMA

Florence Finch Abbott Director

Painting the French Landscape

INTERVIEW

IN THE FOLLOWING CONVERSATION co-curators Michael Marlais, Wendy Watson, and John Varriano discuss the origins of French landscape painting. For more information about the museum's special exhibition on the subject, see page 4.

JV: Why was it that the French dominated landscape painting? They approached it with a zeal unrivalled by any other nation.

WW: It's an interesting question. Not only did the French express the first and strongest interest in landscape—and the most consistent over three centuries—but what is also intriguing is that they frequently traveled to Italy to find landscapes they wanted to paint.

MM: Perhaps an explanation can be found on the level of individuals. Claude and Poussin really made it happen in the 17th century. They were among the first French artists to gain international recognition—and they were landscape painters. Others wanted to emulate them. Ironically, again, they did their best work in Italy. In fact, even in the 18th century, the French were not especially interested in their own countryside.

JV: I think a key factor that attracted artists to the Italian landscape was the light.

WW: That was certainly true for Valenciennes. He was fascinated by weather and light conditions and wrote about it a lot. He concentrated considerable attention on light effects in his sketches and oil studies.

MM: There may have been a social component as well. French landscape painters were away from their families on a fairly regular basis. Being a landscape painter meant going out into the country and being in the company of other men. And French artists felt that they needed to go to Rome to study the great masters like Raphael and Poussin. When they got there, however, they discovered that they were enjoying themselves enormously—and of course, the landscape is beautiful.

WW: There must have been an adventure component as well. Travel in Italy was dangerous at that time.

Jean-Joseph-Xavier Bidauld
(French 1758–1846)
Ponte San Rocco, Tivoli
Oil on canvas, 1811
Private collection, Courtesy of
W.M. Brady & Co., Inc.

MM: Daubigny tells us as much in his letters. He liked to travel across the Alps. Even after crossing that perilous terrain, he went back to paint *St. Jerome in the Wilderness.* When you think of it, of course, the St. Jerome subject in itself was another great pretext for painting landscape.

JV: Early European landscape painting is also tied to the concept of the marvelous, the

spectacular. Landscapes appear in the background of 16th-century northern art, like the Joos van Cleve in the exhibition, where a big rock rises dramatically out of a valley. It seems imaginary, but he could have seen such a phenomenon. It was a marvel. When Bruegel painted the *Bay of Naples or Vesuvius,* he clearly admired the drama of the sites.

WW: Historical nuance was extremely important too. Besides natural sites such as those you just mentioned, the attraction in many cases also had to do with the ruins. In Tivoli, for example, in addition to spectacular waterfalls there are several important ancient structures, like the circular temple that appears in so many paintings in the show.

Another component to consider is literature. When these artists traveled to various sites, especially in Italy, they often had their Horace in hand. They expected their audiences to be well-educated in literature, ancient literature and poetry in particular. Traveling to and sketching these sites involved a combination of beautiful landscape, the awareness of historical and archaeological monuments, and the sources of classical literature that informed their paintings.

JV: They could have their cake and eat it too. They were painting high-minded subjects that spoke of intimate knowledge of the most esoteric myths and doing it in beautiful places with fantastic weather. In fact, an artist couldn't make that claim of intellectual content with still life painting or portraiture. Landscape was the one genre you could deal with and still boast lofty content, even if you were only winking at it, with a cluster of mythological or historical figures in the lower right hand corner.

MM: I think it was also nationalist in a conservative way. When French artists painted the Italian landscape in the 17th and 18th centuries, they were claiming the heritage of the ancient world. So, Louis XIV became the new Roman Emperor. Poussin and Claude represented that for him and for French culture. Then in the 19th century, artists began to focus on French sites. We see this first in printmaking—as in the engravings in Charles Nodier's travel books of the 1830s—which invited viewers to look at France.

JV: There is also the nationalism that essentially expresses the idea that French soil is better than the soil of other nations.

MM: A clear example of that is in the exhibition, when you compare Valenciennes' *Greek*

Charles-François Daubigny
(French, 1817–1878)
Landscape, oil on panel
Gift of Mr. Roger L. Putnam, Jr.
Museum of Fine Arts,
Springfield, MA

Landscape with Daubigny's *The Hamlet, Optevoz*, on loan from the Metropolitan Museum. In the former, a variety of sites including Tivoli and the Parthenon are thrown together in an artistic invention that exemplifies the neoclassical mindset. The latter shows a very specific place, a village in the French countryside. This painting was actually a government commission because Napoleon III wanted to show that he supported the rural communities. So both are quite nationalistic in different ways.

WW: Valenciennes' theoretical method was to work out of doors—*sur le motif*—gathering elements from various sites. Later, in the studio, he would combine them in a highly finished and formal work, in a sense "improving" on nature or, to use his word, "adjusting" it to make it even more perfect.

JV: That follows up on the Cartesian notion of bringing order out of nature. The English would say that they are imposing order on nature, but the French would contend that they are cultivating nature and expressing its harmony and balance. So when they get to Italy, they don't choose to paint nature unmediated but instead view it through a lens finding and emphasizing vertical and horizontal lines. They discover structure that becomes the essential foundation of their compositions.

MM: In addition to gathering elements and combining them in a way that conveyed the underlying structure of the natural order, Valenciennes evoked Greece in the title of the Mount Holyoke painting.

WW: Yes, clearly he felt it was important to identify the landscape as Greek—following the path of Enlightenment figures like Winckelmann—even though only one of the structures depicted is truly Greek.

JV: That would add another layer of resonance to the landscape. The idea of painting landscape for its own sake was radical, after all. Landscape without a connection to narration was merely "Art," with a capital A. Claude often gave his paintings titles that called up no mythological or historical heritage at all.

MM: That could be considered subversive because Claude was stretching the notions about what landscape painting could be.

JV: After all, the entire basis of the Academy's teaching method assumed that art was fundamentally didactic: paintings must tell stories. Landscape provided the background for that storytelling. It became subversive when artists concentrated their attention increasingly on the landscape elements so that the figures seem almost like an afterthought.

WW: The figures are there to legitimize the painting, but in the work of Valenciennes and the other Neoclassical painters, the figures get smaller and smaller in relation to their setting.

MM: Of course, narration continued to be a very strong tradition for a few centuries, but in the 17th century landscape began a movement toward painting that aims primarily to be aesthetically satisfying, without being uplifting or telling a story, which was indeed radical. ■

Valenciennes, Daubigny, and the Origins of French Landscape Painting

7 September–12 December 2004

French painters have long had a special affinity with landscape. Their engagement with nature is illustrated in this exhibition that traces the depiction of landscape from the late Renaissance—when it first emerged from the background of narrative representation—to the eve of Impressionism in the 19th century.

Using carefully selected paintings, oil sketches, drawings, and prints, co-curators Michael Marlais, James M. Gillespie Professor of Art at Colby College, John Varriano, Idella Plimpton Kendall Professor of Art History at Mount Holyoke College, and Wendy Watson, the museum's curator, show the many choices French artists faced as they made their way through the rural landscape over the course of three centuries. This exhibition and its lavishly illustrated catalogue, written by the co-curators, make an important contribution to the scholarship of French landscape painting with a revealing new look at salient moments in its history. In short, the installation shows the difference between classicism and naturalism as stylistic developments in French art while demonstrating both the changes from one period to the other and the continuity between them.

For a large portion of the three centuries represented, the classical idiom captured and sustained artists' imaginations. Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes, the "father" of French Neoclassical landscape painting, constitutes a milestone in the itinerary. A significant segment of this show focuses on an analysis of his *Classical Greek Landscape with Girls Sacrificing their Hair to Diana*. Painted in 1790, this lyrical canvas was purchased for the museum's permanent collection in 2000.

Eventually French landscape painters began to question the authority of that inherited tradition. Charles-François Daubigny's *Water's Edge, Optevoz*, created in 1856, introduces both a new empiricism and a freshly conceived regional chauvinism to the formulas the artist had learned as a student and perfected during his own Italian sojourn. Daubigny's painting, a gift to the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum in 1981, provides a second focus to the exhibition and elucidates another milestone along the path of one of France's most adventurous artistic journeys.

The exhibition also includes a variety of works of art from the schools of Salvator Rosa and Claude Lorrain, as well as Jean-Victor Bertin, Jean-Joseph Bidauld, Jean-Charles Rémond, Jean-Antoine Constantin, Hubert Robert, Camille Corot, Theodore Rousseau, Narcisse-Virgilio Diaz, Henri Harpignies, and others. A selection of prints by Daubigny and Adolphe Appian demonstrates the notable contribution printmaking made to landscape representation in mid-19th-century France. Explanatory wall text and illustrative material, such as photographs, treatises on landscape, vintage postcards and maps, are included.

Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes
(French, 1750–1819)
Classical Greek Landscape with Girls Sacrificing Their Hair to Diana on the Bank of a River
Oil on canvas, 1790. Purchase
Mount Holyoke College Art Museum

These important and beautiful works of art have come together at the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum from many lenders, among them The Cleveland Museum of Art; The Metropolitan Museum of Art; the Museum of Fine Arts, Springfield; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Smith College Museum of Art; Mead Art Museum, Amherst College; Rhode Island School of Design Museum; Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, Vassar College; Colby College Museum of Art; Middlebury College Museum of Art; Davison Art Center, Wesleyan University; as well as a number of private collectors.

Manet, Millet, Picasso and More: New Acquisitions and Loans
7 September–12 December 2004

The museum is fortunate to receive on a regular basis generous gifts and loans of art from alumnae and friends. Since its establishment in 1876, the museum has also been the recipient of monetary gifts for its acquisition endowments. These funds allow the museum to buy objects that particularly enhance the collection and its use in the curriculum by many departments across the campus.

This fall in the Rodney L. White Print Room, an exhibition of 30 stellar purchases, gifts and long-term loans of works on paper illustrates recent generosity. Included is a suite of six untitled etchings by noted artist Katherine Porter, part of a major donation last year by alumna Renee Conforte McKee (class of '62) and her husband David. Several very fine works on paper have been given by Art Advisory Board member Lisa Carbone Carl (class of '81) and her husband William. On view is their gift of the meticulous 1937 drawing of a street in Middleburg, Holland, by Cornelis Johannes Jacobus Bosch. Traditionally, studio art professor Nancy Campbell, director of the Mount Holyoke College Printmaking Workshop, presents the museum with a copy of each edition produced by the visiting artists. The workshop's most recent release, a dramatic large-scale color etching and aquatint entitled *Falcon* by Kiki Smith, is part of the installation.

An important gift of works on paper from Robert L. and Eugenia W. Herbert,

Jean-François Millet
(French, 1814–1875)
The Sower, lithograph, 1852.
Gift of Eugenia W. and Robert L. Herbert

professors emeriti of art history and history, has recently come to the museum. Among these are graphic works by French 19th-century caricaturist Grandville, Japanese woodblock artist Hokusai, and French painter and printmaker Jean-François Millet, as well as an important crayon drawing by Paul Signac of the Pont Neuf in Paris.

A group of Old Master drawings by Guercino, Pier Leone Ghezzi, and other Italian and northern artists has been promised to the museum by University of Massachusetts professor emeritus Thomas Cassirer (husband of the late Sidonie Cassirer, Mount Holyoke professor emeritus of German). Three examples from this in-process gift are on view, including a remarkable large ink drawing of a cook by Ghezzi; identified on the reverse is the man's name, the household in which he worked, and the date, 25 May 1707.

An alumna who wishes to remain anonymous has added significantly to the museum's capacity for displaying the work of European modern masters with a long-term loan of major drawings and prints. The show includes stunning selections by Edouard Manet, Paul Cezanne, and Georges Braque. Two works by Pablo Picasso are a large-scale drypoint, *Tête de Femme* (1905) and a pastel and watercolor entitled *La Coiffure* (1899).

The Art Acquisition Endowment Fund and the Bernard and Susan Eisenhart Schilling (class of '32) Fund made possible the purchases of several works on paper this year. One of those is a highly amusing and historically important intaglio print by William Hogarth depicting *Strolling Actresses Dressing in a Barn* (1747). Other purchases with those funds are a fine ink portrait of a woman by Albert Besnard and a dramatic etching of a dead toreador by Edouard Manet, one of his best-known images. Also on view is a fascinating Iris print color photograph that was part of last spring's highly acclaimed Rosamond Purcell exhibition. It was acquired after the show with funds from the Henry Rox Fund (established by Paul and Harriet Levine Weissman [class of '58]). The Madeleine Pinsof Plonsker (class of '62) Fund made possible the purchase of two beautiful black-and-white prints of the Cistercian abbey at Pontigny by New York photographer David Heald, which are part of the current installation. These images will also be part of a large body of Heald's work in *The Architecture of Silence* at the museum next spring (see page 8).

Petals and Plumage: A Collection of Indian Textiles
26 January–11 March 2005

India was considered the textile workshop of the world for hundreds of years, particularly from the late 17th century into the 19th. The pre-eminence of the industry there depended upon a number of key factors. Raw materials—cotton, wool, flax, and silk—

were readily available. Important skills, particularly the knowledge of cotton-dyeing and a wide range of decorative techniques, developed early in the region. In addition to a lively production in cotton for local consumpton, luxury and export textiles were circulated using well-established regional and inter-regional trading systems. Today, although mill production and shifting economic patterns have limited the role of the subcontinent's hand-produced fabrics, this highly skilled, immensely rich and varied industry survives and remains a vital part of Indian culture.

This show, which is drawn from an extraordinary New York private collection, illustrates the history, sumptuous beauty and technical precision of Indian textiles over six centuries. It also presents a broad range of complex production techniques: painting, block printing, tie-dye, brocade, ikat, tapestry, and embroidery. Early painted and printed cottons, and silk ikats represent prestige textiles made for export to Southeast Asia. Chintzes and Kashmiri shawls from the 17th and 18th centuries exemplify the fine garments and furnishing fabrics associated with Mughal patronage. Textiles destined for use within Hindu religious contexts, such as painted cotton pichwai (backdrops for images in Hindu shrines) and cloth for dressing sacred images are also included. Brocade saris and dupattas (scarves) from Murshidabad, Dacca, Paithan, and Chanderi celebrate distinctive regional styles. Varied folk traditions are represented by embroidered and tie-dyed fabrics from Gujarat, Bengal, and Kutch. Common to many of these diverse fabrics are the flora and fauna that form the aesthetic foundation of Indian textile design tradition.

Several examples in the exhibition illustrate the complex aesthetic interchanges that resulted from global trade. One 18th-century pattern-dyed cotton recalls French "bizarre" silks whose designs were developed in France based on Asian motifs. Fabrics with such European-derived patterns made their way to India where they, in turn, inspired textiles that were exported to Indonesia. Indian textiles became the dominant currency in the spice trade as European merchants bartered them in Southeast Asia in exchange for nutmeg, cloves, mace and pepper.

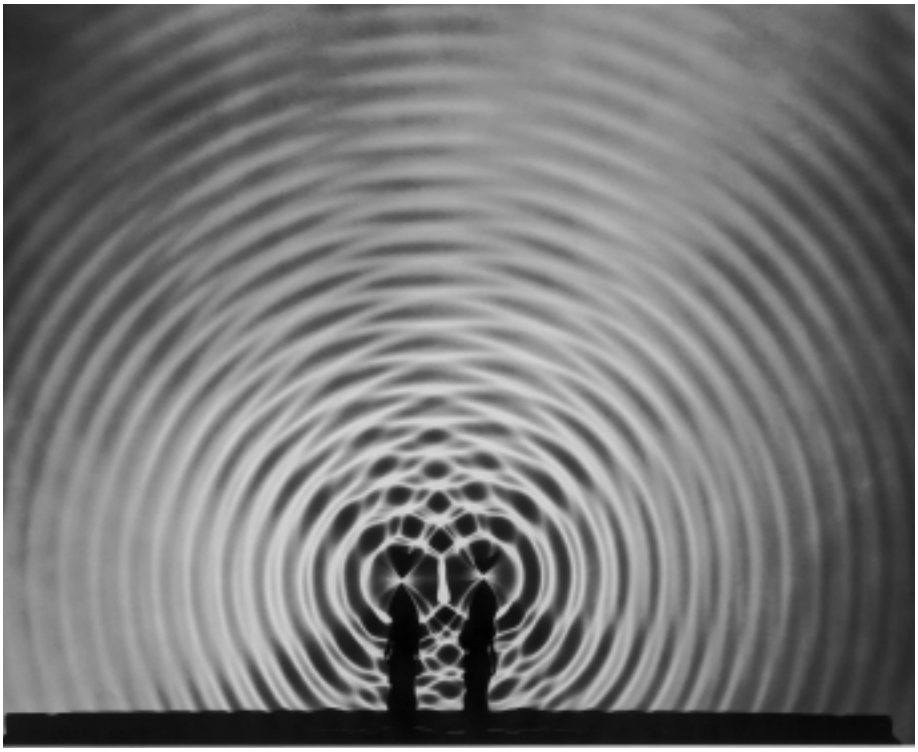
Petals and Plumage is based in part upon an exhibition organized by the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art at Cornell University in 2000. The collection upon which that exhibition was based has since grown significantly and newly acquired textiles will be included in the Mount Holyoke venue.

Border fragment of a pichwai with lotuses and parrots (detail) Indian, Deccan, pattern-dyed cotton, paste-resist mordants, dyes, and painted gold, 17th century. Private collection.

Eye on Water

1 February–30 June 2005

Organized in conjunction with the series of programs developed around the theme "Water Matters" (see the Director's letter), this exhibition focuses on water as a subject for artists. Selections from the museum's collection range from Ansel Adams' magnificent photographs of waterfalls in American national parks to Vija Celmins' stunning etching *Drypoint—Ocean Surface.* Berenice Abbott is best known for her documentary photographs of New York City, but she was also engaged with scientific interpretation. *The Science Pictures: Water Pattern,* which will be on view, reflects her appreciation for the



Berenice Abbott (American 1898–1991)
The Science Pictures: Water Pattern, gelatin silver print photograph, 1982
Gift of Joseph R. and Ruth Lasser (Ruth H. Pollak, class of '47)

capacity of rigorously conceived images to convey information in an aesthetically engaging way.

In addition to drawing on the museum's permanent collection, *Eye on Water* will include a number of loans from artists, private collectors, and institutions.

Architecture of Silence: Cistercian Abbeys of France—Photographs by David Heald

29 March–3 June 2005

Long revered for their exquisitely proportioned spaces and ethereal acoustics, early Cistercian abbeys of France, together with the great cathedrals, embody the profound mastery of architecture that blossomed in 12th- and 13th-century Europe. Built by monks nearly 900 years ago, these remarkable medieval buildings are renowned among contemporary architects and artists for their austere, almost minimal, design and and immensely refined construction. Long interested in architecture and the natural landscape, David Heald, chief photographer for the Guggenheim Museum, made seven trips to France between 1985 and 1995 to photograph 22 of these sites.

This traveling exhibition, organized by Exhibitions International of New York, includes 40 luminous large-format black-and-white images that are saturated with surface detail, penetrating illumination, and rich tonal range. Tom Hinson, curator of photography at the Cleveland Museum of Art, notes, "Heald's photographs capture the essence, the emotional impact, of these incredible spaces. In his detailed images, the marriage of light, space, and texture is succinctly, beautifully expressed. His serene photographs perfectly render the distinguishing quality of Cisterian architecture and monastic life: silence."

Heald's work is part of many public and private collections and has appeared in numerous publications, including the highly acclaimed book of the same title as the exhibition (Harry N. Abrams, 2000). Chosen as one of the finest books on architecture in 2000 by the *New York Times Book Review,* the photographs in it were described by the *Times* as "hauntingly beautiful . . . perfectly illustrat[ing] Le Corbusier's famous definition of architecture as 'the skillful, correct and magnificent play of volumes assembled in light.'" In the book's introduction, Terry N. Kinder writes, "These photographs awaken a longing for a quieter, simpler existence. . . .The immediacy of the images makes us want to touch stone, to run a hand across the ancient surfaces, angles remarkably fresh, tool marks still visible. . . .The indefinable magnetism present here—one might call it the attraction of God—is almost lost on the surface of today's culture. Yet in the poetry of an image one can be stirred by the same spirit that flickered in Cistercians. . . ." Among the foremost architectural photographers of today, Heald has created a unique body of work that is the defining photographic record of an extraordinary architectural legacy. ■

David Heald (American, b. 1951)
Nave Looking West, Longpont
Gelatin silver print photograph, 1990 © 2000 David Heald

The Buses Are Coming!

IN ADDITION TO WELCOMING Mount Holyoke classes—ranging from art to philosophy to science—and local elementary and middle-school children who participate in the education program, the museum has recently hosted many other groups. Fifteen students from Holyoke Community College's sculpture class, 13 kindergarteners from Gorse Child Study Center, 15 young women from the Care Center in Holyoke, and the Amherst Women's Club visited *Rosamond Purcell: Two Rooms.*

A Kids to College tour brought 24 youngsters to the galleries. *Light in the Landscape: Photographs by Ann Ginsburgh Hofkin* drew enormous interest from the region, including a Hampshire College photography class and numerous buses from retirement facilities. Travelers from the Birmingham Museum of Art, the Class of 1952 mini-reunion, and several group tour operators invited by the Greater Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau visited. Chinese, Japanese and Indian objects in the Norah Warbeke Gallery were a highlight during the Asian Alumnae Conference.

Last summer, when college presidents and deans came to the International Women's Education Conference on campus, a docent-led tour of the permanent collection impressed. A few days later the docents adjusted their program for 60 first-graders on a field trip. During the USGA Women's Open held at Mount Holyoke's Orchards Golf Course, scores of alumnae viewed *The Sporting Woman: The Female Athlete in American Culture* at an Alumnae Association reception on the premises.

Additional groups included the Deerfield Institute Study Group, led by Diana Kleiner of Yale University. High School students in Amherst College's summer program came for a sketching period. The Chicopee Opportunity Council brought 25 teens, and a Girl Scout troop counted *The Sporting Woman* experience toward the merit badge in athletics. Numerous 12-year-olds from the Center for Talented Youth participated in a creative writing exercise, and the Springfield Jewish Community Center brought a bus full of enthusiastic visitors to see the permanent collection before crossing the brook for lunch at Willits-Hallowell Center and an afternoon Connecticut River boat ride on *The Spirit of South Hadley.*

The museum welcomes groups year-round. For docent-led tours, please make arrangements at least three weeks in advance. ■

IN MEMORY

RECENTLY we learned that two very special members of the museum's extended family have passed away.

We are deeply saddened by the loss of Natalie Hofheimer (class of '44), an active and enthusiastic member of the museum's advisory board since 1981, on July 21. With her husband Joseph, who joined the board only two years after she had become involved, they ably served as a husband-and-wife team, contributing sage advice to board discussions about a range of issues, with particular focus on finding new sources of funding for the museum's activities. Natalie was often heard to exclaim how much she enjoyed her service on the board, and with Joe she generously directed resources toward acquisitions, the museum's education program, and the development of exhibitions. She was an extraordinary woman, a tireless traveler, especially to Australia, and a wonderful ambassador for the museum.

Natalie Hofheimer

Late in 2003 we lost Francelle Wohl Marcus (class of '40) who had served on the board from 1970 until 2002. We especially recall the generosity of Francelle and her husband Richard that was commemorated in part by the Francelle Wohl Marcus Sculpture Garden. With the museum's recent expansion, that area was transformed into new gallery space. Soon Fran's sculpture garden will come to life again when the area in front of the museum is redesigned. She also donated a Renoir landscape painting with the intention that the museum would sell the work at auction. The income from that sale will partially fund the first permanent outdoor sculpture that will be installed near the entrance to the museum.

Francelle Wohl Marcus

We send our sympathy to the families of Natalie and Fran. ■

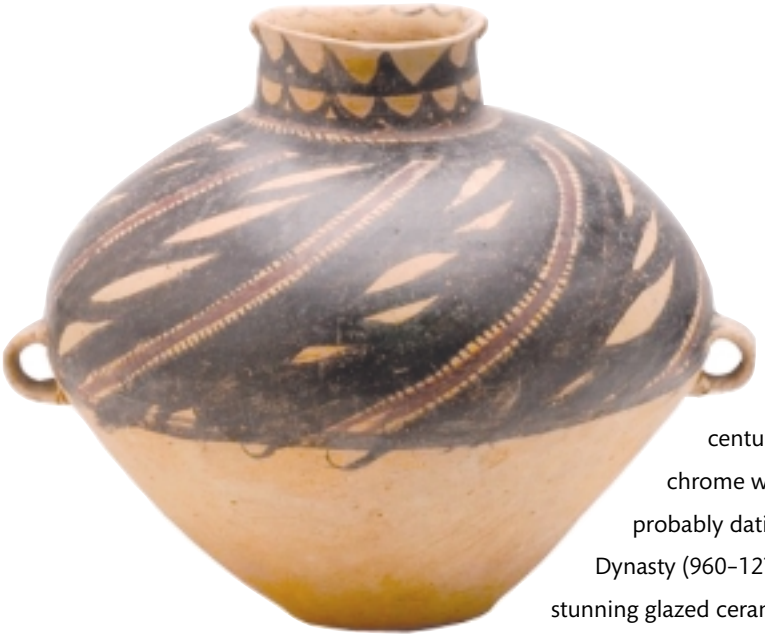
Asian Art

FOR THE NEXT YEAR a remarkable selection of Asian art, on long-term loan from the Arthur M. Sackler Foundation in New York, is on view in the Norah Warbeke Gallery. In 1965, Dr. Sackler (1913–1987), a research psychiatrist, medical publisher, connoisseur and collector of art, established the foundation to make his extensive art collections accessible to the public by lending art to museums and creating traveling exhibitions to promote understanding and enjoyment of Asian art.

Following the museum's recent expansion and renovation, curator Wendy Watson received a call from Trudy S. Kawami, director of research for the Sackler Foundation. Kawami wondered if Mount Holyoke would be interested in a long-term loan of several works of art to display alongside its own growing Asian collection. Watson and director Marianne Doezema traveled to New York to investigate. After consultation with various faculty members about curricular applications, a list of possibilities was forwarded to the foundation.

Soon afterwards 16 works of art were conserved and packed for the trip to South Hadley. Among them are four sculptures: a spectacular Thai bronze Buddha (15th–16th

Chinese, Song Dynasty
(960–1279)
or Yuan Dynasty
(1279–1368)
Guanyin, wood, gesso,
paint and gilding
On loan from the Arthur
M. Sackler Foundation



Chinese, Neolithic period, 2nd–3rd millennium BC, Gansu province,Yangshao culture, Banshan phase
Funerary storage jar
Burnished earthenware with red and black pigment
On loan from the Arthur M. Sackler Foundation

century); a Chinese polychrome wood Guanyin figure, probably dating to the Song Dynasty (960–1279 AD); and two stunning glazed ceramic Tang funerary sculptures (618–908 AD), one representing a camel and the other a court official. Ten other ceramic objects include a dramatically-patterned Neolithic Chinese storage jar (2nd–3rd millennium BC), a green glazed censer vessel of the Han Dynasty (25–220 AD), and two beautiful stoneware vases of the Song dynasty.

Six additional ceramics represent the artistic achievements of Iran, and range in date from the first millennium BC to the Seljuk and Safavid periods (13th and 17th centuries). Those are installed in the museum's Carson Teaching Gallery.

All of these objects will enrich the college's curriculum in several departments and programs including art history, religion, history, and Asian Studies. Jonathan Lipman, professor of East Asian history at Mount Holyoke, examined the objects during their installation recently and remarked "I can easily imagine using these marvelous works of art to study the transmission and visual presentation of Buddhism, the interaction of Chinese and Central Asian cultures, and the aesthetics of everyday life in East Asia. We'll visit the museum at least two or three times next semester as part of my Introduction to Chinese Civilization course."

Chinese, Tang Dynasty (618–907 AD)
Camel, clay with lead glazes
On loan from the Arthur M. Sackler Foundation

Throughout his life, Arthur Sackler was an avid student of art and art history. "One wonderful day in 1950," he wrote, "I came upon some Chinese ceramics and Ming furniture. My life has not been the same since." Asian art, especially Chinese bronze and jade, came to form the core of the Arthur M. Sackler Collections. Ultimately, they included art from China, Korea, Cambodia, India, Japan, and ancient Iran, as well as Italian Renaissance maiolica and European terracotta sculpture from the 14th to the 20th centuries.

Furthering his commitment to the arts, Sackler endowed galleries at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Princeton University and supported the construction of the Arthur M. Sackler Museum at Harvard. With his brothers, he funded the Sackler Wing at the Metropolitan Museum of Art to house the renowned Temple of Dendur. In 1987 he was the principal benefactor of the Sackler Gallery in Washington, D.C., a national museum of Asian art and part of the Smithsonian Institution. ■

cover: Detail of
Charles-François Daubigny
(French, 1817–1878)
The Water's Edge, Optevoz
Oil on canvas, ca. 1856
Gift in memory of Mildred and
Robert Warren, Mount Holyoke
College Art Museum

Fine art reproductions of this image and others are available for purchase. Go to www.mtholyoke.edu/offices/artmuseum/general_info.html for details or call 413-538-2245.

FRIENDS OF ART MEMBERSHIP

Friends of Art provide core funding for special exhibitions, publications, and public programs. Friends receive invitations to opening receptions, lectures, and other events as well as the newsletter. Memberships, valid for one year, are tax-deductible contributions to support Mount Holyoke College Art Museum.

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