



mhcam

Mini Magazine
2024-25



PLANNING FOR OUR 150TH ANNIVERSARY

We are now just two years away from our sesquicentennial in November 2026! MHCAM staff and I hope that you are as excited as we are.

Museum staff are putting all their energy into re-imagining how we display the collection to better reflect our values and mission. While we complete this ambitious project, we are thrilled to keep our supporters updated with this interim *MHCAM Mini-Magazine*, a pared-down version of our regular magazine. The reinstallation of the permanent collection galleries has already begun and will continue in phases until fall 2026, with the goal of broadening, diversifying, and deepening the stories we are able to share—making the Museum a more welcoming space for generations to come.

In support of this larger vision, I am thrilled to announce the establishment of an endowed fund by long-time Museum supporter Ludmila Schwarzenberg Bidwell '67. Ludmila's generous gift makes possible the naming of the Wendy M. Watson Gallery, honoring Wendy's incalculable legacy as MHCAM curator for 41 years. The gallery debuts this year with the exhibition *Northern Exposure: Painting from the Low Countries in the Permanent Collection*, which includes many important artworks acquired during Wendy's long tenure at the Museum.

As this exceptional gift reminds us, we would not be at this 148th-year mark without those who came before us and those who support us today. We value your continued belief in MHCAM as we work towards our 150th anniversary celebration.

With gratitude,

Tricia Y. Paik
Florence Finch Abbott Director



15 YEARS OF TEACHING WITH ART

Fall 2024 marks the 15th anniversary of the Museum's Teaching with Art program. In this time, the Museum has become a dynamic space, continuously infused with new ideas generated through class engagement across a wide range of disciplines. Seeing and thinking about the collection through the eyes of students and faculty has expanded the creative possibilities of our work together, shaping our current approach to reinstalling the permanent collection galleries.

During the past academic year, we learned from psychology students whose final projects showcased interactive ways for visitors to engage with the Museum based on universal design principles. We gained new insights from physics students who closely observed pattern-making in artworks ranging from prints by Anni Albers and Mel Bochner to Pueblo pottery. Spanish students translated label texts and history students studied Native American objects that were made for the market in a new course, "The Material Cultures of Turtle Island."

We also convened two groups of faculty to consult with us about the Museum's reinstallation. The faculty members shared their expertise in the arts of Asia, Europe, and the Americas, giving us new insights about objects in MHCAM's collection. They also generated fresh ideas for teaching with innovative displays of global art, bringing different cultures and artistic traditions into conversation with one another.



Left: MHCAM staff celebrate Pride Month 2024

Above: Students in Professor Becky Packard's Educational Psychology class doing a close looking exercise with Kay WalkingStick's *Sierra Ravine*.

IN THE GALLERIES

As we look forward to 2026, work continues on the renovation and reinstallation of our galleries. After opening the redesigned Harriet L. and Paul M. Weissman Gallery in fall 2023 as a space for art since 1900, this 2024–2025 academic year will see the opening of the new gallery for art made before 700 CE. Situated immediately to the right of the Museum’s front exhibition space, this renovated gallery will now showcase early art from around the globe. While still highlighting our strong collection of Greek, Roman, and Egyptian art, the new design will allow us to dedicate permanent gallery space to showing great works in our collection from West, South, and East Asia and the Americas.

This year’s construction is also laying the groundwork for updates to the next gallery, set to reopen in the fall of 2025. The changes we are making will join the Caroline R. Hill Gallery and the Evans Gallery to allow us to display art from 700–1700 CE in one space, making connections across time and place in new and exciting ways. We look forward to sharing our redesigned spaces with you!

OBJECT SPOTLIGHT

Renovating and reinstalling our gallery of ancient art means bringing exciting artworks out on view that have not previously had a permanent home in the Museum. One such object is this small bowl made in Peru around 150-275 CE. Hummingbirds in flight encircle the exterior of the vessel, which is typical of the pottery of the Nasca people. Sixteen different types of hummingbirds are found in the coastal region of Peru where the Nasca lived and the small, delicate birds proliferate in their art. Nasca potters are famous for their unique polychrome (many-colored) vessels. This bowl showcases the Nasca talent for polychrome painting, and we can see how the painter detailed each hummingbird in subtle shades of tan, brown, and gray.



SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS

Northern Exposure: Painting from the Low Countries in the Permanent Collection

September 3, 2024–May 25, 2025

Wendy M. Watson Gallery

Seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish painters invested great care in the technical concerns of luminosity, clarity, reflection, and shadow, producing paintings where light and its diverse forms take center stage. The Mount Holyoke College Art Museum holds a rich group of works that demonstrate these interests and the astonishing range of lighting effects that these painters achieved. The variety of paintings in the collection also points to the region’s shifting social, religious, and economic conditions during the seventeenth century. What we can—and cannot—see in these paintings evidences many of these changes, prompting conversations about the legacies of the seventeenth century that are still with us today.

Mariam Ghani: Like Water from a Stone

September 3, 2024–May 25, 2025

Gump Family Gallery and Harriet L. and Paul M. Weissman Gallery

This small exhibition is embedded in the Museum’s installation of 20th- and 21st-century art and features Ghani’s video work alongside two photographs by the artist. Using performance to illuminate and personify issues around place and culture, Ghani traces millennia of geological and social changes in Norway, including those wrought by the discovery and extraction of oil.

Above: Hendrik Martensz. Sorgh (Dutch, 1609/11–1670), *An Inn Interior with Peasants*, ca. 1641–45, oil on panel, Purchased through prior Gift of the Trustees of the Carlyn H. Wohl Trust, 2012.13

Left: Unidentified Nasca maker, *Bowl with hummingbirds*, 150–275 CE, earthenware with polychrome pigments, Purchase with the Nancy Everett Dwight Fund, 1962.7.F(a).A

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Unidentified Greek maker, *Drinking cup (kylix) with the head of a Gorgon*,
6th century BCE, earthenware with black slip and red and white pigment,
Purchase with the Belle and Hy Baier Art Acquisition Fund, 2022.13

