

OBJECT GUIDE

Art of Medieval and Renaissance Europe



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Unidentified artist
French, Limoges
Christ on the Cross, c. 1185
gilt copper with inlaid enamel
Ackland Fund, 70.28.1



- Eighteen small holes around the perimeter reveal the places where this image was attached to a wooden processional cross, carried during the Catholic Mass. It is similar to the central plaque of a cross from the Cherves Treasure, a group of objects found in 1896 and now in the Louvre in Paris.
- The city of Limoges was famous for its enamel workshops, which were patronized by royalty and the Catholic Church. This cross is associated with the Abbey of Grandmont, which was one of the premier sponsors of Limoges enamel work.
- The cross was created using a process in which artists carved cells out of a metal base – usually copper – and filled them with powdered glass. They then heated the entire object to melt the glass. They usually gilded the copper surfaces that were still visible.
- This type of image was derived from a Byzantine source and was known as a *Suffering Christ*. Jesus' emaciated body, mournful expression, the nails in his hands and feet, and the blood pouring from the wound on his right side are important characteristics of this type.

Unidentified artist
French, Limoges
Key Guard with Four Interlocked Griffins, c.
1225
champleve enamel on bronze
Ackland Fund, 61.6.1



- Griffins are mythological winged creatures with the body of a lion, head of an eagle, and sometimes a serpent's tail. They have traditionally served as guardian figures and in this case, they protected the key hole and the objects within.
- The small holes around the circumference of the *Key Guard* indicate that it was attached to a larger structure, perhaps a small marriage chest or a reliquary.
- The plant-like motifs likely derive from Byzantine or Islamic sources. The vivid blue color in the center is typical of Limoges enamels. Blues were usually derived from copper oxide or cobalt oxide. Cobalt was a rare and expensive pigment that had to be imported from Persia.

Unidentified artist

British, Nottingham

**The Head of St. John the Baptist on a
Charger Flanked by St. Peter and Probably
St. Thomas of Canterbury, 1420-50**

alabaster with traces of paint

Ackland Fund, purchased in honor of John M.

Schnorrenberg, Professor of Art (1959-1976),

76.44.1



- Plaques like this one were made in large numbers in the late middle ages in England, for use in private devotions at home. They were made much less frequently after the Protestant Reformation.
- On either side of John the Baptist's severed head is another saint: on the left, Peter holding the keys of heaven and on the right a bishop, probably the English martyr Thomas à Becket. Below, Jesus emerges from the tomb, a representation traditionally known as the *Man of Sorrows*.
- Fifteenth-century alabaster reliefs were made principally in Burton-on-Trent, York, and Nottingham, with stone quarried from a location nearby. Reliefs depicting St. John's head were a specialty of Nottingham.

Unidentified artist
Russian
Holy Wisdom, 16th century
tempera and gold on wood panel
Gift of Jane Barry Haynes, 89.83



- The Greek word *sophia* means wisdom; in a Christian context it connotes holy wisdom or the wisdom of God. Many Greek and Russian churches were dedicated to Sophia, or Wisdom. In Greek and Russian the word *sophia* is gendered feminine, which, in part, explains why Wisdom is often depicted with feminine attributes.
- Sophia is usually depicted in red, which is a valuable and symbolic color in Russian art. In fact, the Russian adjective *krasnyi* is used to mean both red and beautiful.
- The imagery seen here is said to have originated in the northern Russian city-state of Novgorod, probably sometime in the fifteenth century. By then, Sophia had already become a symbol of Novgorod, and was said to have protected the city from foreign invaders.
- The figures are arranged in a way that imitates the traditional organization of the screen of icons separating the nave from the sanctuary in a church. There is a central figure (here Sophia, but usually Jesus) flanked by Mary and St. John the Baptist, then by angels and saints.

Unidentified artist

Byzantine

Polycandelon, c. 600 CE

bronze

Gift of Charles Millard in honor of Litsa

Tsitsera, 2001.6



- The Greek word *polycandelon* refers to a device designed to hold multiple candles or oil lamps. Lamps, usually made from glass or bronze, rested in the round openings in the metal disk (there are nine in this one), and the entire chandelier was suspended from the ceiling by chains.
- *Polycandela* were used in synagogues, churches, and mosques, as well as in secular settings. This one may have come from a Byzantine church: elements of its design suggest the shapes of the Greek letters alpha and omega, which are used to refer to God in the Christian New Testament.
- Sixth-century Greek poet, Paul the Silentiary, described the *polycandela* in the great Byzantine church, Hagia Sophia in Constantinople:

Thus, descending from their lofty course, they float in a circle above the heads of men. The cunning craftsman has pierced the discs all over with his iron tool so that they may receive shafts of fire-wrought glass and provide pendent sources of light for men at night.... Thus the evening light revolves round the temple, brightly shining.

Unidentified artist

Byzantine

Sgraffito Bowl with Raptor, 12th century CE

earthenware and glaze

Anonymous Loan, L2007.34.57



- This bowl is thought to have been discovered in a shipwreck in the 1960s. Its physical makeup, the image of a raptor, and traces of marine incrustations link it to another bowl in the collection of Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, DC that may have come from the same shipwreck.
- *Sgraffito* is created by applying a contrasting color of slip (clay thinned with water) to the surface of a vessel, and then etching a design into the surface, revealing the color of the clay beneath.
- Aristocrats trained raptors and other birds of prey (identifiable by the hooked beak) for hunting. Depicting one on a bowl could be a reference to the owner's power and social status.

Unidentified artist
German, Lower Franconia, Middle Rhine
The Death of the Virgin, c. 1490
lindenwood with paint and metal leaf
The William A. Whitaker Foundation Art
Fund, 61.1.1



- This sculpture may be related to another that depicts Mary's funeral procession, which is now in the DeYoung Museum in San Francisco and attributed to an artist in the circle of the sixteenth-century German sculptor Erasmus Grasser.
- Music notations, visible on the pages of the books held by some of the figures, were added at a later time, estimated to be around 1700.
- This subject is referred to both as the Death of the Virgin and as the Dormition (falling asleep) of the Virgin. Here as in many other representations she is surrounded by the apostles. In many images, but not here, artists also represented her soul being assumed into heaven.
- This sculpture is made of two pieces of lindenwood joined near the center. The carved front sides of the wood pieces are coated with gesso, partly covered with metal leaf, and painted. The reverse side is hollowed out.

The Master of the Legend of Saint Catherine
Flemish, Brussels, active 1470 - 1500

Hugo De Groot (1451-1509), 1480s?

oil on panel

Ackland Fund, 73.36.1

Conservation treatment for this painting,
completed in 1995, was made possible by a
grant from the Getty Foundation.



- This portrait was designed to be hinged at the left to a painting of Mary so that Hugo de Groot's image gazed reverentially at hers.
- This painting was formerly attributed to an artist from Delft called the Master of the Virgo inter Virgines. That artist made no known portraits, and it is difficult to compare the style of Hugo de Groot's face with that of the faces in his religious paintings. An attribution to the Master of the Legend of St. Catherine - who is known for painting small hands - is more convincing.
- The inscription on the back of the painting reads:

In this tomb is buried Hugo, known as the great [de Groot]. He was chosen a priest in the new church of Delft, which worthy post he undertook as a duty of the Councilor of the court. [In him] the church at The Hague had a loyal canon, whom Geervliet had as Dean of its holy order. Say, reader, may he go to Heaven blessed in fortune. 1509, 8th of May

Unidentified artist
Flemish/German, 15th – 16th century
Virgin and Child, c. 1500
painted glass
Gift of the Tyche Foundation, 2010.24



- Europeans began using silver stain to produce color in the early fourteenth century and probably learned about the technique from sources in the Islamic world. To achieve the warm tonalities, artists applied silver oxide to the back of the glass, fired it, and then added details, both with a brush and also by scratching and stippling them through the gray washes.
- The monogram in the lower right corner of the composition identifies the name of the family that the work belonged to, the Ofhuys family.
- In the fifteenth century it became popular to place images like this one – made in *grisaille* (or, using shades of gray) with paint and silver stain on clear glass – in the windows of private homes.
- Medieval theologians often compared Mary to clear glass pierced by a ray of sunlight. In an account written by fourteenth-century mystic Bridget of Sweden, Jesus said: “The sun does not damage the glass by entering it, nor was the Virgin's virginity lost when I took my human nature.”

Circle of Lucas Cranach the elder
German, 1472 – 1553

The Mass of St. Gregory, c. 1550

oil on wood panel

Ackland Fund, 59.8.2

Conservation treatment for this painting, completed in 1988, was made possible by a grant from the Institute for Museum Services.



- Cranach was a close friend of the Protestant reformer Martin Luther. He painted famous portraits of Luther and other reformers, but he also worked for Catholic patrons and made versions of this subject for them.
- The painting depicts a miraculous event from accounts of the life of St. Gregory. While Gregory performed the rite of communion, a member of the congregation doubted that the bread and wine actually became the body and blood of Jesus, which was Church doctrine. In response, and to prove the Church's position, the body of Jesus appeared on the altar.
- The date (c. 1550) corresponds to the period when an artist called the Master of the Mass of St. Gregory, to whom this painting used to be attributed, was active. But it may have been painted much earlier; one scholar has suggested a date of about 1515.

1472: Born in Kronach

1502-04: Worked in Vienna

1505: In Wittenberg as the court painter to Prince Frederick the Wise of Saxony

1508: In the Netherlands; given permission to use the winged dragon as his blazon

1520: Bought a pharmacy; later bought a bookshop that had a printing house associated with it

1537-44: Was the mayor of Wittenberg

1550: Together with his patron, Prince John Frederick of Saxony, was a prisoner of Emperor Charles V in Augsburg

1553: Settled in Weimar and died there on 16 October

Master of the Altötting Doors

German

Altar, 1520-30

linden wood, inscriptions in ink

Gift of the Tyche Foundation in honor of the
50th Anniversary of the Ackland Art
Museum, 2008.19



- Traces of red paint on the lips of some figures indicate that the altar was once painted. Inscriptions in sixteenth-century German script on the exterior of the two wings are likely instructions that specify the subjects of biblical scenes or the names of saints that were originally intended to appear there.
- The composition of the carvings on the altarpiece corresponds closely to a series of prints by the artist Hans Schäufelein that appeared in a 1507 publication by the Nuremberg physician and humanist, Ulrich Pinder, entitled *Speculum Passionis Domini Nostri Ihesu Christi* (*The Mirror of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ*).
- The subject of the altar is Jesus' Passion. In total, there are eleven scenes: four on each wing, the central panel depicting the Crucifixion, and two additional scenes, one above and one below the Crucifixion.

Unidentified artist
Flemish, Antwerp
St. Jerome in Penitence, c. 1515
oil on wood panel
The William A. Whitaker Foundation Art
Fund, purchased in memory of Clemens
Sommer, Professor of Art 1940-1962, 67.31.1



- St. Jerome (c. 347 – 420), one of the great scholars of the early Christian church, translated the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into Latin. This painting, however, emphasizes his humility rather than his learning. Kneeling before a crucifix, he beats his breast with a stone in repentance for past sins.
- Beside St. Jerome are his cardinal's vestments as well as the lion with which he usually represented. According to legend, when he was living as a hermit in the wilderness a lion approached him with a thorn in its paw. After Jerome pulled out the thorn, the lion remained as his companion.
- According to accounts of St. Jerome's life, he lived in the desert during the years he was a hermit, but the wilderness in this painting could not be mistaken for the desert. Instead it suggests distance from society with rocky mountains and a long, winding path through the landscape.
- Clemens Sommer, in whose memory this painting was purchased, belonged to the five-person board that established what became the North Carolina Museum of Art.

Unidentified artist
Italian, Urbino
Molded Dish with Europa and the Bull, c.
1550
tin-glazed earthenware (maiolica)
Gift of the William E. Shipp Estate, by
exchange, 2007.5



- The term *maiolica* is used to describe tin-glazed Italian pottery, known for its vivid colors and complex painted designs, which are often adapted from paintings and prints.
- The surface of the dish displays two episodes from the story of Jupiter and Europa, as described in Ovid's poem, the *Metamorphoses*. Disguised as a bull, the Roman god Jupiter convinced the mortal princess Europa to sit on his back, and then carried her off to Crete.
- *Maiolica* dishes were often given as gifts. In the sixteenth century, a bowl with a scene representing an abduction of a young woman could have been presented as a wedding gift, a reminder of the expectation that a woman would submit to her husband's will.
- Jupiter appears three times on the dish: twice disguised as a bull, enticing and abducting Europa and once as a god, portrayed with his traditional symbol, the eagle, at the top of the composition.

Unidentified artist

Swiss, Rhenish

Roundel from a Tazza: Repousse Medallion

Representing Harvesters or Summer, c. 1600

silver gilt

The William A. Whitaker Foundation Art

Fund, 81.17.2



- In the technique used to make this roundel, an artist hammered a metal sheet from the back, making the image appear on the front in relief.
- This medallion represents a harvesting scene or an allegory of summer. There are several men working in a field, some carrying goods, and we also see a wagon loaded with goods driving away.
- Although it is small, this work gives a sense that it depicts a great expanse. The figures in the foreground seem almost to project out of the composition into the viewer's space while the city recedes far into the distance.
- This roundel may have been the central portion of a basin in a two-piece basin and ewer set.

Hans Jamnitzer
German, 1538 - 1603
Minos and Scylla, 1569
lead
The William A. Whitaker Foundation Art
Fund, 81.17.1



- The ancient Roman poet Ovid tells of two women named Scylla. The Scylla depicted here went mad with love for King Minos, who was at war with her father, King Nisus of Megara. In this story, Scylla kills her father and gives Minos a lock of his hair, offering Minos victory over her people. Disgusted, he rejects her and sails away.
- This medallion incorporates the whole narrative of the story into one scene: the warring Minos rears on his horse as his ships leave the harbor, while Scylla stands on a palace tower.
- Hans Jamnitzer was from a family of goldsmiths who worked in Nuremberg throughout the sixteenth century.

Giovanni V. Melon
Italian, active in Netherlands and Italy, 1571 –
1579

Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, 1575

bronze

Anonymous Gift in honor of Evan H. Turner,
83.9.1



- On the front of this medal is a portrait of Cardinal Alessandro Farnese (1520 – 1589) and a Latin inscription with his name and office. On the back is the façade of the Jesuit church he commissioned in Rome, Il Gesù, and another Latin inscription indicating the date the medal was struck.
- Cardinal Alessandro Farnese was an important patron in Rome during the sixteenth century. His grandfather, Pope Paul III had officially recognized the Jesuit order in 1540.
- Perhaps because of the medal's small scale, the image of the façade omits a monumental inscription carved just above the church's first story, which also credits Alessandro Farnese's patronage.

Unidentified artist
Flemish
Hercules and Omphale, c. 1650-1670
ivory or bone
Gift of the Ackland Associates, 84.14.1



- According to Classical sources, the hero Hercules was sold as a slave to Queen Omphale of Lydia as punishment for a crime he had committed. In most accounts, Omphale and Hercules became lovers. This relief depicts the story in which he wore women's clothes and spun yarn, while she wore his lion skin and carried his club.
- In the seventeenth century (as well as in antiquity), this story in which the strongest man in the world gave the symbols of his masculinity and power to a woman was widely used as an example of the sexual power women held over their lovers.
- Ivory is soft enough to allow fine detail in carving, so that intricate scenes like this one can be depicted in a small format.

Gaspard Dughet
French, 1615 - 1675
Landscape with Figures, c. 1665
oil on canvas
Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Richard W. Levy in honor
of the Ackland Art Museum's 40th
Anniversary, 98.21



- Born in Rome to French parents, Dughet spent his entire life in Italy. He studied with another French expatriate, the painter Nicolas Poussin (who had married Dughet's sister).
- Landscape painting flourished in Italy at this time. Patrons avidly purchased paintings like this from the many artists who produced them. Dughet's landscapes evoke the countryside of central Italy, but do not represent specific locations. They are recreations of nature, not records of it.
- This painting was engraved in 1828 by an artist named Adolf Heydeck. An inscription on the engraving indicates that the painting belonged at that time to Baron Liersdorff in Brunswick.

1615: Born 15 June in Rome

1631-35: Apprenticed to Nicolas Poussin

1644-46: Worked in Florence and Naples

1649-53: Painted works commissioned by Pope Innocent X

1657: Elected to the artists' academy in Rome, the Accademia di San Luca

1675: Died 25 May in Rome

Johann Boeckhorst
German, active in Flanders, 1605 – 1668
The Triumphant Christ Forgiving Repentant Sinners, c. 1660
oil on canvas
Ackland Fund, 72.1.1



- Boeckhorst was an assistant in Peter Paul Rubens' studio and later worked with Rubens' pupil Jacob Jordaens.
- The cross in this painting is a symbol of Jesus' sacrifice. Beneath his feet are a globe representing the earth, and a serpent and a skull, symbols of sin and death. The laurel crowns and palm branch carried by the angels at the upper left signify victory and triumph.
- Jesus receives a group of figures from the Bible who are famous for having sinned and then repented: King David, the Repentant Thief (kneeling on his cross in the foreground), Mary Magdalene, the Prodigal Son, and St. Peter (weeping in the background at the right).
- There is a preparatory study for this painting, made in watercolor, at the National Gallery of Art in Washington. It shows the complete composition seen in this finished painting.

1605: Born in Münster, Germany or Rees, Belgium

1626: Moved to Antwerp

1633: Made a free Master in the Antwerp artist's guild, the Guild of St. Luke

1635-37: Toured Italy

1639: Visited Rome

1668: Died 21 April in Antwerp

Peter Paul Rubens
Flemish, 1577 - 1640
Germanicus and Agrippina, c. 1615
oil transferred to masonite panel
Ackland Fund, 59.8.3



- The identity of the couple is uncertain. It is generally assumed that they represent Roman imperial family members. The most likely candidates are Germanicus Caesar and his wife Agrippina. Germanicus was not an emperor but was an outstanding military leader, and his wife was regarded as a notable example of marital devotion.
- Rubens adapted this composition from the Gonzaga Cameo, an ancient gem that belonged to his patron, Vincenzo I Gonzaga, duke of Mantua.
- The National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC owns a portrait by Rubens based on the same gem, but in that painting the woman is in the front.

1577: Born 28 June in Siegen, Westphalia, while his family was in exile

1578: Family returned to their home in Cologne

1587: Father died, family moved to Antwerp

1598: Master in the Antwerp artists' guild, the Guild of St. Luke

1600-08: In Italy (traveled to Spain in 1603)

1608: Returned to Antwerp

1609: Appointed painter to the Archduke Albert of Austria and his wife, the rulers of the Spanish Netherlands

1626: Wife died, Rubens became more involved in politics and diplomacy

1630: Knighted by King Charles I of England

1640: Died 30 May in Antwerp

Gerard Seghers
Flemish, 1591 - 1651
Do Not Touch Me (Noli me tangere), c. 1639-40
oil on panel
Gift of the Tyche Foundation, 2010.7



- The Latin title of this painting refers to a passage from the Bible (John 20:17) describing the moment after Jesus' crucifixion and burial, when he appeared to Mary Magdalene. After she recognized Jesus, she reached out to touch him. He stopped her, saying: "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my father."
- According to the text, Mary Magdalene first mistook Jesus for a gardener. The shovel Jesus carries is a reference to that passage. Mary Magdalene can be identified by her traditional attribute, a jar of ointment, which she used to anoint Jesus' feet in other stories from the Gospels.
- This painting served as a model for an engraving. Seghers also replicated this composition in a larger painting now in the Landesmuseum in Mainz, Germany.
- In the seventeenth century Flemish artists were interested in conveying the sensation of touch through carefully rendered textures and reflective surfaces. This subject was especially well suited to such efforts.

1591: Baptized 17 March in Antwerp

1608: Became a master in the Antwerp artists' guild, the Guild of St. Luke

1613: Traveled in Italy

1620: Back in Antwerp

1635: Worked for the cities of Antwerp and Ghent to make decorations for the
Triumphal Entry of Cardinal-Infante Ferdinand, governor of the Spanish
Netherlands

1651: Died 18 March in Antwerp

Circle of Christoph Daniel Schenck
German, 1633-1691

The Repentance of Peter, c. 1675

boxwood

Gift of Howard Holsenbeck, Class of 1963,
2006.19



- This panel likely served as one half of a diptych used for private devotion; the other wing of the diptych probably depicted the repentant Mary Magdalene.
- Images of St. Peter and Mary Magdalene, who were key examples of contrition, became increasingly popular after the mid-sixteenth century, when the Council of Trent (which was called to address reform of the Catholic Church in light of the Protestant Reformation) reaffirmed the importance of confession and penance in Christian life.
- St. Peter appears praying over an open book as a cock crows behind him. The presence of the cock refers to the moment at dawn, described in the Gospels in the New Testament, in which Peter realized he had denied Jesus three times and wept bitterly.

1633: Born 26 August in Konstanz

1650-53: Documented making sculpture for the former monastery church in
Kreuzburg

1664-89: Several signed and dated works

1691: Died in Konstanz

Giovanni Battista Naldini
Italian, Florence, c. 1537 - 1591
The Presentation in the Temple, 1577
oil on wood panel
The William A. Whitaker Foundation Art
Fund, 77.41.1



- This painting is a model that Naldini prepared before beginning work on the full-scale altarpiece of the same subject. It closely resembles the finished painting, which is still in the Sommaia chapel in the church of Santa Maria Novella in Florence.
- The scene represented here is sometimes referred to as the Presentation in the Temple and sometimes as the Purification of the Virgin. It depicts the occasion, forty days after Jesus was born, when Mary and Joseph took him to the temple and when Mary completed the traditional Jewish ritual of purification after childbirth.
- Cosimo de' Medici, duke of Florence, funded the restoration of Santa Maria Novella (1565 - 1577). Cosimo demanded that the patrons of individual chapels in the church pay for new decorations in keeping with a new overall design. If they refused, he replaced them with new patrons.

1537: Born in Fiesole

1549-56: Trained with Jacopo Pontormo

1557: In Rome

c. 1562: Returned to Florence

1563: Founding member of the Accademia del Disegno, the artists' academy in Florence

1564-65: Worked with Vasari on decorations for Michelangelo's funeral and for the marriage of Duke Francesco de' Medici

Late 1570s: In Rome

1592: Died 18 February in Florence

Agnolo Bronzino
Italian, Florence, 1503 – 1572
**The Virgin and Child with the Infant
St. John the Baptist**, 1560s
oil on wood panel
Ackland Fund, 64.28.1



- An artist in Bronzino's studio probably executed this work based on a drawing that Bronzino himself made. Two paintings with the same composition of figures, likely based on the same drawing, exist in other collections.
- In the foreground, Mary, Jesus, and his cousin John the Baptist appear as they often do in devotional images; the man and donkey walking along the path at the upper left suggest the biblical story of the Flight into Egypt.
- This painting's composition is characteristic of Bronzino's early work. The handling of the paint is typical of a later phase of his career, and details such as the awkwardly constructed donkey in the background are different enough from the rest of the painting that experts have thought it may be by another artist.

1503: Born 17 November in Monticelli

1538: Published a volume of poetry, *Del Pennello*

1539-60: Served as court artist to Duke Cosimo of Florence

1540: Was a founding member of the Florentine literary academy, the Accademia degli Umidi, (later the Accademia Fiorentina)

1549: His views on the debate over whether painting or poetry was the superior art form were published by the humanist author Benedetto Varchi

1572: Held office in the Florentine artists' academy, the Accademia del Disegno

1572: Died 23 November in Florence

Battista Luteri, called Battista Dossi
Italian, active 1517 – 1548

The Holy Family with the Infant

St. John the Baptist, c. 1530

oil on wood panel

Ackland Fund, 85.22.1



- One of the reasons the Ackland acquired this painting was to add a good example of north Italian Renaissance painting to the collection. Features like the lush landscape, careful attention to the texture of fabric and hair, and effects of light and atmosphere were typical of north Italian painting.
- Battista and his more famous brother Dosso Dossi were painters at the court of the d'Este family in Ferrara. They worked for Dukes Alfonso and Ercole II d'Este.
- In 1885, an agent for the director of the National Gallery of Art in London bought the painting, apparently for his own collection and not the National Gallery's. Later owners included collectors in England, Chicago, and Switzerland.

c. 1490: Born

1517: Name first appeared in account books in Ferrara

1520: Mentioned in Ferrarese documents as being in Rome working with Raphael;
later that year after Raphael's death mentioned as being back in Ferrara

1542: His brother Dosso Dossi died

1548: Died in Ferrara

Master of 1419
Italian, Florence, active early 15th century
The Virgin and Child, c. 1415
tempera and gold on wood panel
Ackland Fund, 80.34.1



- Based on stylistic characteristics and fifteenth-century Florentine payment records, Laurence Kanter, a specialist in Italian Renaissance painting, has proposed that the Master of 1419 was an artist named Battista di Biagio Sanguigni (1393–1451).
- In paintings made with egg tempera, like this one, artists worked with small brushes, blending delicate brushstrokes together. The halos were embellished with punchwork designs, made by pressing a pattern into the gold leaf background with a metal tool.
- Gold and blue were especially precious and costly materials. Using them in paintings like these both honored Mary and Jesus and suggested the wealth and piety of the painting's owner.
- Mary kneels or sits on the ground, a pose that identifies her as the *Madonna of Humility*. The stars on her shoulder and the top of her veil refer to her Hebrew name, Miriam, which means star of the sea. The Latin inscription on the lower panel of the painting translates as: "Hail Mary Full of Grace the Lord is with Thee."

Francesco Traini

Italian, Pisa, active 1321 - 1363

Christ Blessing, c. 1335

tempera and gold on wood panel

The William A. Whitaker Foundation Art Fund, 61.12.1

Conservation treatment for this painting, completed in 1991, was made possible by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.



- Traini was an influential painter and book illuminator who was active in Pisa, but knowledgeable about painting styles in nearby Siena and Florence. It is likely that he had a workshop and numerous apprentices.
- The shape of the panel suggests that it was placed above the central panel of a polyptych - a multi-panel altarpiece - probably similar in structure to an altarpiece Traini painted for the Dominican Church of Santa Caterina in Pisa.
- The inscription on the book that Jesus holds combines verses 6 and 12 from John: 14. It reads: "EGO/SUM/VIA/[ET] VERI/TAS/ET VI/TI QV/I CRE/DIT/IN/ME," or "I am the way, and the truth, and the life, to those who believe in me."

1322: Was paid for painting a palace in Pisa

1337: Took on an apprentice named Giovanni

1344-45: Painted an altarpiece for the Church of Santa Caterina in Pisa

workshop of Cristoforo di Bindoccio, Italian,
active 1361 – 1409

and Meo di Pero, Italian, active 1370 – 1393

Enthroned Madonna and Child with Saints

tempera and gold on wood panels

Ackland Fund, 68.11.1

Conservation treatment for this painting,
completed in 1988, was made possible by a
grant from the Institute for Museum Services.



- When this painting underwent conservation treatment in 1988, x-rays of the painting suggested that the triptych originally had finials attached to the tops of the three panels and that there was a base attached at the bottom.
- At the center of this painting, Mary sits with the infant Jesus on her lap. Two saints flank them within the central panel and two more are in the side panels. Above is the Crucifixion. In the upper registers is the Annunciation: the angel Gabriel at the left faces Mary at the right.
- There is little documentation about the lives and careers of either Cristoforo di Bindoccio or Meo di Pero. Miklos Boskovits, a scholar and connoisseur of Italian painting, attributed the painting to these artists and thought it was made in the first decade of the fifteenth century.
- The small format of this painting made it suitable for personal devotional use. While there is no information about its original owner, the painting may have later belonged to a monastery in Austria.

Unidentified artist
Italian, Rome
The Virgin of the Annunciation, c. 1450-60
marble
Ackland Fund, 76.44.2



- In its original setting, a figure of the angel Gabriel carved on one side of a similar column probably accompanied this sculpture. Together the two figures formed a scene of the Annunciation, in which Gabriel informed Mary that God had chosen her to be the mother of Jesus.
- When the Ackland acquired this sculpture it was described as a mourning female figure and attributed to Andrea Bregno (1421 - 1506), a sculptor and architect active in Rome. Since then the Museum has learned more about the subject but no longer believes Bregno is the artist.
- This sculpture emphasizes Mary's modesty - her hair and body are covered, her head and gaze are lowered, and the gesture she makes with her hand also indicates modesty.