

OBJECT GUIDE

Flora and Fauna



ACKLANDARTMUSEUM

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ACKLAND ART MUSEUM

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
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Sopheap Pich
Cambodian, born 1971
Rang Phnom Flower No. 5, 2016
bamboo and metal wire
Courtesy of the Artist and Tyler Rollins
Fine Art, L2016.13



- Pich is Cambodia's most internationally prominent contemporary artist. Born in Battambang, Cambodia, in 1971, he moved with his family to the United States in 1984. He studied at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago before returning to Cambodia in 2002, where he began working with local materials – bamboo, rattan, burlap from rice bags, beeswax, and earth pigments – to make sculptures inspired by bodily organs, vegetal forms, and abstract geometric structures.
- “Rang Phnom” is the Khmer word for the cannonball tree, which bears vine-like clusters of flowers.
- In Cambodia, the tree has strong Buddhist associations and is often planted near temples, in part owing to its resemblance to a sal tree, the type of tree under which Buddha was born.

Su Hang Pak

Korean, active 19th century

Orchids and Rock with Calligraphy,

19th century

ink on paper, mounted on hanging scroll

Gift of Ruth and Sherman Lee, 91.105

Conservation treatment for this scroll

painting, completed in 2012, was made

possible by grants from the Institute of

Museum and Library Services, the E.

Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter

Foundation, and the Office of the Provost

of The University of North Carolina at

Chapel Hill



- The calligraphic inscription states that with this painting the artist wanted to evoke the scent of the orchids that grow in a sacred site in China where immortal fairy women reside.
- This subject matter, the somewhat abstract sprays of orchids and floating rocks, executed entirely in black ink, is very typical of scholarly or literati painting, which blends calligraphy, poetry, and painting.
- Korean painting was heavily influenced by Chinese art. After the collapse of the Ming Dynasty in the seventeenth century, Korean painting became increasingly distinctive, with more daring compositions, somewhat eccentric styles, and native themes. While this work references a sacred site in China and bears a resemblance to Northern Chinese painting, the placement of the flowers and decorative treatment of their overlaid stems is distinctly Korean.

Unidentified artist
Chinese, active late Ming (1368 - 1644)
and early Qing (1644 - 1911) dynasties
The Orchid Pavilion Gathering, 17th
century
ink and colors on silk, mounted on
hanging scroll
Gift of Elizabeth Lee Chiego and William
J. Chiego in honor of Ruth and Sherman
Lee, 2013.32



- The Orchid Pavilion Gathering was a fourth-century poetic event in which many famous poets, including the renowned calligrapher Wang Xizhi (306-361) gathered to play a drinking and poetry contest, called “floating goblets.” Cups of wine were floated down the river as the men sat along the banks. Whenever a cup stopped, the man nearest it had to drink it dry and compose a poem before the arrival of the next cup. Failure to do so would result in a penalty of drinking three additional glasses of wine. Twenty-six participants produced thirty-seven poems.
- The style of this painting is typical of the traditionalist school of the late Ming or early Qing Dynasties, which originated in the Southern School of Chinese painting, also called literati painting. This style is characterized by an emphasis on detail, tighter compositions, more controlled brushwork, and less perspectival simulation.
- During the Ming Dynasty, narrative painting became very popular. This work blends a traditional landscape with that tradition, as well as what the Chinese termed the three perfections of art: painting, poetry, and calligraphy.

Kajino Genzan
Japanese, 1868 – 1939
Flowers of the Four Seasons, 1920s
ink, pigment, and powdered shell on
paper with gold leaf, mounted on screen
with lacquer frame
Gift of Mrs. Joseph Palmer Knapp, by
exchange, 2016.11.2.1 and 2016.11.2.2



- Kajino Genzan was an important painter of the Kano School, which was heavily influenced by Chinese literati painting. During the late 1920s Genzan experimented with many different styles, likely influenced by the public auction of many important Japanese art collections in this period.
- The screens are “read” from right to left. As the viewer traverses them, the seasons also progress.
- Even within this work there are many different styles of painting, such as the wisteria vines made with pools of wet ink or the sharply delineated hollyhocks.

Ganho

Japanese, active 1900 – 1920s

Catch of the Day, ca. 1900-1920s

mineral pigments, including powdered shell and mica dust, on silk, mounted as screen

Gift of Mrs. Joseph Palmer Knapp, by exchange, 2016.16.1



- Though this painting is executed on silk, the painter included horizontal lines in the background to simulate the appearance of the type of paper that was overlaid on earlier screens.
- Some of the fish have been embellished with mica dust, giving them a luster or sheen that makes them appear to be wet.
- “Umi no sachi,” sometimes translated as a “bounty of the sea” or “catch of the day,” is a ubiquitous subject in the history of Japanese art, though here the intense focus on realistic depiction indicates that this work dates to the early part of the twentieth century.

Ando Jubei
Japanese, 1876 - 1953
Vase with Swimming Koi, c. 1910
cloisonné enamels, including raised,
wired, and wireless varieties, on metal
base with silver mount
Gift of Mrs. Joseph Palmer Knapp, by
exchange, 2016.33



- Ando Jubei pioneered the Nagoya style of cloisonné, which used increased negative space and a more minimal decoration.
- Cloisonné is very difficult to make and involves the fusing of wires to a metal base using powdered orchid root in a low-temperature firing. The cloisons created by the wires are then filled with powdered enamels, usually mixed with water. The piece is later fired (possibly numerous times) to melt the enamels, which are then smoothed, carved, and polished to a shine.
- In the case of this vase, Ando also removed the wire cloisons in places before applying additional enamels, resulting in the wireless cloisonné used to simulate the portions of the fish that are underwater. By layering the enamels and removing the wires, Ando creates the illusion of seeing the fish through water; what the viewer actually perceives is multiple, translucent layers of enamel. It may be difficult to see but there are actually four fish on the vase.

Attributed to Nara Yasuchika IV
Japanese, 1819 - ?
**Articulated Model (jizai okimono) of a
Spiny Lobster**, 19th century
bronze
Lent by a Private Collection, L2016.7



- The Nara school takes its name from its location in the Japanese city of Nara, and was one of the main schools of metalwork, focusing primarily on samurai armor.
- Nara Yasuchika I, who lived during the seventeenth century, is one of the most important armor makers of the Edo Period (1600-1868). This lobster was made by one of his successors, who assumed the title of “Yasuchika” upon ascent to the head of the school.
- Models like these were a popular way for armor makers to demonstrate their skill in the fabrication of small intricate pieces. Each part of the spiny lobster is hinged and able to move.

Kaoru Kawano
Japanese, 1916–1965
Standing Crane, probably 1950s
polychrome woodblock print
In loving memory of Dr. Frances K.
Widmann, 2013.31.5



- Kawano was born on Hokkaido, the northernmost of Japan’s four main islands. He was later held in Siberia as a prisoner from 1944-1949 but went on to have a successful international art career in the 1950s.
- This is an example of *sosaku hanga* or “creative prints,” a movement in Japan that emerged in the twentieth century. Unlike a traditional Japanese print, which was made by a group including illustrators, carvers, printers, and publishers, *sosaku hanga* works are made exclusively by one artist.
- One of the tenets of the *sosaku hanga* movement is an emphasis on process and an embrace of a slightly rustic aesthetic.

Unidentified Artist
 Japanese, active 19th century
Cranes in Water, late 19th century
 pigments and gold on paper
 Bequest of John Ives Getz and Elizabeth
 Cozad Getz, 2008.23.3



- In Japan there are two types of fans: the fixed fan (*uchiwa*) or the folding fan (*sensu*). While the former originate in China, the folding fan was invented in Japan sometime between the sixth and ninth century, and spread throughout Asia thereafter.
- This fan would have originally been mounted on a bamboo frame. The lines in the fan indicate that it was likely used.
- In Asian art, cranes symbolize longevity and fidelity and are often depicted in pairs. The inclusion of a third crane may be a witty addition by the artist, possibly to surprise the viewer as the fan unfolds to reveal the third bird.

Attributed to Shen Nanpin
Chinese, 1682–1762 or after
**Two Cranes with River, Tree, and
Roses**, 18th century
ink and color on silk hanging scroll, now
framed
Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Henry L. Hsieh,
2002.31



- Shen Nanpin was born in Zhejiang Province, China though he traveled to Japan on an official visit from 1731-1733, during which time he resided in Nagasaki. He would go on to found the Nanpin School of Chinese painting, which emphasized an almost scientific dedication to realistic depiction and detail; this was a result of the presence of the Dutch traders in Nagasaki and the prevalent interest in Western science in eighteenth century Japan.
- In many Chinese paintings, plants and animals carry symbolic meanings. Both the crane and the pine tree are symbols of long life, and are often shown together in Chinese art. Cranes are usually depicted in pairs as a reference to fidelity and marital bliss.
- The bamboo growing by the pine is likewise a plant with many symbolic connections, but one is old age – “evergreen and unchanging.” By contrast the rose is an emblem of youth.

Unidentified Artist
Indian, Punjab Hills, Kangra, active c.
1800

**The Battle Between the Monkeys and
the Demon Army of Ravana**, c. 1800
opaque watercolor and gold on paper
Gift of Clara T. and Gilbert J. Yager, 91.71



- The story illustrated here comes from Book Six of the *Ramayana*, the Hindu epic in which Prince Rama seeks to rescue his wife, Sita, who has been abducted by Ravana. Assisting Rama is an army of monkeys and bears.
- The figure at the upper center of the scene is Indrajit, Ravana's son, using magical powers to disappear and reappear as his chariot courses across the sky. The painter depicts him in a shade of blue just slightly darker than that of the sky, with minimal details to suggest that he is barely visible at this moment.

Unidentified Artist

North Indian, Haryana or Uttar Pradesh,
active 5th to 7th centuries CE

Monkey on a Rooftop (possibly General Hanuman), 5th to 7th century CE
terracotta

Gift of Clara T. and Gilbert J. Yager, 90.36

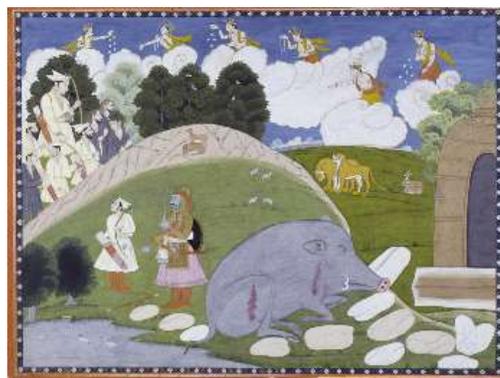


- This plaque is made of terracotta, a medium that allowed the artist to model this dynamic, turning figure relatively easily. Terracotta figures like this were often covered with plaster and painted in bright colors.
- Because we do not know enough about this sculpture's original context, it is difficult to firmly identify the figure. One possibility is General Hanuman, a character in the Ramayana, who helps the hero Rama (an incarnation of Vishnu) rescue his wife Sita from a demon.
- This plaque would likely have been placed along with others on the terrace of a temple, either in a narrative or ornamental context.

Unidentified Artist
Indian, Punjab Hills, Kangra, active c.
1850

**Arjuna Encounters Siva, Illustration to
the Mahabharata, c. 1850**

opaque watercolor and gold on paper
Gift of Clara T. and Gilbert J. Yager, 87.54



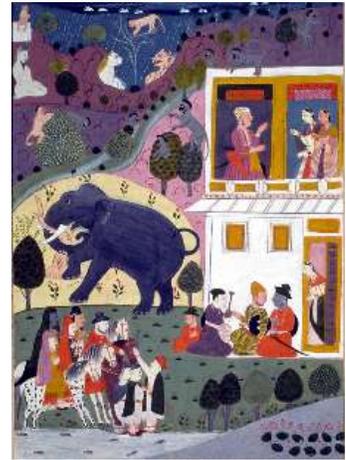
- In the *Mahabharata*, an important epic from ancient India, Arjuna is a principal character. In this scene, Arjuna is living as an ascetic on a mountain. The god Siva, taking the form of a wandering hunter, appears to him.
- Not only is the verdant landscape a suitable setting for this story, but it is also a typical feature of painting from Kangra between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries.

Unidentified Artist
Indian, Deccan, active 18th century
**The Kanhara Ragini: Hunters and
Elephant**, 18th century
opaque watercolor on paper
Gift of Ruth and Sherman Lee, 99.14.5



- A ragini is a personification of a musical form (and the feminine form of the term raga). A kanara ragini is a musical mode from the Karnatic region of southern India.
- This painting may have belonged to a set of works that depict ragas and raginis in the form of people or scenes.
- The scene shows the successful completion of a hunt, but the mood seems to be more melancholy than triumphant.

Unidentified Artist
Indian, Rajasthan, Marwar active late
18th century
**The Month of Bhadon, Page from the
Baramasa**, late 18th century
opaque watercolor on paper
Gift of Clara T. and Gilbert J. Yager,
84.1.3



- An inscription on the reverse of this painting names the month of Bhadode, which corresponds to the month between mid-August and mid-September.
- The *Baramasa* is a poetic form that represents the twelve months of the year. This painting was likely part of such a series.

Unidentified Artist
Indian, Madhya Pradesh, active mid-10th
to mid-11th century
Dancing Ganesha, mid-10th to mid-11th
century
sandstone
Gift of Clara T. and Gilbert J. Yager,
85.2.1



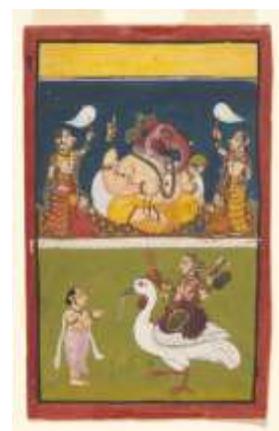
- Ganesha is called the Lord of Auspicious Beginnings. He is often invoked when initiating a new undertaking to remove any obstacles to success. This carving would have adorned the exterior wall of a north Indian temple at the place where devotees began their circumambulations of the temple.
- Ganesha appears here with several of his attributes, including an axe, a pineapple, and an elephant goad. He holds a bowl of sweets in one of his left hands. He raises his right foot to dance to the music of his attendants. His vehicle, a tiny mouse, is in the lower left of the sculpture.
- One of the narratives about Ganesha explains how he got his elephant's head: his mother, the goddess Parvati, created him to guard her while she bathed. When her husband Shiva returned home, he saw Ganesha emerging from her doorway, but did not recognize him and decapitated him. To atone, he vowed to give Ganesha the first head he saw - which was an elephant's head.

Unidentified Artist
Indian, Rajasthan, active 20th century
Elephant and Rider, 20th century
ink and watercolor on paper
Gift of Clara T. and Gilbert J. Yager, 86.35



- When the Ackland acquired this drawing it was thought to have been made in the eighteenth century, but since then experts have advised that is a twentieth-century work.
- Beyond the right edge of the drawing's mat, the head of another animal – perhaps a camel – at the irregular edge of the paper suggests that the composition originally extended further in that direction.

Unidentified Artist
Indian, Rajasthan, active late 18th century
Ganesha and Sarasvati, late 18th century
opaque watercolor and gold on paper
Gift of Clara T. and Gilbert J. Yager, 86.38



- This manuscript page is a type known as a prayer page. Patrons used them to dedicate a book to gods and goddesses, in this case to the elephant-headed Ganesha, the god of luck and good fortune, and Sarasvati, the goddess of learning and wisdom.
- In the lower register of this painting, Sarasvati rides a white swan. The sacred swan, if offered a mixture of milk and water, is said to be able to drink the milk alone. The swan thus symbolizes discrimination between the good and the bad or the eternal and the temporary.

Unidentified Artist
Indian, Rajasthan, active c. 1710
Enraged Elephant, c. 1710
ink on paper
Gift of Clara T. and Gilbert J. Yager, 87.43



- In the lower corners of this drawing, three men holding poles with firecrackers at the ends and one man holding a drawn bow approach a tethered elephant.
- This drawing was made in a part of Rajasthan that was an important center of drawing in the early eighteenth century.

Ghasi

Indian, Rajasthan, active 1820s

Maharana Bhim Singh at a Hunting

Picnic, 1824 or 1825

opaque watercolor and gold on paper

Gift of Clara T. and Gilbert J. Yager, 89.75



- At the center of this composition, the Maharana sits cross-legged, surrounded by attendants and enjoying a feast after a successful hunt. On a hilltop in the background, we see a preceding scene, in which the animal was killed.
- Maharana Bhim Singh (1768 - 1828), ruled the Mewar Kingdom and the Princely state of Udaipur in India from 1778 until his death. Ghasi was a principal artist at his court.
- Inscriptions on the reverse of the painting indicate that Ghasi painted it in a period of three months and received a gold bracelet when he presented it to the Maharana.

Unidentified Artist
Indian, School of East India Company,
near Calcutta, active c. 1780 – 1800

Bristlegrass, c. 1780-1800

color on paper

Bequest of Gilbert J. Yager, 2007.8.4



- During the era in which the British ruled India as an imperial colony, they commissioned botanical studies like this as part of an economic survey.
- Bristlegrass is a grass of the Tribe Paniceae, probably a species of *Setaria*. A former curator of the UNC Herbarium identified it as the subject of this watercolor.
- This piece was originally owned by Major James Nathaniel Rind, who served in India from 1778 to 1804.

Jalal Quli

Indian, Mughal, active 1630 – 1660

**Prince Dara Shikoh and Mullah Shah,
Accompanied by Five Retainers, in
Kashmir, c. 1640-1650**

opaque watercolor and gold on paper,
mounted on an 18th century album page
Gift of the Tyche Foundation, 2009.21



- This scene depicts scholars, musicians, and soldiers gathered near a tree. Two of the principal figures may be Prince Dara Shikoh – son of the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan – and Mullah Shah, his spiritual mentor, but the identification is not certain.
- The artist signed his name on a rock at the lower center. An inscription on the reverse of the page is a poem attributed to the eleventh-century Persian Sufi, Abu Si'id ibn Abi al-Khayr.
- This painting was once mounted in an album owned by an elite art collector, who could examine it closely and contemplate its connection to inscriptions – whether those on the reverse of this page or writings on the facing page (and perhaps on the back of another painting).

Ahmed, Turkish, active 1707, calligrapher
Abdullah ibn Mostafa, Turkish, active
1707, illuminator

Illuminated Qur'an, 1707

ink, gold, and opaque watercolor on
paper, with leather binding

Gift of Dorothy and S. K. Heninger, Jr.,
96.12



- This copy of the Qur'an is written in naskh script, which uses smaller and more rounded characters than other types of Arabic scripts and plays on diagonal thrusts.
- By tradition, the first two pages of the text are always decorated. In this manuscript, other pages are also decorated, but the first two are the most ornate.
- The illuminator signed his name and the year 1119, which is 1707 in the Gregorian calendar.

Hajji Mir Muhammad Ibrahim bin al-Hasani al-'Ari

Persian, active 1828

Illuminated Qur'an, 1828

ink, gold, and opaque watercolor on paper, with lacquer binding

Ackland Fund, selected by the Ackland Associates, 96.4.1



- Hajji Mir Muhammad Ibrahim ibn al-Hasani al-'Arizi was the calligrapher who made this copy of the Qur'an; he signed and dated it, noting in the inscription: "And this Qur'an is the 63rd that I have copied with my ephemeral hand."
- The opening and concluding parts of this manuscript include invocations – some in Arabic and some in Persian – that link it with Shiite traditions, suggesting that its patron, Muhammad Ja'far ibn Muhammad Ibrahim was Shia.
- To honor the text of the Qur'an, the manuscript is adorned with calligraphy (in a script called naskh), a profusion of floral ornaments, and burnished gold leaf.

Unidentified Artist
Indian, Mughal, active 18th century
Prayer Mat, 18th century
woven cotton ground embroidered with
silk thread
Ackland Fund, selected by the Ackland
Associates, 96.3.1



- Among the leaves and flowers embroidered in varied patterns across the surface of this textile is an inverted V shape marked with green leaves. This motif symbolizes the gateway to paradise and the flowers within it represent the walled garden of paradise.
- Silk embroidery of this type was widely produced by the workshops of provincial courts in the Mughal Empire.

Unidentified artist
Indian, possibly northeastern Rajasthan,
southern Haryana, or Uttar Pradesh,
Mathura region

Vishnu in his Boar Incarnation

(Varaha), late 11th century CE

phyllite

Gift of Clara T. and Gilbert J. Yager,
82.5.1



- Varaha the boar is an incarnation of the Hindu god Vishnu. In this form, Vishnu fights for a thousand years with a demon who trapped the earth goddess beneath the ocean. She is seated on his left elbow with her hands in a gesture of gratitude to him for saving her.
- Vishnu's left foot rests firmly atop two serpent beings, and one of his right hands grasps a mace. His other attributes, a conch shell and a disc, appear in his two left hands. He is crowned by an umbrella-like lotus.
- Brahma (with three of his heads showing) is at the upper left of the sculpture and Shiva is at the upper right. Together with Vishnu, they represent the cycle of creation, preservation, and destruction of the universe.
- The smooth black phyllite medium and the fine carving of this sculpture suggests that rather than occupying the exterior walls of a temple, this representation of Varaha would have been placed in the inner sanctum or a subsidiary shrine in the temple.