

ABOUT THE ART

Art from
the Ancient
Mediterranean
and Europe
before 1850

Gallery 15

ACKLAND

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ACKLAND ART MUSEUM

The University of North Carolina
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Domenichino
Italian, 1581 – 1641
**Landscape with Fishermen,
Hunters, and Washerwomen**, c. 1604
oil on canvas
Ackland Fund, 66.18.1

About the Art

- Italian art criticism of this period describes the concept of “variety,” in which paintings include multiple kinds of everything. Here we see people of all ages, nude and clothed, performing varied activities in numerous poses, all in a setting that includes different bodies of water, types of architecture, land forms, and animals.
- Wealthy Roman patrons liked landscapes like this one, combining natural and human-made elements in an orderly structure. Rather than emphasizing the vast distance between foreground and horizon with a sweeping view, Domenichino placed boundaries between the foreground (the shoreline), middle ground (architecture), and distance. Viewers can then experience the scene’s depth in a more measured way.
- For many years, scholars thought this was a copy of a painting by Domenichino, but recently it has been argued that it is an original. The argument is based on careful comparison of many of the picture’s stylistic characteristics, and on the presence of so many figures in complex poses. At this point in Domenichino’s career he wanted more commissions for narrative scenes and knew he needed to demonstrate his skill in depicting human action.

About the Artist

1581: Born Domenico Zampieri in October in Bologna, Italy

c. 1595: Studied in Bologna in the famous academy run by Agostino, Annibale, and Ludovico Carracci

1602: Moved to Rome, Italy

c. 1604: Painted the Ackland’s *Landscape*

1614: Became known as “Domenichino”

1621: Appointed Papal Architect by Pope Gregory XV

1631: Worked in Naples, Italy, on a difficult project to decorate the Cathedral

1641: Died April 6 in Naples, possibly by poisoning according to some accounts



Vicente Carducho

Italian, active in Spain, c. 1576 – 1638

The Stigmatization of Saint Francis, c. 1610–30

oil on canvas

The William A. Whitaker Foundation Art Fund, 95.3

About the Art

- Saint Bonaventure's *Life of Saint Francis of Assisi* (1263) describes the event depicted here. While praying in the mountains with a companion, Francis had a vision of a winged seraph carrying the image of the Crucifixion, seen in the top left corner of the painting. From that moment on, he was marked with stigmata – wounds on his hands, feet, and side like the ones Jesus received at his crucifixion.
- The painting was intended to convey Saint Francis' humility, so the artist positioned him kneeling and emphasized his coarse, patched robe.
- Although Vicente Carducho lived centuries after Saint Francis' death in 1226, he portrayed the saint as a recognizable individual. In doing so, he was following the guidance of medieval descriptions, which described him as thin (even gaunt), with a prominent nose.

About the Artist

c. 1576: Born in Florence, Italy

1585: Moved to Spain with his brother, Bartolomé, who became a painter at the court of King Philip II

1601: Documented working for the Spanish court at Valladolid, then at Lerma

1609: Became an official Painter to the King

c. 1610–30: Painted the Ackland's *Stigmatization of St. Francis*

1632: Completed a cycle of fifty-six paintings for a Spanish Carthusian monastery

1633: Published an art treatise, the *Diálogos de la Pintura, or Dialogues on Painting*

1638: Died in Madrid, Spain

Chat with this work of art using ARTBOT. Instructions available in the Museum lobby.



Valentin de Boulogne
French, 1591 – 1632
Saint John the Evangelist, c.
1622–23
oil on canvas
The William A. Whitaker
Foundation Art Fund, 63.4.1

About the Art

- Saint John the Evangelist is known as the author of the Gospel of John. Valentin de Boulogne shows him transcribing text from the scroll in his left hand to the bound book at his right, pausing momentarily to look in the viewer's direction. The eagle is the traditional emblem of Saint John.
- The contrast between the deep shadows and the brilliant highlights (which cause John to squint) coordinate well with a line from the opening passages of the Gospel of John: "The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it." Latin writing on the scroll he holds also refers to this passage.
- Valentin emulated the style of the Italian artist Caravaggio, using dramatic effects of light and shadow (known in Italian as *chiaroscuro*) and showing his figures as ordinary people rather than idealized figures. These choices contribute to the profound sense of immediacy in this painting.
- This painting might have been one of a set of four depicting the evangelists: Saints Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. King Louis XIV of France owned a similar, later set by Valentin.

About the Artist

1592: Baptized 3 January in Coulommiers, France

1620: Documented in Rome, Italy (may have moved to Rome several years earlier)

c. 1622–23: Painted the Ackland's *St. John the Evangelist*

1627: Began to receive commissions from Cardinal Francesco Barberini

1629: Received a commission for an altarpiece in St. Peter's Basilica

1632: Died August 18 or 19 in Rome as a result of bathing in a cold fountain, according to one account



Salomon van Ruysdael
Dutch, c. 1602 – 1670
**River Landscape with
Fishermen, 1643**
oil on panel
The William A. Whitaker
Foundation Art Fund,
2002.15

About the Art

- This kind of river scene, with its subdued hues and village folk conducting daily life, was popular in the seventeenth century. Viewers can examine the progression of boats from those in the shadows at the right to the ones visible along the horizon line, where the colors of the sea and the sky seem to blend together.
- Salomon van Ruysdael's painting may depict the Dutch city of Vianen on the river Lek, but another possibility is the city of Dordrecht. Some elements of this painting's composition — like the wedge shape of the land projecting into the water — were standard parts of many river scenes, making it difficult to identify the specific location.
- In the seventeenth century, many members of the growing Dutch middle class were prosperous enough to own paintings. Ruysdael's River Landscape might well have been displayed in the home of a Dutch merchant.

About the Artist

c. 1602: Born in Naarden, near Amsterdam, the Netherlands

1623: Entered the Guild of St. Luke, the artists' guild in Haarlem, the Netherlands

1628: Was included in Samuel van Ampzing's publication, *Description and Praise of the Town of Haarlem*

1643: Painted the Ackland's *River Landscape with Fisherman*

1647, 1648, 1669: Held offices in the Guild of St. Luke

1651: Recorded as a merchant of blue dye for Haarlem's cloth bleaching industry

1670: Died November 3 in Haarlem



Guercino
Italian, 1591 – 1666
Assumption of the Virgin, 1655
oil on canvas
Ackland Fund, 82.12.1

About the Art

- Even with very few figures and details of the setting, viewers can tell that something important is taking place. Mary's gaze beyond the picture's frame, her slightly parted lips, and outstretched arms suggest her dramatic reaction to whatever it is. Her toes peeking out from beneath her robe, the swirling folds in her blue mantle, and the loose strands of her hair suggest that she is moving upward.
- The Assumption of the Virgin is a subject that depicts Mary being summoned to heaven. The angels, clouds, and golden background indicate that she is already in a heavenly sphere, but Guercino allows us glimpses of blue sky through the parted clouds behind the angel at right and at the lower corners of the canvas, and by implication, the earthly realm below.
- A note in Guercino's account book lists the patron, price, and payment date for this painting: a man named Padre Abbate Ducino paid him 50 ducats on April 22, 1655.

About the Artist

1591: Born February 2 in Cento, Italy, named Giovanni Francesco Barbieri

1621: Went to Rome, Italy, to work for Pope Gregory XV

1623–42: Worked primarily in Cento, but also worked for patrons in France

1646: Moved to Bologna, Italy

1655: Painted the Ackland's *Assumption*; Queen Christina of Sweden visited his studio

1666: Died December 22 in Bologna



Emanuel de Witte
Dutch, c. 1617 – 1692
**The Interior of the Oude Kerk,
Amsterdam, c. 1660**
oil on canvas
Ackland Fund, 73.31.1

About the Art

- Rather than representing a view directly down the nave to the altar, Emanuel De Witte's painting shows an oblique view of the nave, north aisle, and transept of the church.
- Above the three men on the right is an inscription that names a Dutch admiral, Cornelis Jansz de Haan (d. 1633).
- The action in the painting focuses on everyday activities instead of a religious ceremony. This may explain the artist's decision to include two dogs – one of which requires close attention to detect – among the human figures.
- The Oude Kerk (Dutch for "old church") still stands in Amsterdam. It was consecrated in 1306 as a Catholic church and in 1578 became a Protestant church.

About the Artist

c. 1617: Born in Alkmaar, the Netherlands

1636: Joined the artists' guild, the Guild of St. Luke, at Alkmaar

1641: Recorded as a member of the artists' guild in Delft, the Netherlands

1652: Settled in Amsterdam, the Netherlands

c. 1660: Painted the Ackland's *Interior of the Oude Kerk, Amsterdam*

1692: Died in Amsterdam



Gaspard Dughet
French, active in Italy, 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

About the Art

- This painting is composed to represent receding space (from the vegetation in the foreground to the mountains in the distance) within a carefully balanced frame. At the right edge, the trees create a boundary to the scene and direct viewers' attention back to the center. At the left, in the middle distance, the buildings on the hill perform a similar function.
- While Gaspard Dughet's landscape evokes the countryside of central Italy, with certain characteristic geography, vegetation, and architecture, it does not represent a specific location.
- The lounging figures in the sunshine at the center of the scene wear clothing meant to look like that of classical Rome. For seventeenth-century viewers, they suggested an idealized notion of the long history of civilizations in Italy.
- This painting was engraved in 1828 by an artist named Adolf Heydeck, making the composition more widely available for people to see. An inscription on the engraving indicates that the painting belonged at that time to Baron Liersdorff in Brunswick.



Adolf von Heydeck, *Landscape with Fisherman in a Rocky Landscape*, 1828. Engraving. 19.9 x 27.4 cm. Thorvaldsens Museum, Copenhagen, Denmark

About the Artist

1615: Born June 15 to French parents in Rome, Italy

1635: Apprenticed to Nicolas Poussin

1649-53: Painted works commissioned by Pope Innocent X

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

c. 1665: Painted the Ackland's *Landscape with Figures*

1675: Died May 25 in Rome



Jan Weenix
Dutch, 1642 – 1719
Still Life with Hunting Trophies,
1680s–90s?
oil on canvas
Ackland Fund, 84.43.1

About the Art

- Jan Weenix's painting depicts both an aristocratic hunting scene (in the middle ground) and its aftermath, the trophies strewn across the foreground. The awkward poses of the dead deer and heron form a large triangle at the composition's center, flanked by two living animals – a hunting dog at left and a monkey at the right.
- Throughout the painting Weenix carefully depicts different textures, such as fur, feathers, polished metal and wood, tassels, as well as living and wilting vegetation. Not only did this captivate viewers' senses, but it also functioned as a reminder of life's transitory nature. Flowers fade, fruit rots, the sun sets, and animals and humans live and die.
- In the seventeenth century hunting large game was restricted to royalty and the aristocratic class. Even though members of the middle class could not hunt animals like deer, many could afford large hunting paintings like this one. Owning one demonstrated the spending power they had acquired and, perhaps, the social status to which they aspired.

About the Artist

1642: Born in June in Amsterdam, the Netherlands

1664: Became a member of the artists' guild, the Guild of St. Luke in Utrecht, the Netherlands

1675: Moved to Amsterdam

1680: Began to paint still life hunting scenes

1680s–90s: Painted the Ackland's *Still Life with Hunting Trophies*

c. 1702–14: Worked as court painter to Elector Palatinate John William of Düsseldorf, Germany

1719: Buried September 19 in Amsterdam



Giovanni di Isidoro Baratta

Italian, 1670 – 1747

Model for an Altarpiece, c. 1700–09

terracotta

The William A. Whitaker Foundation Art Fund, 88.13

About the Art

- Although in principle Giovanni Baratta designed this sculpture to act as a frame for a religious relic, his decoration for it breaks as many boundaries as it sets. The baby angels turn their heads to gaze inside the frame. The rays of light – and wings of the larger angels – project beyond the model's outer border. And, viewed from the side, looking from top to bottom, the figures extend more and more into the viewer's space.
- Baratta used the clay medium both to mold fully three-dimensional forms and to suggest the illusion of three-dimensional space the way a painter might. At the sculpture's lower edge, he indicates the more distant edges of the clouds, and the angel's foot and drapery with very shallow relief.
- The finished altarpiece, for the Church of San Ponziano in Lucca, Italy, is thirteen feet tall and made of marble. The central space, which is empty in the Ackland's model, was made to display an ornate vial called a reliquary containing what was believed to be the blood of Jesus.

About the Artist

1670: Born May 13 in Carrara, Italy

1697: Moved to Florence after spending several years in Rome, Italy

1700–09: Made the Ackland's *Model*; worked for patrons in Genoa and Lucca, Italy

1709: King Frederick VI of Denmark visited his studio in Florence, Italy

1725: Lived again in Carrara

1731: Given the title of Count

1747: Died May 21 in Carrara



follower of José de Mora
Spanish, 1642 – 1724

Mater Dolorosa (The Sorrowing Virgin), after 1700
wood and fabric with polychrome, silver leaf, glass,
and ivory
Ackland Fund, 75.11.1

About the Art

- To make this sculpture appear as lifelike as possible, the sculptor used glass to imitate the moist surface of the eyes, ivory to suggest the color and texture of teeth, and fabric dipped in plaster to make the mantle drape realistically.
- The Sorrowing Virgin (or in Latin, the Mater Dolorosa), is the name for a type of image of Mary that is related to narrative scenes during or after her son Jesus' crucifixion. In images of the Sorrowing Virgin, Mary appears alone, often in close-up views, allowing viewers to concentrate on the intensity of her emotional experience, which the sculptor emphasizes here.
- This type of half-length figure made of wood, painted, and ornamented with other materials, could be found in churches and private devotional settings across Spain and in Latin America.
- José de Mora (1642-1724), who was a court sculptor to King Charles II of Spain, made many sculptures of the Sorrowing Virgin, as well as of Jesus and other saints.



Jean Restout the younger

French, 1692 – 1768

Christ at the Pool of Bethesda, c. 1725

oil on canvas

Ackland Fund, 87.15

About the Art

- The biblical story depicted here, from Book of John, Chapter 5, verses 1-9, tells of Jesus miraculously healing a lame man. Jean Restout chose the moment before the miracle occurs, showing the lame man reclining at the painting's lower left, with his crutch, and turning to plead with Jesus for help.
- At the time Restout painted this scene, dramatic narratives with many figures were considered the most difficult and prestigious kind of painting. Nearly everyone depicted here exhibits complex poses or emotional expressions and gestures. Amid the crowd of figures, Restout focuses viewers' attention on Jesus by placing him at the center.
- This painting is a preparatory study for a larger painting commissioned for the church of Saint-Martin-des-Champs, Paris.

About the Artist

1692: Born March 26 in Rouen, France

1720: Became a full member of the artists' academy, the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture in Paris, France

c. 1725: Painted the Ackland's *Christ at the Pool of Bethesda*

1737-63: Exhibited regularly at the official Salon in Paris

1760: Became director of the Academy

1768: Died January 1 in Paris



Jacopo Amigoni
Italian, active throughout Europe, 1682/85 –1752
Venus Disarming Cupid, 1730s or 1740s
oil on canvas
Ackland Fund, 86.47

About the Art

- Jacopo Amigoni positioned Venus' body along a diagonal line bisecting the canvas from lower left to upper right, her pink and white drapery echoing that diagonal. The tilt of her neck and her curving arms and legs, however, soften that linear momentum and make her appear relaxed and playful.
- This painting corresponds to a story from the ancient Roman poet Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Venus, the goddess of love, took her son Cupid's arrows away after the mischievous infant scratched her breast with one of them, causing her to fall in love with the mortal Adonis. Amigoni, however, shows no sign of injury on Venus.
- This engraving of a portrait by Amigoni depicts Carlo Broschi, the renowned Italian castrato opera singer known as Farinelli, who was a friend of the artist and once owned the Ackland's painting.

About the Artist

1682/85: Born in Venice, Italy

1711: Documented as a member of the Venetian painters' guild, the *Fraglia*

1715–29: Lived and worked in Germany

1729: Moved to England

1730s or 1740s: Painted the Ackland's *Venus Disarming Cupid*

1739: Returned to Venice

1747: Appointed court painter to Ferdinand VI of Spain

1752: Died August 21 in Madrid, Spain



Jacopo Amigoni, Carlo Broschi, *Known As Farinelli*, 1735. Engraving. 29.8 x 21.2 cm. Gift of Robert M. Light, 91.102, Ackland Art Museum

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13

Corrado Giaquinto
Italian, 1703 – 1765

The Lamentation, early to mid-18th century
oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph F. McCrindle, 2003.12

Conservation treatment for this painting, completed in 2004, was made possible by the generous support of Joseph McCrindle.

About the Art

- The Lamentation is a standard title used for images that show a group of people mourning over the body of Jesus after it has been taken down from the cross. Jesus' mother Mary is almost always included; the number and identity of other mourners varies. Here, the artist shows Saints Mary Magdalene, John the Evangelist, and two infant angels around the body as well as more angels in the sky.
- Often artists who depicted scenes like this made strong visual contrasts between the deathly pallor of Jesus' body and the flesh of the living figures gathered around. Corrado Giaquinto took care to accentuate pink tones in the infant angels and Saint John – whose red mantle picks up some of the same colors.
- In 2004, this painting underwent conservation treatment that included removing surface dirt and old, dull layers of varnish. As a result, it became easier to see some of the subtle gradations of color in the painting.

About the Artist

1703: Born February 8 in Molfetta, Italy

1721-27: Worked in Naples, Italy

1727: Moved to Rome, Italy

1740: Admitted to the Roman artists' academy, the Accademia di San Luca

1753: Invited to Spain by King Ferdinand VI and appointed court painter

1762: Returned to Naples, continuing to act as court painter to King Charles III of Spain

1765: Died in Naples



Johann Joachim Kändler, German, 1706 – 1775
for Meissen Porcelain Manufactory, German, active from
1710 to the present

Apollo, from a *Bath of Apollo* centerpiece, c. 1748
porcelain with clear glaze

Gift of the William E. Shipp Estate, by exchange, 2012.7

About the Art

- Originally, this sculpture was part of a large group of porcelain figures that showed the god Apollo attended by six nymphs. His left foot extended forward, he is about to step down into a bath from the rock where he sits.
- Sculptural groups like this were made to decorate banquet tables in royal palaces and residences of the very wealthy. On the base of the Ackland's figure are the letters (H and I/J), which would have guided servants when matching up the other pieces of the group when it was put on display.
- The porcelain factory in Meissen, Germany, where Johann Joachim Kändler worked as a modeler, was the first in Europe to successfully produce hard-paste porcelain. Before that, Europeans had to import porcelain from China. Collectors loved porcelain's delicacy, durability, and white – even translucent – color.

About the Artist

1706: Born June 15 in Arnsdorf, Germany

1723: Worked in Dresden, Germany

1730: Court sculptor to Frederick-Augustus I, Elector of Saxony

1731: Began working at the Meissen Porcelain Factory

c. 1748: Made the Ackland's *Apollo*

1775: Died May 17 in Meissen, Germany



15

Jean-Antoine Houdon
French, 1741 – 1828

Voltaire, dated 1778, probably made between 1779 and 1793

painted plaster and wood
Ackland Fund, 75.15.1

About the Art

- Voltaire's posture, in which he leans forward in his chair, suggests that at any moment he may stand: he extends one foot over the edge of the base, touches his robe with one hand, turns his torso and head, opens his mouth slightly, and appears to look directly at something to the left that we can't see.
- Although the sculpture is small, Jean-Antoine Houdon included many finely modeled details, such as the lines in the sitter's face, strands of hair, the spiraling curves of the chair's arms, and even the delicate incised pattern on the sides of the seat cushion.
- Houdon based the animated face on a 1778 life mask he made of Voltaire, that is, an impression of his face made in a soft material like wax or plaster. The Voltaire portrait was to be one of a series Houdon planned to make of famous men of his day. He subsequently produced large and small versions of this portrait in bronze, marble, plaster, terracotta, and papier-mâché.
- Voltaire is the pen name of François-Marie Arouet (1694-1778), one of the most famous writers and philosophers of the French eighteenth century.

About the Artist

1741: Born March 25 in Versailles, France

1761: Won the royal artists' Academy's Rome Prize, allowing him to study in Rome, Italy

1768: Returned to Paris, France, and was admitted to the artists' Academy

1778: Created the composition for the Voltaire portrait seen in the Ackland sculpture

1779 – 1814: Exhibited portraits of famous men at the official Salon exhibitions in Paris

1781: Exhibited a marble version of Voltaire seated

1785: Went to the United States to make a portrait of George Washington

1812: Made a portrait of Voltaire standing

1828: Died July 15 in Paris



Joseph-Siffred Duplessis
French, 1725 – 1802
Portrait of an Artist, 1787
oil on canvas
Ackland Fund, 60.25.1

About the Art

- Because the sitter holds a portfolio under his left arm, he is likely an artist. For many years, the portrait was thought to be of the French engraver Augustin de Saint-Aubin. Another suggestion is an artist named Thomas Bernus who was from Joseph-Siffred Duplessis' hometown.
- The elegant bearing, the plush velvet coat, the lace at his collar and sleeve, and the delicate bend of his pinky finger suggest that this artist is at ease in polite society and proud of his accomplishments, although these details show very little of the labor involved in making art.

About the Artist

1725: Baptized September 23 in Carpentras, France

1744: Went to Rome, Italy, worked with Pierre Subleyras

1752: Left Rome

1764: Settled in Paris, France

1769: Exhibited ten portraits at the official Salon in Paris

1774: Became a full member of the artists' Academy in Paris, was given lodging in the Louvre

1787: Painted the Ackland's *Portrait of an Artist*

1802: Died April 1 at Versailles, France



Gilbert Stuart
American, 1755 – 1828
Mrs. Daniel Denison Rogers, 1811
oil on panel
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Cabot Sedgwick, 80.65.1

About the Art

- The wall behind Elizabeth Denison Rogers makes the space seem quite shallow, but by tilting her chair toward the viewer, Gilbert Stuart suggests that she projects forward into the viewer's space.
- This portrait was painted during a period when President Thomas Jefferson restricted the import of European goods, making it difficult for Stuart to acquire canvas. A Boston woodworker treated the smooth surface of wood panels to imitate the texture of canvas so Stuart could achieve the illusion of oil on canvas.
- Elizabeth Bromfield (1763-1833) married Daniel Denison Rogers, the widower of her older half-sister, in 1796. In 1811 Stuart painted her portrait along with her husband's, which is now in a private collection. Until 1980, when this painting was given to the Ackland, it belonged to the Rogers' heirs.

About the Artist

1755: Born in Kingstown, Rhode Island

1775: Studied in London, England, with the painter Benjamin West

1787: Exhibited at the Royal Academy of Arts in London; left London for Dublin, Ireland

1793: Returned to America

1795-96: Painted portraits of George Washington

1803: Worked in Washington, the new capital of the United States

1805: Settled in Boston, Massachusetts

1811: Painted the Ackland's *Mrs. Daniel Denison Rogers*

1828: Died in Boston



18

Richard Westall
British, 1765 – 1836
The Sword of Damocles, 1812
oil on canvas
Ackland Fund, 79.10.1

About the Art

- This dramatic scene from ancient Greek and Roman accounts tells the story of Dionysius (the tyrant of Syracuse) and the young courtier Damocles, who envied the ruler's wealth and power. When Damocles accepted Dionysius' offer to change places for a day, he was terrified to see a sword dangling by a single horse hair over his head – a symbol of the dangers that accompanied Dionysius' position.
- The principal action takes place in the center of the painting, around Dionysius' throne and Damocles' startled expression. Behind the wall draped in pink, curious onlookers lean in to watch; at the painting's very foreground, the kneeling woman offering a wine glass occupies the space closest to viewers, signaling to us where to direct our attention.
- The profusion of ancient Greek and Roman ornaments – in the architecture, the table setting, the furniture, and the costumes – attest to Richard Westall's careful study of Classical culture.
- Westall signed and dated this painting on a low upholstered stool placed at the very bottom of the picture.

About the Artist

1765: Born in Hertford, England

1784: Exhibited at the Royal Academy of Arts in London, England

1794: Admitted to the Royal Academy as a full member

1811: Painted a first version of the *Sword of Damocles*

1812: Painted the Ackland's *Sword of Damocles*

1836: Died December 4 in London



Hiram Powers
American, 1805 – 1873
Duff Green, 1834–37
marble

Transferred from the Art Department Collection, 56.3.1

About the Art

- Hiram Powers combined characteristics of ancient Roman portraits – bust-length images in pure white marble, eyes without pupils – with some individualized details of Green's appearance. For example, a few strands of hair brush against his ears, and faint lines on his chin denote the particular set of his jaw.
- Green (1791-1875), was a military man, active in Missouri politics, and a prominent newspaper editor in Washington, D.C. He owned slaves, defended slavery, and actively worked on behalf of the Confederacy. After the Civil War, Green was pardoned by President Andrew Johnson for his support of the Confederacy.
- In a letter from Powers to Green about the portrait, which Green commissioned, the artist alluded to some of the steps in the process of creating it. Powers first made a plaster model of it (now in the Smithsonian American Art Museum) and completed the marble version later.
- Powers was the most famous and accomplished American sculptor of the nineteenth century. A bust by Powers of Green's friend John C. Calhoun is on view at the North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh.

About the Artist

1805: Born July 29 in Woodstock, Vermont

1819: Moved to Ohio

1834: Moved to Washington

1834–37: Made the Ackland's *Duff Green*

1837: Moved to Florence, Italy

1845: First exhibited his most famous work, the Greek Slave, in London, England

1873: Died June 27 in Florence



 20

Eugène Delacroix
French, 1798 – 1863

Cleopatra and the Peasant, 1838
oil on canvas

Ackland Fund, 59.15.1

Conservation treatment for this painting, completed in 1990, was made possible by the generous support of the Friends of French Art.

About the Art

- This painting represents a scene from William Shakespeare's tragic play *Antony and Cleopatra*, which tells the story of the ancient Egyptian queen who committed suicide after her defeat and capture by the Romans. In this scene, a peasant presents her with the poisonous snake he has smuggled into her prison cell, concealed in a basket of figs. Many artists chose to depict the moment the snake is biting, but Eugène Delacroix opted instead for the moment before, when Cleopatra is contemplating her death.
- When this painting was exhibited in Paris at the official Salon of 1839 it received mixed reviews. Several critics assumed Delacroix's source was the ancient Roman historian Plutarch rather than Shakespeare. They thought this representation of Cleopatra was arrogant and imperious, too unlike the dainty queen Plutarch described.
- Delacroix's Cleopatra may be modeled after a famous French actress who went by the name of Rachel.
- One of Delacroix's preparatory drawings for this painting, in which he worked on the placement of the peasant's arm, is also in the Ackland collection.

About the Artist

1798: Born April 26 in Charenton-Saint-Maurice, France

1822: Exhibited for the first time at the official Salon in Paris, France: Dante and Virgil in Hell

1832: Accompanied the Comte de Morny on a diplomatic mission; traveled to Spain, Morocco, and Algeria

1838: Painted the Ackland's *Cleopatra and the Peasant*

1855: Exhibited 35 paintings at the World's Fair in Paris

1863: Died August 13 in Paris



Eugène Delacroix, *Study for Cleopatra and the Peasant*, c. 1838. Graphite on paper. 34 x 22.5 cm.

Ackland Fund and Gift of Leena and Sheldon Peck, 2015.6. Ackland Art Museum.



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Elisabeth Baumann

Danish, 1819 – 1881

Italy, 1859

oil on canvas

Gift of Ruth and Sherman Lee, 2003.35.1

Conservation treatment for this painting, completed in 2009, was made possible by the generous support of Katharine Lee Reid and Charles W. Millard.

About the Art

- Layers of darkened varnish obscured part of the painting when the Ackland acquired it, including the writing on the prison wall in the upper left. Conservation treatment now allows viewers to see the Italian word *Libertà* (Liberty), a crucial element of the painting's allegorical meaning.
- The red inscription on the left of the canvas indicates that Baumann made the painting in Rome during the period of struggle for Italy's unification and independence from Austria. In 1861, two years after this painting was finished, a united Kingdom of Italy was established.
- An 1860 review of this painting noted that it showed "such power of drawing and colouring as have rarely been manifested by a female painter."

About the Artist

1819: Born November 27 in Jolibord, near Warsaw, Poland, to German parents

1838: Began her studies at the Düsseldorf Academy in Düsseldorf, Germany

1845: Established a studio in Rome, Italy

1846: Married Danish sculptor Jens Adolf Jerichau

1852: Made a private presentation of her paintings to Queen Victoria at Buckingham Palace in London, England

1859: Painted the Ackland's *Italy*

1861: Became the first female member of the Royal Danish Academy of the Fine Arts

1867 and 1878: Showed her work at the World's Fair in Paris, France

1881: Died July 11 in Copenhagen, Denmark