

Bowdoin College Museum of Art

To Instruct and Delight: European and American Art, 1500–1900

Bowdoin Gallery

Opened January 15, 2015

Labels for Installation as of February 2020

LOUIS/LUDOVICO DORIGNY

French, 1654–1742

St. Peter Delivered from Prison by an Angel, ca. 1720s

oil on canvas

Bequest of the Honorable James Bowdoin III

1813.22

Long attributed to the northern Italian artist Antonio Balestra, this work was recently identified as a painting by Ludovico Dorigny, a Frenchman from a distinguished Parisian artist family who was active in Venice and Verona. As a young man, Dorigny produced works for King Louis XIV and for Cardinal Richelieu. In Italy, he was also a sought-after decorative painter. The Acts of the Apostles relate the story of Peter's imprisonment by Herod, who at the time persecuted the leadership of the nascent Christian Church. During the night before his public prosecution, an angel appeared to Peter, "and a light shone in the cell, and he ... woke him, saying, 'Get up quickly.' And the chains fell off his hands." In his right hand, Peter holds the keys that symbolize the power to bind or loosen souls.

JACOPO DA PONTORMO

Italian, 1494–1557

Apollo and Daphne, 1513

oil on canvas

Gift of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation

1961.100.9

Pontormo's haunting rendition of the tragic legend of Apollo and Daphne takes place in neither bucolic Arcadia nor Thessaly, but a shadowy nowhere land. The canvas depicts the love-struck Apollo chasing Daphne, who was shot with a blunt leaden shaft, inciting antipathy. Growing exhausted from his relentless pursuit, Daphne implores her river god father to save her. The chaste maiden's prayers are answered. Just as Apollo is about to overtake her, she is transformed into a laurel tree. In Pontormo's painting, we witness the initial instant of Daphne's transformation, branches springing upward from her arms, while the rest of her body still retains its human form. The grieving Apollo adopted the laurel as his sacred plant in memory of his beloved, and the crown wreathed with its leaves came to be appropriated in celebration of poets and public triumphs.

Renaissance Carnivals

Florence's Carnevale of 1513 carried special significance, as it marked the first such occasion since the return of the Medici after eighteen years in exile. Pontormo's pair of small mythological scenes, preserved here and in a painting in the Samek Museum at Bucknell University (a gift, like this one, of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation) were jointly conceived for the elaborate ritual as part of a much larger program of painted and sculpted ephemera. Together, the carefully choreographed decorations served to mark a particularly charged political and social event. The turn in political fortunes, already signaled during Carnevale, was strongly reinforced just a month later, with the election of Giovanni de' Medici as Pope Leo X in Rome. Only eighteen at the time, Pontormo was entrusted with a project of great personal prestige.

Dennis V. Geronimus

Associate Professor of Art History, Department Chair, New York University

UNIDENTIFIED ARTIST

Italian

Fish Shambles, mid-seventeenth century
oil on canvas

Bequest of the Honorable James Bowdoin III
1813.13

Historically, "Shambles" referred to a table or stall for presenting goods, especially meats, for sale. Thus, the assigned title of this painting merely describes the setting of the drama and does not indicate a disorderly mess. Present at the Museum for more than 200 years, this painting still lacks an attribution to a specific artist, although scholars suggest an origin in mid-seventeenth-century Italy, perhaps in Naples. Close stylistic examination reveals two artists at work, a well-documented practice in seventeenth-century Italy. The human figures present a gentle matte surface, creating softness in the flesh and fabrics. In contrast, the sharply rendered fish shine forth in metallic brilliance. This collaboration between two talented artists results in a painting unified through the effects of light and shade.

Edible Species of Mediterranean Fish

The bravura fish still life at the core of the work features a dozen distinct species captured with an ichthyologist's precision, tantalizingly realized in crisply painted textures, curious shapes, and vibrant colors. On the left, a female monk fish, her great jaws agape, flashes rows of pin-sharp teeth beyond which lie creamy innards. Hanging from hooks in the center, an iridescent striped perch and partially gutted skate gleam with brilliant silvers and whites. To their right, a rather stiff cod lies diagonally, its open mouth and ribbed gills darkened in shadow. Across the front of the fish seller's stone slab, a small upturned skate hangs over the edge, its pearlescent underbelly beaded with water droplets. Surrounding it, a scattered mess of six small and two large gurnards stick out their massive boney heads. Pairs of dark perch and brilliant red groupers complete the

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table's display, which is framed by coins on the left and dark spikey sea urchins on the right. Hanging above, a small shark with spotted fins and a winged ray flank the disemboweled skate.

Susan Wegner
Associate Professor of Art History, Bowdoin College

CRISTOFANO ALLORI
Italian, 1577–1621

Portrait of Geri della Rena, ca. 1602
oil on canvas

Gift of Mr. R. P. Manson
1870.3

Two miniatures in the Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, also by Allori and his workshop, are based on this portrait and are identified as likenesses of Geri della Rena at age twenty-two. Traditionally this painting had been attributed to the Spanish court painter Diego Velazquez, then to Velazquez's son-in-law. Its proper placing in the Florentine tradition was confirmed when the painting was included in a landmark exhibition on art in Florence of the seventeenth century at the Palazzo Pitti in 1986–1987. The disarming emotions on display in Allori's portraits are understood as his major contribution to the genre.

GIOVANNI BENEDETTO CASTIGLIONE, called IL GRECHETTO
Italian, 1609–1664

Christ Cleansing the Temple, ca. 1639
oil on canvas

Gift of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation
1961.100.12

Based on Rembrandt's print of the same scene from 1635, this work focuses on Jesus's rush toward the fleeing merchants. In contrast to Rembrandt, Castiglione places this drama in the background and fills the foreground with panicking livestock stampeding over merchandise splayed before us. Both parts of the composition complement each other thematically and reflect Castiglione's sensitivity to current theoretical discussions on literature and art that considered the significance of sequential narratives in poetry and prose as well as the complementary interplay of foreground and background. Moreover, while his meticulous handling of the heap of animals and merchandise in the foreground demonstrates his brilliance as an animal painter, his lighter palette and fluid brushwork of the New Testament narrative echo that of his dry brush drawings.

Castiglione's Career in the 1630s

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After training principally in Genoa, Castiglione sought to reinvent himself as an artist during the mid-1630s in Rome, where he attended sessions at the Accademia di San Luca. There he would have been exposed to some of the issues of artistic theory and practice facing painters at the time. He would have sought to align himself with artists such as Domenichino, Sacchi, Testa, and Poussin, which may explain the dramatic hand and facial gestures of many of his figures, all geared to express emotions by visual means. Despite Castiglione's attempts to accommodate reigning tastes in order to attract a broader base of clients in Rome and then back in Genoa during the late 1630s and early 1640s, he continued to look to others for inspiration, such as Rembrandt, whose rich chiaroscuro and dramatic subjects in his etchings he found appealing.

Timothy Standring

Gates Family Foundation Curator of Painting and Sculpture, Denver Art Museum

FRANCESCO TREVISANI

Italian, 1656–1746

Madonna of the Rosary (La Madone du Rosaire), 1714–1715

oil on canvas

Acquired through the generosity of George and Elaine Keyes
2014.27

This beautifully composed and vividly colored Roman painting from the early years of the eighteenth century is either a fully executed modello made during the preparation of the altarpiece or a ricordo, a smaller version created after the altarpiece was finished. Cardinal Sacripanti commissioned the altar in the cathedral of his hometown, Narni, in central Italy. Located in a chapel dedicated to the Blessed Lucy, the altarpiece demonstrates Trevisani's masterful talent at the height of his career. The artist has drawn from venerable traditions of Italian painting to bring this imagined conversation to life. Surrounding the Virgin and Child are the adoring Saints Catherine, Dominic, Francis of Paola, and Anthony of Padua. Trevisani completed three additional canvases for the chapel dedicated to mystical visions of the Blessed Lucy and the Death of Saint Joseph.

CLAES CORNELISZ. MOEYAERT

Dutch, 1591–1655

The Meeting of Jacob and Joseph in Egypt, 1636

oil on canvas

Museum Purchase, Florence C. Quinby Fund, in memory of Henry Cole Quinby, Honorary Degree 1916
1970.41

A leading Roman Catholic artist in Amsterdam, Moeyaert often painted historical recreations of Biblical subjects and is among a group of Dutch painters now known as the Pre-Rembrandtists. Scenes from the Old Testament were popular in Amsterdam because they included tests of virtue

and faith, particularly around the theme of family. In the book of Genesis, Joseph was the favorite son of the patriarch Jacob. Sold by his brothers into slavery, Joseph eventually rose by virtue of talents to great power in Egypt, where years later he revealed himself to his brothers, forgave them, and brought Jacob and all his family to Egypt. Moeyaert's prior work painting stage decorations for theatrical productions and his studies of animals allowed him to portray this emotional moment of reconciliation within a fully elaborated setting. The complex of Roman ruins in the background is likely of Moeyaert's own invention, as there is no evidence he ever visited Italy.

JOSEPH BAUMHAUER
French, active ca. 1749–1772

Commode, ca. 1760
oak and poplar; tulipwood and amaranth veneers; ormolu mounts; and marble top

Gift of Miss Susan Dwight Bliss
1948.25

Born in Germany, Baumhauer moved to Paris in the 1740s. At the time French craftsmen opposed immigrants as possible competitors in their market. His marriage to the daughter of a French cabinetmaker undoubtedly helped advance his career and he excelled in his new home. Around 1749 Baumhauer was appointed *marchand-ébéniste privilégié du roi* (dealer and cabinetmaker) to Louis XV, without ever becoming a master in the French guild system. This commode or chest of drawers features all the hallmarks of Joseph's best work: an elegant, curvilinear form, variegated marble top that complements the figured veneers, and gilded mounts in their asymmetrical splendor. Its case is stamped "Joseph," the mark he used after dropping his German surname. It is the finest example of French Rococo furniture given to Bowdoin by Susan Dwight Bliss, the Francophile collector who donated a significant collection of European works on paper, rare books, and architectural fragments now assembled in the Bliss Room of the Bowdoin College Library.

SIMON DE VLIENER
Dutch, ca. 1601–1653

A Coastal Scene near Zandvoort, ca. 1640
oil on panel

Museum Purchase, Lloyd O. and Marjorie Strong Coulter Fund
2014.16

A gathering of fisherfolk peddling their catch dominates the foreground. The artist's mastery of perspective is employed here by contrasting the foreground fisherfolk with diminutive figures near the distant water's edge. All of this human activity occurs under a superbly rendered cloudy sky in which the light playing across the scene seems to be constantly shifting, energizing the painting to brilliant pictorial effect. Simon de Vliener was responsible for the transition from the spirited beginnings of Dutch marine art to its most august and refined stage in the years around

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1650. His great predecessor, Jan Porcellis, shifted Dutch marine art away from large-scale history subjects to focus instead on the unique atmospheric effects of the sea. De Vlieger brought these innovations to new levels of refinement by envisaging the constant yet ever-changing rhythm of the sea under vaulting clouds that filter the sunlight playing across land and sea.

De Vlieger's Followers

Simon de Vlieger was one of the pivotal marine painters of the Dutch "Golden Age," and his achievement assured him a unique place in the evolution of Dutch marine art. Willem van de Velde the Younger putatively studied with de Vlieger in Weesp. In particular, his early seascapes bespeak his close study of de Vlieger's art. Likewise, Jan van de Cappelle was an ardent admirer, and the inventory of his estate included more than 1,300 drawings by de Vlieger. During the 1650s and 1660s, these two younger artists brought Dutch marine art to its apogee, but it was de Vlieger who created the groundwork for this development. He was the fulcrum who shifted the direction of Dutch marine art to its moment of perfection.

George S. Keyes

Former Chief Curator and Curator of European Paintings, Detroit Institute of Arts

CHARLES-FRANÇOIS GRENIER DE LACROIX

French, ca.1700/1720–1782

Seaport with Fortress, 1754

oil on canvas

Bequest of the Honorable James Bowdoin III

1813.31

This painting was likely created in Rome, where the French painter, often called Lacroix de Marseille, resided at the time. While little is known about this artist, who established himself in the Papal State and died in Berlin, many of his decorative harbor scenes survive, often in pairs. Lacroix built on a compositional formula developed by Claude Lorrain and modified it according to the changing preferences of his own time. Its luminous pastel colors and picturesque details make it one of the most endearing paintings among the works purchased by James and Sarah Bowdoin during their residence in Paris between 1805 and 1808.

JACQUES FOUQUIÈRES

Flemish, ca. 1580–1659

Landscape with Dancing Peasants, mid-seventeenth century

oil on canvas

Bequest of the Honorable James Bowdoin III

1813.25

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This painting, acquired by James and Sarah Bowdoin when they lived in Paris between 1805 and 1808, still bears its decorative Empire-style frame. The bucolic subject was fashionable again in the early years of the nineteenth century, when many felt it was time to reconnect with nature as an ailment for undesirable hygienic conditions in cities, the political troubles of the era, and for moral improvement. The period saw a revival of landscape painting in the style of the seventeenth century and a renewed appreciation for Dutch, French, and Italian artists of the Baroque period who rendered idealized Italianate landscapes such as this. Jacques Fouquières was a Flemish artist who is said to have collaborated with Peter Paul Rubens before he moved to Paris in 1621, simultaneously with and perhaps prompted by Rubens. He was met with considerable success, and King Louis XIII honored him with the title of baron.

WILLIAM SEARLE

English, born ca. 1634

Joined Great Chair, ca. 1666–1667

carved, joined oak

Gift of Ephraim Wilder Farley, Class of 1836

1872.1

Bowdoin's chair collection began in 1872 with the arrival of this extraordinary joined great chair. William Searle, an English-trained joiner who emigrated to America in 1663, is believed to have produced it for his own household in Ipswich, Massachusetts. After his death, his widow married another joiner, Thomas Dennis (1638–1706), who like Searle was from Devonshire, England. Dennis took over Searle's workshop, and it is through the Dennis family that the chair descended. The handsomely carved ornament, with anthropomorphic figures decorating the stiles, is based on the Renaissance and Baroque strapwork seen on furniture from the region in which Searle trained. Used for many years as the president's chair at Commencement, the chair is now recognized as among the nation's finest examples of seventeenth-century furniture.

JOHN SMIBERT

American, 1688–1751

after NICOLAS POUSSIN

French, 1594–1665

The Continnence of Scipio, ca. 1726

oil on canvas

Bequest of the Honorable James Bowdoin III

1813.10

Smibert's painting is a copy of a 1640 painting by the revered French painter Nicolas Poussin. Its subject derives from Roman history. During the Second Punic War, the Roman general Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus decided to return his war spoils, including the bride of his enemy Allucius, the young prince of the Celtiberians. Scipio's moral fortitude presented an ideal subtext for Poussin's classical interpretation. John Smibert, the copyist, was a portrait painter from

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Scotland who trained in London and later set out with Dean George Berkeley to found a college in Bermuda. This painting was intended to be part of the college's teaching collection, but when that project fell through, Smibert exhibited it in his Boston studio and art supply store. In Boston it set an example for John Singleton Copley, who admired it. At Bowdoin College since James Bowdoin III's bequest in 1813, the work has contributed to the education of countless generations of students.

John Smibert's Exposure to Poussin

Smibert painted this picture in London between 1726 and 1728, soon after the original was acquired from a French collection by Sir Robert Walpole, one of the great art collectors of the eighteenth century. At the time it came into his possession, Walpole lived less than a mile from Smibert's London studio. In 1726, Smibert recorded in his commissions notebook that he painted two miniatures for Walpole, along with a copy of a life-size portrait of him, yet for the latter he records no payment. It is possible that Smibert received permission to copy Poussin's *Continence of Scipio* in exchange for painting a portrait for Walpole. Given Smibert's Presbyterian background and emphasis on leading a moral life, he undoubtedly considered this picture particularly noteworthy. And as there were few original paintings by Poussin then in England, it made the work all the more desirable.

Richard Saunders

Director, Middlebury College Museum of Art, and Professor, History of Art and Architecture,
Middlebury College

DENYS CALVAERT

Flemish/Italian, ca. 1540–1619

Annunciation, ca. 1595

oil on copper

Museum Purchase, Laura T. and John H. Halford, Jr. Art Acquisition Fund, Lloyd O. and Marjorie Strong Coulter Fund and Jane H. and Charles E. Parker, Jr. Art Acquisition Fund
2010.36

The Annunciation, frequently depicted across Renaissance Europe, illustrates the moment when the angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she will become mother to Jesus. Gabriel's instructive gesture appears before the backdrop of a garden, emblematic of the Immaculate Conception, which is symbolized in God's penetrating hand, parting the heavens and emitting light. Mary welcomes the divine presence with modesty within a contained domestic setting, flanked by lilies, a sign of purity. She interrupts her reading of an open book, shaped like the tablets of the commandments. This small painting was likely commissioned for use in personal devotion. As a visual presence in a pious household, this work had a tangible impact on the lives of the residents. Counter-Reformation Europe experienced an upsurge in devotional art and literature, and new spiritual movements and meditative practices centered on the establishment of a closer, more personal relationship with God.

The Marian Ideal

Depictions of the Annunciation provide insights into social, cultural, and religious aspects of early modern society, particularly the implementation of gendered codes of conduct. Catholic preachers and writers of numerous works on the life of the Virgin emphasized Mary's obedience and submissiveness as characteristics of model behavior for women. Humanist treatises and conduct manuals argued for reformations within the church and larger society, encouraging audiences to emulate these prescribed models of gendered behavior. Guidebooks for husbands and wives, for example, were extremely common. Evoking the injunctions of these conduct manuals and humanist treatises, early modern visual culture frequently fashioned a Marian ideal as a way to reinforce and promote these types of gendered expectations. Calvaert's poignant rendition of Mary is emblematic of behavioral norms set for women and popularized by the Cult of Mary: modest appearance, downward gaze, protected posturing, and reading material as evidence of her dedication to study.

Margaret E. Boyle

Associate Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures, Bowdoin College

ALLAN RAMSAY

Scottish, 1713–1784

Portrait of a Woman, ca. 1740

oil on canvas

Bequest of John Nichols, Class of 1936, and Dorothy C. Estabrook

1988.27.1

Allan Ramsay's sojourn in Italy from 1736 to 1738 provided first-hand knowledge of painting styles, colors, and techniques. On his return, he established a portrait studio in London, developing a reputation for a naturalism new to British painting. Sought-after by Scottish and English nobility, his success eventually led to his appointment as Principal Painter to King George III in 1767. Ramsay was especially noted for his elegant portraits of women. Although this sitter's identity is unknown, Ramsey masterfully captured her youthfulness and fashionable dress in a classical setting.

JOSEPH BLACKBURN

American, ca. 1730–after 1778

Portrait of Elizabeth Bowdoin and James Bowdoin III, ca. 1760

oil on canvas

Bequest of Mrs. Sarah Bowdoin Dearborn

1826.11

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When Blackburn passed through Boston sometime around 1760, the Bowdoin family already owned portraits by Joseph Badger, Robert Feke, and others. Nevertheless, James Bowdoin II lost no time in securing Blackburn's talents to depict young James III and his sister Elizabeth. The result is this unusual double portrait, which is at once a charming portrayal of children and an assertively up-to-date statement of their importance as the rising generation of one of New England's most prominent families. Indeed, Blackburn subtly alludes to the family's crest, which includes three birds, through the bird held by the James III and the two in his cap.

ROBERT FEKE

American, ca. 1707–1752

Portrait of Brigadier-General Samuel Waldo, ca. 1748
oil on canvas

Bequest of Mrs. Lucy Flucker Thatcher
1855.3

Robert Feke's full-length portrait of Samuel Waldo commemorates the officer's leadership in the British and American victory in 1745 over the French at Louisbourg, Nova Scotia. This was one of four contemporaneous full-length portraits celebrating the American commanders of that battle. The other featured officers were William Pepperrell, William Shirley, and Peter Warren, whose portraits John Smibert painted in 1745 and 1746. Here Waldo holds a baton, symbolizing his status as a brigadier-general, but instead of being depicted in a uniform, he chose to dress as a prosperous merchant. Feke excelled in the painterly details of Waldo's luminous silk-velvet coat and red waistcoat trimmed in yards of thick gold braid. In a large horsehair wig, Waldo strikes a pose guided by British etiquette books.

General Samuel Waldo—Maine in the Colonial Period

A Massachusetts merchant involved in timber harvesting and shipping, Samuel Waldo expended considerable energy developing lands in the Waldo Patent, between the Penobscot River and Muscongus Bay, now part of Maine. To settle the region beginning in the 1740s, he solicited and encouraged German and Scots-Irish immigrants, many of whom then served in his regiment at Louisbourg. Although usually considered to be Boston-based, Waldo lived in Falmouth-in-Casco-Bay (now Portland), where he also oversaw mast and timbering operations. Following Waldo's death in 1759, the Feke portrait descended to his daughter Hannah, who married Thomas Flucker, Waldo's Boston partner, in 1751. It remained in the family until his great-granddaughter, Mrs. Lucy Flucker Thatcher, bequeathed it to Bowdoin in 1853.

Laura Fecych Sprague

Senior Consulting Curator, Bowdoin College Museum of Art

JOSEPH BLACKBURN

American ca. 1730–after 1778

Portrait of Mrs. Thomas Flucker (née Hannah Waldo), ca. 1755

oil on canvas

Bequest of Mrs. Lucy Flucker Thatcher
1855.2

Joseph Blackburn was perhaps the most *au courant* of the small number of trained English painters working in the American colonies during the mid-eighteenth century. A master of the fashionable French idiom known as Rococo, Blackburn was among the first painters to bring its elegant poses and pastel colors to British America. He was heavily patronized by the colonial elite, who were anxious to have their portraits painted in what was a cutting-edge style, even by London standards. In 1751 Hannah Waldo, the daughter of Brigadier General Samuel Waldo whose portrait is nearby, married Thomas Flucker; his portrait by Copley also hangs nearby. Although Hannah's pose is derived from English mezzotints, Blackburn has imbued her with delicacy and life. The original frame is, like her father's, the work of an unidentified but talented Boston carver working in the Rococo style.

JOHN SMIBERT

American, born Scotland, 1688–1751

The Reverend James MacSparran (1693–1757), ca. 1735
oil on canvas, mounted on panel

Bequest of Charles Edward Allen of Gardiner, Maine, Bowdoin Class of 1835
1897.1

Born in Ireland and trained in Scotland, James MacSparran settled as an Anglican clergyman in Rhode Island in 1721. John Smibert first met the MacSparrans in 1729, when they hosted the philosopher and educator George Berkeley and his group immediately following their arrival in the colonies. Smibert had left London on Berkeley's invitation to assist in founding a college in the Bermudas. The plan fell through due to a lack of funds and Smibert eventually settled in Boston, where he maintained a portrait studio, art supply store, and exhibition space where he put on view European art (often copies such as *The Continnence of Scipio* after Poussin) that proved foundational for the development of American art. Smibert painted the portraits of James MacSparran and his wife Hannah Gardiner shortly thereafter. The pendant portrait is today in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

JOHN SINGLETON COPLEY

American, 1738–1815

Portrait of Thomas Flucker, ca. 1770–71
oil on canvas

Bequest of Mrs. Lucy Flucker Thatcher
1855.1

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John Singleton Copley, colonial America's greatest portraitist, was born to modest circumstances but excelled under the tutelage of his stepfather Peter Pelham, the English-born engraver. Copley catered to his patrons' desires to be portrayed as English aristocrats, and through his exceptional talents he created a new identity for America's merchant class. Thomas Flucker had joined two of colonial Boston's most influential families by marriage. After his first wife Judith Bowdoin, James Bowdoin II's sister, died, he married Hannah Waldo, daughter of Brigadier General Samuel Waldo. Appointed Colonial Secretary in 1770, he remained loyal to the Crown and fled to England in 1774, spending the remainder of his life in London. That same year, his daughter Lucy married Henry Knox, a Boston bookseller who became one of George Washington's most able generals.

American, New Amsterdam

Spindle-back Side Chair, 1660–1720
cherry, turned and painted

Gift of Donald E. Hare '51 and Ann F. Hare
2017.42.7

This side chair with spindles represents the Dutch tradition of turned furniture in seventeenth-century New York, then called New Amstersdam. In the Netherlands, turners were called *stoelendraaiers* and specialized in turned furniture assembled with dowel joints. This seating form appears in many Dutch paintings depicting seventeenth-century interiors. In contrast, the Searle Great Chair, seen nearby is made of more labor-intensive mortice and tenon joints.

GILBERT STUART
American, 1755–1828

James Madison, ca. 1805–07
oil on canvas

Bequest of the Honorable James Bowdoin III
1813.54

Gilbert Stuart started his portraits of Jefferson and Madison while living in Washington, D.C. As he anticipated creating copies, he began by painting studies of their faces, which he retained. He then used those life studies to paint portraits in oil. Stuart completed these pendant paintings in Boston, having moved there in the summer of 1805 at the suggestion of former Massachusetts senator Jonathan Mason, who promised to introduce him to prospective clients. Stuart's mother and sister—together with a number of friends—also lived in Boston. Though he had led a peripatetic life as an artist, living in Scotland, London, Dublin, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, Stuart would make Boston his final home. A year after this painting's completion, Madison was elected the fourth President of the United States.

GILBERT STUART
American, 1755–1828

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Thomas Jefferson, ca. 1805–07
oil on canvas

Bequest of the Honorable James Bowdoin III
1813.55

James Bowdoin III greatly admired Thomas Jefferson's republican principles and felt a kinship with his interest in art and culture. After Jefferson appointed him Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of Spain, Bowdoin offered his services to acquire paintings and sculpture for the President while abroad. Indeed, shortly before his departure for Europe in 1805, Bowdoin presented to Jefferson a marble copy of an antique sculpture in the Vatican's collection that he believed to represent the Egyptian queen Cleopatra (later identified as Ariadne). The gift remains at Jefferson's home, Monticello. In 1805, Bowdoin commissioned Gilbert Stuart to paint official likenesses of the President and Secretary of State James Madison for display in his new residence in Madrid. Setting aside the outward trappings of monarchy, Stuart created a pair of portraits that emphasize individual dignity and thoughtful intensity as the chief qualifications for leadership.

Attributed to VALENTIN LENDENSTREICH
German, Thuringia, ca. 1460–1506

The Virgin and Child on a Crescent Moon, ca. 1500
limewood, painted and gilded

Wyvern Collection

This shallow figure with a hollow back was originally set in the central panel of an altarpiece. It glorifies Mary as the Mother of Jesus, Woman of the Apocalypse, and Queen of Heaven. In the late fifteenth century, limewood sculptures were produced in large numbers, as German cities, towns, and villages built and rebuilt churches and chapels and parishioners donated funds for decorations. At this time, Christian worship increasingly engaged the emotions of the believers to connect with them on a personal level. The bright, expressive faces of the alert child and loving mother communicate with all viewers, regardless of their position in or relation to the clerical hierarchy. Theologian Martin Luther who grew up in the area was soon to declare that all baptized Christians, not only the ordained, were priests in the eyes of God.

ALLEGRETTO NUZI
Italian, ca. 1316/20–1373/74

Christ Blessing, ca. 1360
tempera on panel

Gift of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation
1961.100.4

This triptych, originally a portion of a larger polyptych (altarpieces with multiple panels), is in a very fine state of preservation. When first completed, the tondo might have been part of the frame of the larger altarpiece, in which it would presumably have graced the gable of the central panel. Art historian Roberto Longhi identified the work's "simplicity and amplitude of shape" as telling signs of Allegretto Nuzi's training in Florence in the 1330s, under the strong influence of Giotto. Despite the small scale of this painting, the half-figure of the haloed Christ in the act of blessing possesses monumental dignity. Nuzi's panel depicting Saint Anthony Abbot, a wing of a major altarpiece for his home town of Fabriano, is today in the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., and, like this work, a gift from the Samuel H. Kress Foundation.

GHERARDO DEL FORA
Italian, 1445–1497

St. Mary Magdalene between St. Peter Martyr and St. Catherine of Siena, ca. 1475
tempera on panel

Gift of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation
1961.100.11

Active in Florence in the second half of the fifteenth century, Gherardo was a painter and book illuminator who benefited from the patronage of Lorenzo de' Medici, known as Lorenzo the Magnificent. Gherardo's works reveal a powerful interest in classical antiquity. In this small devotional panel, perhaps commissioned for a Dominican convent, Mary Magdalene is flanked by Peter Martyr (identified by the transparent knife embedded in his head) and Catherine of Siena. The Magdalene is covered only in her calf-length hair, a reference to her years in the wilderness after Christ's death. Seen through a window (a scene-within-a-scene device typical of the artist), an earlier event in Mary's life unfolds, wherein she is the first to recognize Christ, newly risen following his crucifixion. "Noli Me Tangere," or "touch me not," he instructed, as she sought to embrace him.

Retracing the Painting's Origins

Gherardo del Fora's biography is recounted in Giorgio Vasari's *Lives of the Artists*, and documents attest to his activities as illuminator, mosaicist, painter, stationer, and organist. Born into a family of artists in Florence, he spent part of his life as a lay brother at San Marco, the Observant Dominican friary where Fra Angelico's frescoes enriched devotional practice. For whom this painting was made is undocumented, but the iconography may provide clues to its origins. Mary Magdalene, a patron of the Dominican order, and Catherine of Siena, the Dominicans' first female saint, commonly appear in art made for Observant Dominican women. The inclusion of Peter Martyr, who is glorified with the triple crown of martyr, virgin, and doctor, suggests the panel could have been painted for San Pier Martire, an Observant Dominican nunnery in Florence. Gherardo's own association with the order strengthens this hypothesis. Too small to be an altarpiece, the painting may have been intended for a nun's cell there.

Bowdoin College Museum of Art

Trinita Kennedy
Curator, Frist Art Museum, Nashville

AFTER JAN DE BEER
Netherlandish, ca. 1475–before 1528

Adoration Triptych, ca. 1518–19
oil on panel

Museum Purchase, Lloyd O. and Marjorie Strong Coulter Fund, Jane H. and Charles E. Parker, Jr. Art Acquisition Fund and Laura T. and John H. Halford, Jr. Art Acquisition Fund
2018.25

This triptych is one of two exceptional copies of a lost *Adoration* triptych by the Antwerp painter Jan de Beer. Both match de Beer's stylistic repertoire and visual finesse to a far greater degree than the other fifty-two copies, an indication that each was likely produced in de Beer's workshop by studio assistants. The left wing depicts Christ's midnight birth. In the rear, shepherds gather round a bonfire as the Annunciation to the Shepherds unfolds. The center shows the three Magi presenting their gifts. They include according to the legends of the Western Christian church the African Magus, Balthasar; the Persian scholar, Melchior; and the Indian scholar, Gaspar. The journey of the Magi with their caravan is seen in the background. In the right wing, the Holy Family flees Israel to Egypt, in response to Herod's decree to kill all Bethlehem children under the age of two, in fear that the Messiah was born.

Magi & Merchants

The Adoration of the Magi was the predominant religious theme in Antwerp painting, and one of the few instances in which black Africans regularly appeared in Renaissance art. The Magi—foreigners from distant lands, transporting luxury goods—came to be an important part of the city's identity, regarded as analogues to the numerous foreign merchants trading in Antwerp, Europe's largest commercial market. Like the Magi's gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, the city's economy was based upon the luxury trade. Pepper and rare spices from India and Africa, sugar from Madeira and the Canary Islands, silver from Germany and Bohemia, and diamonds from India all poured into Antwerp. Many Antwerp Adorations make the Magi/merchant analogy explicit by depicting the Magi's attendants as porters transporting cargo. Here, in the right-center background, they unload packs from the camels, set them on the ground, and open a chest of valuables.

Dan Ewing
Professor of Art History, Barry University

UNKNOWN ARTIST

Saint Bavo of Ghent and a Kneeling Donor, ca. 1525–1530
painted glass roundel

Bequest and gift of Miss Susan Dwight Bliss, Charles Potter Kling, and Dr. Bernard Samuels, by exchange
2019.5

This fragment of a Renaissance stained glass window represents a donor in the garb of a church canon from St. Bavo, Ghent. He prays to the patron saint, identifiable by his attribute of the masked falcon. The landscape of meadows and rolling hills provides an imaginary meeting point between a castle (on the canon's side) and the wilderness. The artist demonstrates their mastery of the *sgraffito* technique by removing pigment to evoke highlights on the saint's armor. Although the identity of the artist has not been firmly established, the distinctive technique may eventually make attribution possible as the roundel is compared with other surviving examples. Similarly, it may eventually be possible to determine the donor pictured in the work, as a coat of arms with a fleur-de-lis appears prominently in the roundel, suggesting a noble or royal birth.

MASTER OF THE LILLE SERMON
Flemish, died before 1600

The Burning of Sodom, ca. 1550–1575
oil on panel

Museum Purchase, Florence C. Quinby Fund, in memory of Henry Cole Quinby, Honorary Degree 1916
1970.78

In *The Burning of Sodom* a high horizon line combines with an elevated foreground to reveal a sweeping panorama—a composition favored by Flemish painters of the time. Color helps define depth, with a reddish brown hue in the foreground, followed by green and blue shades in the middle and background. In the Book of Genesis, the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed when God condemned their inhabitants for their lascivious lifestyles. Angels were sent to the city of Sodom, but unable to find ten righteous people there to rescue, they called upon Lot, Abraham's nephew, and led him and his family from the city. The only stipulation was that they must not look back at their burning home. When Lot's wife disobeyed, she was turned into a pillar of salt. Two distraught daughters got Lot drunk, as seen in the foreground, and then enticed him to father their children.

HENDRIK CORNELISZ. VAN VLIET
Dutch, ca. 1611–1675

The Tomb of Admiral Jacob Van Wassenaer in the Choir of the Jacobskerk in The Hague, 1667
oil on canvas

Museum Purchase, Florence C. Quinby Fund, in memory of Henry Cole Quinby, Honorary Degree 1916
1971.6

Bowdoin College Museum of Art

In mid-seventeenth-century Delft, Hendrick Cornelisz. van Vliet was one of several painters who specialized in illusionistic renderings of the interiors of the city's two great Gothic churches. In addition to the scrupulous investigation of the visual qualities of light and space, these views were also expressions of the pleasure of observation and national pride, drawing attention to the memorials of the heroes in Holland's recent struggle with Spain. The figures in the composition serve as more than mere markers of scale, bringing life to this representation of the church, which served as one of the city's important civic centers. The remarkable trompe l'oeil curtain in the far-right foreground cleverly plays with notions of surface and illusion and serves as a transition between the space of the viewer and the deep architectural volume of the interior.

PIERRE REYMOND

French, 1513–1584

Limoges painted enamel Ewer, ca. 1560
painted enamel

Wyvern Collection

French

Limoges Enamelled Plaque, ca. 1550
painted enamel

Wyvern Collection

PIERRE REYMOND

French, 1513–1584

Limoges Painted Enamel Tazza of the Wise Man with the Good Heart, 1558
painted enamel

Wyvern Collection

Attributed to the MASTER OF THE LOUIS XII TRIPTYCH

French, active late fifteenth century–ca. 1515

Annunciation

painted enamel

Gift of Miss Susan Dwight Bliss

1963.256

Limoges, France was the center of innovative and creative excellence in enamel production during the Middle Ages. In these examples, the artists applied the enamel directly to the surface

of the metal, allowing for a fluid rendering of volume, shadow, and depth comparable to that of painting. The technical development of “painted enamel” allowed for the creation of seamless compositions rather than forms defined by metal borders or lines, like that of the earlier established cloisonné enamel and champlevé enamel techniques. These examples were all created during the sixteenth century, a period in which royal edicts afforded a select few high-status families with the authority to produce enamels.

Walter Gans, class of 1957, recently presented the Museum with a collection of English and Irish silver. It has been supplemented by many notable examples of early London and provincial English silver, the 2017 gift of Walter Gans '57 and Katherine Gans. Highlights of this collection are on view in this case. In addition to being an easily converted commodity, silver has long been fashioned into useful ornamental objects. Families of means traditionally accumulated a variety of forms for dining, drinking, lighting, and writing.

ROBERT COOPER

English, London

Milk Jug, 1709–1710

silver, fruitwood handles

2015.36.8.2

JOHN LE SAGE

English, London

Teapot, 1737

silver, wooden handle and finial

2017.47.1

ROBERT COOPER

English, London

Coffee Pot, 1709–1710

silver, fruitwood handles

2015.36.8.1

Beginning in medieval times, guilds offered craftsmen a way to control the manufacture and trade of specialized goods, including silver. Great Britain has long been recognized for the quality of its silver. The guild system maintained this level by testing silver content on an object’s completion. The assay marks, guaranteeing quality, appear with marks of the maker, city of origin, and date. Colonial American silversmiths did not have a guild, but often stamped their name or initials on their work.

EDWARD GIBBON

English, London

Mounted Bottle, ca. 1725
silver and blue blown glass
2017.47.7

UNIDENTIFIED MAKER
Shrewsbury, England

Plate, dated 1683
silver
2017.47.15

SETH LOFTHOUSE
English, London

Porringer, 1697
silver
2017.47.16

Glass, like silver, was a luxury material in early Europe, and the British mastered glassmaking during the seventeenth century. Made of a rich blue glass, the bottle was mounted in silver, signifying its particular value to its owner. According to the inscription around the rim, this plate was given to a Shrewsbury church in 1683 by Margaret Eyton who lived in the nearby hamlet of Acton Reynold. Silver from this provincial region, northwest of London, is rare, and the unusual dedication adds to this plate's significance. The porringer is an early example of a form that became especially popular in Colonial America.

TIMOTHY LEVY
English, London

Two-handled Cup, 1692–1693
silver
2015.36.9

UNIDENTIFIED SILVERSMITH “BA”
English or Dutch

Coconut Cup, ca. 1620
silver and coconut shell
2015.36.11

UNIDENTIFIED SILVERSMITH “WR”
English, London

Beaker, ca. 1660
silver

2015.36.7

These cups and beakers are typical seventeenth-century forms. Coconuts were such exotic fruit in early Europe that their shells were converted into elegant drinking vessels. Three scenes engraved on the shell—a couple dining, a woman feeding pigs, and a man departing on horseback—display many period details. One beaker's engraved inscription *Ex dono Caroli Secundi Regis* reveals it had been a gift from King Charles II of England.

CHINA FOR EXPORT

Bowl, ca. 1750

hard-paste porcelain with brown enamel and blue underglaze decoration

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Wilmont M. Schwind Jr.

1986.119

CHINA FOR EXPORT

Winecup, 1620–1640

hard-paste porcelain with blue underglaze decoration

Gifts of Mr. and Mrs. Wilmont M. Schwind Jr.

1984.52

CHINA FOR EXPORT

Tea bowl and saucer, ca. 1740

molded hard-paste porcelain with enamel and gilt decoration

Private Collection

These Chinese porcelains are types known to have been used in early America and document global trading patterns. The bowl with brown glaze was recovered from a Dutch East India Company vessel which sank in the China Sea in 1752. From the Nanking cargo, the bowl bears a brown glaze known as Batavia after the Dutch port in Java. The small winecup with a delicate flame pattern relates to one discarded circa 1610 in Jamestown, North America's first successful English settlement. The cup and saucer with sophisticated molded decoration is believed to have been owned in colonial Portland.

JACOB HURD

American, 1702/03–1758

Teapot, ca. 1740

silver, wooden handle

Private Collection

WILLIAM GRUNDY

English, London, ca. 1718–ca. 1779

Pair of Canss, 1748–1749

silver

Gifts of Clara Bowdoin Winthrop
1943.3.1–2

Jacob Hurd, like the Reveres, was a successful Boston silversmith. The teapot with its bold round shape is typical of Boston's best colonial silver. Engraved with the Bowdoin and Erving coat-of-arms, the English canns were likely wedding gifts to James Bowdoin in 1748.

KNIGHT LEVERETT
American, 1702/3–1753
Strainer Spoon, ca. 1735
silver
Gift of Mrs. Mary Prentiss Ingraham Davies, Daniel Cony Memorial Collection
1928.19.21

PAUL REVERE, SR.
American, 1702–1754
Covered Sugar Bowl, ca. 1750
silver
Private Collection

PAUL REVERE JR.
American, 1734–1818
Punch Ladle, 1760–1774
silver with fruitwood handle
Gift of Clara Bowdoin Winthrop
1943.3.3

PAUL REVERE JR.
American, 1735–1818
Tablespoon, ca. 1770
silver
Gift of Donald E. Hare '51 and Ann F. Hare
2017.42.3

Colonial American silversmiths competed with imported British wares, especially tea wares, spoons, and other flatware. The Paul Reveres, both father and son, were among Boston's most successful silversmiths. Like the Bowdoins, the Reveres were Huguenots, originally named *Rivoire*. Arriving in Boston in 1716, Paul Revere Sr. was apprenticed to the silversmith John Coney before working independently. The sugar bowl's simple yet elegant shape is derived from Chinese export porcelains. One of America's great patriots, Paul Revere, Jr., made the tablespoon and punch ladle.

CHARLES–LOUIS AUGUSTE SPRIMAN
French, active 1775–1781

Bowdoin College Museum of Art

Covered tureen, ca. 1775
silver

Gift of Miss Clara Bowdoin Winthrop in the name of the children of Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Winthrop, Jr.
1924.3.1

Sarah and James Bowdoin III owned this French tureen. As an essential supporter of the American Revolution, France was a source of inspiration to many Americans. On their return to Boston from Paris in 1808, the Bowdoins shipped crates of household wares, including French textiles, porcelains, and glass. Rococo in style, this tureen represents a form and decoration that continued to influence both American and émigré silversmiths.