Back to School

9 | Art Works





10 | Shop Guide



FALL | 2020





Anatomy of... [Statuette of a Lioness-Headed Goddess]

Where to Find It: Egyptian Galleries Curator: Jessica Powers, the Gilbert M. Denman, Jr. Curator of Art of the Ancient Mediterranean World



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* deceased



San Antonio Museum of Art



6

Table of Contents

- 4 Popular Art
- 6 Exquisite Adornment
- 8 New & Noted
- 9 Art Works
- 10 Shop Guide
- 11 Give & Join

From the Director's Office

Dear Members,

Since you received your last ArtNow, a lot has happened in the world. On March 13 the Museum temporarily shut its doors due to COVID-19 and mobilized to present digital programming for all ages at samuseum.org/samaanywhere. Please join us for a happy hour tour, artist talk, or story time!



10

To navigate re-opening on May 26, sneeze guards, hand sanitizer, and spacing signage were installed, masks were distributed, online ticketing was established, and our frontline teams stepped up to regularly clean common areas. SAMA's spacious galleries allow for safe social distancing, but for anyone uncomfortable with venturing out, we've continued a robust calendar of online programming.

This summer's Black Lives Matter protests caused reflection in every cultural institution, and our staff-led Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access task force (see page 8) was already in the works. Look for internal and external initiatives to be rolled out in the coming months.

You may have also noticed that our exhibition schedule changed. The Museum was fortunate that the lenders for *Texas Women* graciously allowed us to extend the exhibition through September 6. We are delighted to re-open our Latin American Popular Art Gallery (see page 4) and are thrilled to announce the opening of *Exquisite Adornment: Turkmen and Miao Jewelry from the Elizabeth and Robert Lende Collection* (see page 6).

Thank you for being a member of the San Antonio Museum of Art during this extraordinary time. Your support allows us to keep our doors open, and we hope, in return, we are able to offer some respite and inspiration.

We look forward to seeing you in the galleries (or digitally!) soon,

Emily Suno

Emily Sano, Co-Interim Director

Cover: Still Life with Parrot, Puebla, Mexico, 19th century, Oil on canvas, 21 1/2 x 29 1/2 in. (54.6 x 74.9 cm), The Nelson A. Rockefeller Mexican Folk Art Collection, 85.98.97

Above Left: Miguel Linares, Skeleton Street Vendor (detail), Mexico City, Mexico, ca. 1965, Papier-mäché, paint, wire, and cord, h. 39 in. (99.1 cm); w. 12 in. (30.5 cm); d. 14 in. (35.6 cm), The Nelson A. Rockefeller Mexican Folk Art Collection, 85.98.591.a-e

Above Center: Dorsal Ornament (detail), Turkmenistan (Teke), late 19th to early 20th century, Gilt silver inlaid with carnellan, 6 5/16 × 5 11/16 in. (16 × 14.5 cm), Promised gift from Elizabeth and Robert Lende, L2020.23.24, Photo by Seale Studios

ARTNOW

MEMBERS MAGAZINE

DESIGNER: DVS Design

PHOTOGRAPHY: Elizabeth Leland, Parish Photography, Ansen Seale, Peggy Tenison

3

Latin American Popular Art Gallery

OPENING SEPTEMBER 12, 2020



Above: Still Life with Parrot, Puebla, Mexico, 19th century, Oil on canvas, 21 1/2 x 29 1/2 in. (54.6 x 74.9 cm), The Nelson A. Rockefeller Mexican Folk Art Collection, 85.98.97 Opposite Left: Miguel Linares, Skeleton Street Vendor, Mexico City, Mexico, ca. 1965, Papier-mäché, paint, vire, and cord, h. 39 in. (99.1 cm); w. 12 in. (50.5 cm); d. 14 in. (55.6 cm), The Nelson A. Rockefeller Mexican Folk Art Collection, 85.98.161.4 cm); Cancel Diala K. Concertained and Cord, h. 39 in. (99.1 cm); w. 12 in. (50.5 cm); d. 14 in. (55.6 cm); d. 17 in. (43.2 cm), The Nelson A. Rockefeller Mexican Folk Art Collection, 85.98.164.4 cm); w. 81.0 (20.3 cm); d. 17 in. (43.2 cm), The Nelson A. Rockefeller Mexican Folk Art Collection, 85.98.664, Photography by Peggy Tenison



IN THE SPRING OF 2017, there was a confined flood in the Latin American Folk Art gallery. This incident required a complete deinstallation in order to repair the gallery space. After being closed for three years, the gallery will reopen on September 12, with a new interpretation of our treasured collection.

The collection became internationally recognized after the donation of two major Latin American folk art collections: the Nelson A. Rockefeller Mexican Folk Art Collection and the Robert K. Winn Folk Art Collection. It has grown exponentially over the past thirty-five years, thanks to the efforts of Marion Oettinger Jr., SAMA's Curator Emeritus of Latin American Art, and is comprised of approximately 8,000 objects.

"This installation features some of SAMA's best-known works of folk art, and incorporates interpretive strategies and innovative programming that reflect contemporary discussions about Latin American folk art," said Lucia Abramovich, Associate Curator of Latin American Art. "Our hope is that this installation will generate partnerships with regional, national, and international artists and scholars working with this material."

Instead of using traditional themes to organize the gallery (utility, decoration, ceremony, and recreation), the reinstallation structures the collection using flexible themes such as "Life, Death, and Faith" and "Legacies of Craftsmanship." The gallery will also share the history of the Latin American folk art collection and frame it within the movement to promote and collect Latin American folk art in the twentieth century.

The gallery will be known as the Latin American Popular Art Gallery. This new title provides a more faithful translation of the original Spanish term for this genre (*arte popular*). The term "popular art" in this context also encompasses a broader range of Latin American and Spanish material culture, taking into consideration the remarkable size and diversity of SAMA's Latin American art collection.

This installation is generously funded by the Galt Latin American Art Fund.



EXQUISITE ADORNMENT

TURKMEN AND MIAO JEWELRY FROM THE ELIZABETH AND ROBERT LENDE COLLECTION

OCTOBER 9, 2020-JANUARY 3, 2021 | COWDEN GALLERY



To HONOR THE FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY of the San Antonio Museum of Art in 2021, longtime supporters Elizabeth and Robert Lende have promised the Museum their outstanding collection of tribal silver jewelry. Over the past forty years, the Lendes have assembled their collection from diverse cultures in the Middle East, Asia, North Africa, and the Americas. *Exquisite Adornment: Turkmen and Miao Jewelry from the Elizabeth and Robert Lende Collection* features jewelry from the Turkmen people of Central Asia and the Miao people of southwestern China. It has been organized to recognize the Lende's generous support and showcase the dazzling artistic traditions and diverse cultures represented by the collection.

The term "Turkmen" refers to several ethnic groups living in the vast steppe land stretching from the Caspian Sea to the west and the Chinese border to the east. On the other hand, the Miao people are one of over fifteen ethnic groups living in the remote and mountainous southwest region of China. This exhibition features a broad range of exquisitely crafted silver jewelry. Some categories such as headdresses, earrings, necklaces, and bracelets, are shared both by Turkmen and Miao people, whereas other types are unique to each group: amulet bags, braid adornments, and temple pendants for Turkmen people; neck rings, combs, and back hooks for the Miao.

Exquisite Adornment brings together approximately 120 pieces to present the unique aesthetic tastes preferred by the Turkmen and Miao peoples. The Turkmen jewelry is adorned with abstract and geometric forms and perforations. The contrast of silver and parcel gilding is enhanced by studded carnelians. Miao silver jewelry, however, usually displays an array of flora and fauna motifs derived from local beliefs. Miao jewelry also embraces geometric forms and shapes, but in a much more minimalistic style, such as the necklace designed to include a series of concentric silver rings and devoid of any surface decoration.

Beyond the apparent visual differences between Turkmen and Miao jewelry, this exhibition explores their functions, materials, techniques, and rich symbolism. Similarities in these areas frequently outweigh differences. This suggests a social and cultural dimension shared by the jewelry from these two distinct cultures. Turkmen and Miao jewelry is mostly for women and projects a great amount of information about the wearer: family wealth, age, and marital status. Silver was valued in both cultures as an auspicious material capable of protecting the wearer. Silversmiths in Central Asia and southwestern China shared surprisingly common craftsmanship vocabularies: repousse, filigree, and granulation, etc. Most important of all, Turkmen and Miao jewelry bears layers of hidden meanings, symbolizing happiness, progeny, and feminine virtues.

Turkmen and Miao peoples were migratory. For centuries, they were subjugated by other dominating ethnic groups and were pushed to the most inaccessible and marginal areas. *Exquisite Adornment* provides a rare opportunity to appreciate the beautiful jewelry created by these ethnic groups. The extremely fine craftsmanship may belie the hardship endured by Turkmen and Miao people. Today, they face the challenges of maintaining their cultural identities under the spread of urbanization and the commercialization of their living environment.





This exhibition is organized by The San Antonio Museum of Art with support from the Guizhou Provincial Museum and Guizhou Provincial Bureau of Culture and Tourism, China. It is generously funded by The Brown Foundation, Inc. of Houston and The Elizabeth Huth Coates Charitable Foundation of 1992.

Opposite: *Dorsal Ornament*, Turkmenistan (Teke), late 19th to early 20th century, Gilt silver inlaid with carnelian, 6 5/16 × 5 11/16 in. (16 × 14.5 cm), Promised gift from Elizabeth and Robert Lende, L.2020.23.24, Photo by Seale Studios

Above: Miao women process in traditional jewelry and garments. Photo courtesy of Guizhou Provincial Bureau of Culture and Tourism, China.

Left: Pair of Earrings, China (Miao), first half of the 20th century, Silver, each approx. 3 15/16 x 2 3/8 in. (10 × 6 cm), Promised gift from Elizabeth and Robert Lende, L2020.23.31.a-b, Photo by Seale Studios



New & Noted

NEH Grant Awarded

Jessica Powers, PhD, the Gilbert M. Denman Jr. Curator of Art of the Ancient Mediterranean World, has earned SAMA a coveted \$100,000 implementation grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities for an upcoming exhibition



dedicated to Roman landscapes. "This groundbreaking exhibition explores the evocative landscape scenes created to decorate houses and tombs in ancient Rome and Pompeii," explained Powers. "Many of the works we'll show in the exhibition, including the celebrated "Odyssey Landscape" paintings from the Vatican Museums, have never before traveled to the U.S., and we are excited to share them with SAMA's visitors."

Museum Building Refurbished

SAMA's historic building is a great blessing-and a great challenge. "Through the generosity of The Brown Foundation, Inc., The Ewing Halsell Foundation, The Nancy Smith Hurd Foundation, Frost Bank, and the Elma Dill Russell Spencer Foundation, the Museum has undertaken a series of long overdue projects," said the Director of Facilities, Scott Sanders. "We recently cleaned and repainted the Sky Bridge and are currently cleaning, repairing, and repointing the masonry on the Ewing Halsell wing." In October the East and West Tower elevators will be modernized, after which replacing the Cowden Gallery windows and further brick work on the main building are planned. The Museum is grateful to these donors for ensuring its building is in optimal condition for housing our delicate collections and welcoming visitors.

Quotable _

The San Antonio Museum of Art is incredible. It is definitely a must-see and one of the best museums I have ever been to. The staff is friendly, the facility is clean, and every corner is packed with something new and exciting to look at.... My family and I spent hours exploring and learning things no other museum ever taught us.

–JaDee Williams, TripAdvisor

New Postdoctoral Fellow Chosen

SAMA is eager to welcome Bernadette Cap, PhD, as the 2020–2022 Mellon Postdoctoral Curatorial Fellow. Starting this fall, Cap will work closely with the Associate Curator of Latin American Art, Dr. Lucia Abramovich, to reinterpret and redesign the Pre-Colombian Gallery. "I am excited for this opportunity to create a new experience for the public. I have conducted archaeological research on Pre-Columbian societies for eighteen years, with a focus on the Maya and their economies," says Cap. "In the SAMA collections, I am interested in gaining greater insight on economies of the elites of society." Bernadette Cap earned her doctorate in Anthropology from the University of Washington-Madison in 2015.



Educators Receive Free Memberships

This summer, the Museum showed its support for local Bexar County educators by offering an exclusive three-month free membership. Their tremendous work and quick transition from traditional to online learning in the wake of COVID-19 did not go unnoticed. Nearly 500 educators have registered and will receive their membership benefits through September 30, 2020. SAMA will always continue to support and appreciate our educators as they continue to integrate art history and culture into their students' lives.



Inside SAMA

This year, the San Antonio Museum of Art created the Diversity, Equity, Access, and Inclusion Task Force (DEAI). Co-led by the AT&T Director of Education, Bella Merriam, and Public Programs Manager, Yohanna Tesfai, the group includes members from all departments of the Museum and meets bi-weekly to address barriers that might limit SAMA's audiences. "We are inspired by the feedback we received from staff in our first DEAI survey", said Merriam. "This will help to shape the work of the task force going forward, and we are creating opportunities for additional staff members to be involved in this very important work for the Museum." Merriam attended the virtual National Leadership Conference hosted by the National Art Education Association (NAEA) from July 13 through 18. As the Museum Commissioner for the NAEA's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Commission, Merriam contributed recommended actions to the association's 2021-25 strategic planning process.

New Acquisitions

The Museum recently acquired three important new works of contemporary art, including Liz Trosper's monumental "scanner painting" toothy zip (neon: ochre), featured in the exhibition Texas Women, and Hock E Aye Vi Edgar Heap of Birds's multi-panel Trail of Tears, featured in the installation This Is America, which uses the stark visual language of traffic signs to commemorate the forced removal of tens of thousands of Native Americans from their lands in the nineteenth century. This work marks the first piece by a contemporary Native American artist to enter SAMA's collection. Self-taught, Texas-based artist Kirk Hayes explores illusionistic possibilities in his trompe l'oeil painting Cruelty's Gate, based on a collage constructed in his studio and then destroyed. These new works reflect the Museum's commitment to the diversity of new fresh voices that are shaping our cultural landscape today.



Above: Liz Trosper (American, born 1886-1969), toothy zip (neon:ochre), 2019, UV inkjet print on canvas, 102 x 74 in., Courtesy of Barry Whistler Gallery, Photography by Liz Trosper

Teaching through Art

Contemporary Works Power Trinity University Course

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IN THE REINSTALLATION of the Museum's Contemporary II Gallery, Coates Foundation Trinity University–SAMA Postdoctoral Fellow Yinshi Lerman-Tan assembled an exhibition of thirteen works of post-1969 American art titled *This Is America*. The exhibition borrows its name from hip hop artist Childish Gambino's Grammy-winning 2018 song and music video. The works on view address the complexity of the American experience and themes such as American geographies, borders, identities, and histories. These works predominantly represent a turn back to figurative and representational art. Many Texas and San Antonio artists are included here, including David Zamora Casas, El Franco Lee II, César A. Martínez, Michael Menchaca, Dario Robleto, Vincent Valdez, and Susan Whyne.

The installation was conceived as a teaching exhibition for Lerman-Tan's seminar of the same name in Trinity's Department of Art and Art History, and some works on view are accompanied by labels written by Trinity students. Students in the Spring 2020 seminar considered the works in the exhibition, as well as objects across the Museum's American, Latin American, and Modern and Contemporary collections. Their seminar discussions were informed by reading from art history, post-colonial studies, critical race art history, and recent exhibition reviews.

"In envisioning this gallery as a teaching exhibition, I chose works that help us rethink what we mean by 'American art," said Lerman-Tan. "The artists grapple with questions ranging from the history of American urban spaces, the American Civil War, state-sanctioned execution, the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, and the American news cycle. Especially in our own fraught moment in American history, these artists help us grapple with the complex history and present of our country."





Top: Willie Cole, American, born 1955, *How Do You Spell America*? #6, 1993, Ollstick, chalk, and latex on Masonite and wood, 49 x 96 in, (124 5 x 243.8 cm), Purchased with funds provided by The Brown Foundation Contemporary Art Acquisition Fund, Janet L. Brown, The Guillemon C. Nicolás & James C. Foster Art Fund, Christopher C. Hill, Dr. Harmon and Harriet Kelley, Zoe A. Diaz, Stacey Hill and Erick Schlather, and an Anonymous Donor, 2012/1, Left and Detail p. 1: Cesar A. Martinez, American, born 1944, *Bato can High School Jacket*, 1986, Acrylic on canvas, 64 1/2 x 59 1/2 in. (163.8 x 1511 cm), Purchased with the Tom Slick Estate Acquisition Fund, 90.761, **Above:** Faith Ringslol, American, born 1930, *The Funeal: Lower's Quill*; **47**, 31986, Acrylic on cotton canvas; tie-dyde, *Dista*, and pierced fabrics, 57 x 76 in. (144.8 x 193 cm), Purchased with the American Art Acquisition Fund, 2006.7

Shop Guide

Great Products to Buy in Person or Online at samuseum.org/shop



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dig into your shoulders, this 100% cotton tote is exclusively made for SAMA by Everybody World, an ethical apparel factory in South Los Angeles.

\$35

\$14.99-\$24.99



MEMBER PROFILE

Get to Know SAMA Supporters Will Maney and Michael Weil.

What's their relationship with the Museum?

SAMA is a very important place for this couple. Both are from San Antonio and grew up going to the Museum. Mike has early childhood memories there and interned with the Latin American art curator and registrar after college, and Will visited multiple times and went to events. They met at *To Live Forever: Egyptian Treasures from the Brooklyn Museum* in October 2010 and loved the exhibition. "Most of the artworks were objects that you don't see generally in Texas," said Mike. "There was no shortage of things to talk about." So, when it was time to propose, Will decided to kneel in the Egyptian gallery, a nice tie-in with their first date. Mike said yes.

How often do they visit SAMA?

They like to visit at least once a month and also whenever there are events. Will and Mike particularly like the artist talks and meeting people at exhibition openings, usually making a date night out of them. They love to bring people from out of town—mostly to see new exhibitions—and also bring friends who live in San Antonio but have never visited the Museum.

What are their favorite galleries?

Besides their special attachment to the Egyptian Gallery, Mike loves the Spanish Colonial Gallery and Will loves the Contemporary Gallery the most. "It's a great space that changes often," he said. "The large pieces are breathtaking."

Why did they decide to get a membership?

It makes sense to get a membership when you know that you want to visit on a regular basis. The couple had been members for quite some time but decided to become Circle members three or four years ago, when they were able to offer more support to the Museum. "It's important to give back to the community," said Will, "but SAMA's also a place that means so much to us that we wanted to be part of it at a higher level."

What membership perks do they use?

All of them! They once used a ten-person tour for a birthday party and take advantage of bringing guests for free. When traveling, they use the reciprocal membership to other museums.

Why do they support SAMA?

"SAMA brings new thinking, new perspectives, and creates new dialogues, which is essential for our city and the community," said Mike. In particular, they mentioned last year's exhibition *Men of Steel, Women of Wonder* from Crystal Bridges. "It was such a comprehensive view of themes that are part of American life, bringing different perspectives and points of view," said Mike. "It pushed the national conversation further."



Mike Weil and Will Maney take in the view from the Sky Bridge.

In Memoriam: Lenora Peace Brown -



The SAMA community mourns the passing of longtime supporter Lenora Brown on July 18, 2020. While Lenora was a philanthropic light to the entire San Antonio community, she was completely transformative to the San Antonio Museum of Art.

Lenora and her husband Walter F. Brown, who passed away on the same date six years earlier, began donating their magnificent collection of Chinese ceramics to the Museum in the early 1880s. A Life Trustee of SAMA's Board of Directors, she chaired that body from 1994 to 1998 and was a lead donor in the 2005 expansion of the Museum to include the 15.000-source-foot Lenora and Walter

F. Brown Asian Art Wing, which provides ideal conditions for viewing 6,000 years of the art of China, Japan, Korea, Tibet, Nepal, Pakistan, Thailand, and Vietnam.

"This Museum simply would not be what it is today without Lenora Brown," said Co-Interim Director and the Coates-Cowden-Brown Senior Advisor for Asian Art, Emily Sano. "Her extraordinary generosity, vision, and leadership over three decades have put SAMA on the national and international map for the excellence of its collection and display of Asian art."





Ready, Set, Mark Your Calendar

Visit samuseum.org/calendar for upcoming events.



ART BITES: A Creative Cooking Class September 15



EVENING FOR EDUCATORS: Latin American Popular Art September 24



TOUCH-FREE FAMILY DAYS September 13 & October 4



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samuseum.org

Above Center: Jaguar Mask, Mexico, Guerrero, late 19th century, Glass, painted wood, animal teeth, boar bristle, h. 13 in. (33.0 cm); w. 12 in. (30.5 cm); d. 7 ½ in. (19.1 cm), The Nelson A. Rockefeller Mexican Folk Art Collection, 85.98.642, Photography by Peggy Tenison

Art Just Wants to Be Seen-In Person or Online

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SAMA is open and safe. Not yet ready to visit? Get online programming at **samuseum.org/samaanywhere**.