



# ARTNOW

San Antonio Museum of Art

FALL | 2021





# Anatomy of...

## [a Nun's Badge]

**Where to Find It:** Spanish Colonial Gallery

**Curator:** Lucía Abramovich Sánchez, PhD, Associate Curator of Latin American Art

### What kind of object is this?

Nun's badges, known in Spanish as *escudos de monja*, were devotional objects often worn by nuns in New Spain, specifically those in the Conceptionist and Jeronymite orders.

### How was it worn?

These badges were worn over the nun's habit, on the center of the chest. In the painting *Sor Maria Francisca de San Calletano*, located in the same gallery, a nun is pictured wearing an emblematic badge over her habit; here you can see how a badge like this may have been worn.



### Who is depicted in this scene?

At the center of the badge is the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception, surrounded by (clockwise from top): the Holy Trinity, an angel holding the Christ Child, Saint John the Evangelist, Saint Pasqual, Saint Luke the Evangelist, Saint Francis of Assisi, Joseph and the Christ Child, and the Archangel Michael.

### What kind of material is the frame made of?

The frame is made with tortoiseshell, a regionally sourced luxury material in eighteenth-century New Spain (Mexico). The nun's badges originated to evade reforms that banned the wearing of devotional ornaments made of valuable materials such as precious metals and gems; tortoiseshell was still considered appropriate.

### Why is this object important?

This object embodies the strategies that wealthy nuns would employ to show their devotion without sacrificing the extravagance they were accustomed to in their former, secular lives. The Conceptionist and Jeronymite orders in New Spain had the daughters of affluent families as members; Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz was a member of the Jeronymite order, for example.

**Caption:** Artist unknown, *Nun's Badge (Escudo de monja)*, Mexico, 18th century, Oil on copper with tortoiseshell frame, diam. 6 in. (15.6 cm), Purchased with funds provided by the Robert J. Kleberg and Helen C. Kleberg Foundation, 93.45



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From the Director's Office

Dear Members,

Fall is officially here and with that comes the opening of our exhibition *40 Years, 40 Stories: Treasures and New Discoveries from SAMA's Collection*. The curators took a deep dive to find intriguing works in storage that haven't recently been on view, new acquisitions, and beautifully conserved pieces. I invite you to visit and then join one of our online lectures including one with the conservator who recently restored SAMA's Chinese handscroll of the utopian *Peach Blossom Spring*. You can register and find more information at [samuseum.org/calendar](http://samuseum.org/calendar).



Make sure to mark February 11 on your calendars for the opening of the exhibition *Wendy Red Star: A Scratch on the Earth*. Red Star, a contemporary multimedia artist and an enrolled member of the Apsáalooke (Crow) tribe, explores her heritage, Crow mythology, the role of Indigenous women, and her perspective on American history in her work. Read more about the exhibition on page 6.

On page 7 you'll find a digest of measures that SAMA's Education Department undertook to provide students, teachers, and families with access to arts education in the 2020–2021 school year, efforts which continue in the current school year.

If you haven't had a chance to stop in to view the works highlighted at SAMA for the Texas Biennial, I encourage you to do so. The range of artists is vast and the works are a fantastic reflection of the contemporary art scene in Texas.

Hope to see you soon in the galleries,

*Emily Sano*

Emily Sano, Co-Interim Director,  
Coates-Cowden-Brown Senior Advisor for Asian Art



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# 4 Years, Stories

Treasures and New Discoveries from SAMA's Collection

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OCTOBER 16, 2021–JANUARY 2, 2022 | COWDEN GALLERY





**THIS YEAR THE SAN ANTONIO MUSEUM OF ART CELEBRATES ITS 40TH ANNIVERSARY.** To mark the occasion our fall exhibition, *40 Years, 40 Stories: Treasures and New Discoveries from SAMA's Collection*, will focus on unique works from storage in the Museum's own collection. From 1981 to now, SAMA's collections have grown to include nearly 30,000 works of art from around the world. These objects reflect a broad range of human experience, and each has a tale to tell about cultures, communities, and history. *40 Years, 40 Stories* brings together a selection of artworks that have not recently been on display and shares their fascinating stories. Like the Museum's collection, the works in this exhibition span the globe, representing cultures on six continents and thousands of years of human endeavor, from one of the oldest works in the collection, a female figure made in northern Mesopotamia more than six thousand years ago, to the present day.

Among the exhibition's themes is the behind-the-scenes work of caring for the Museum's collection. *40 Years, 40 Stories* will unveil the results of recent conservation treatment on two important paintings. The Museum's full-length portrait of Mary, Lady Arundell of Wardour, by the celebrated English painter Sir Joshua Reynolds, has been transformed by a multiyear conservation project at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, that revealed the original beauty of Reynolds' pigments and previously unseen details of her garments. A late Ming or early Qing dynasty Chinese handscroll depicting the tale of the *Peach Blossom Spring*, in which a fisherman discovers a utopian community, likewise will be shown for the first time since recent conservation to repair and remount the scroll.

The exhibition introduces several new acquisitions, among them an exquisitely carved Islamic amulet and a petrosphere (a massive stone sphere) fashioned by the ancient inhabitants of Costa Rica. Also featured are surprising discoveries from the Museum's storerooms, including embroidered textiles made by Salvadoran refugees who fled their country's civil war in the 1980s. In addition, *40 Years, 40 Stories* explores remarkable but little-known stories about the Museum's donors. Among these is actress Pola Negri, a femme fatale of 1920s and '30s Hollywood who retired to San Antonio and left her glamorous portrait to the Museum. The exhibition also displays selections from the Museum's collection of African art, which has not been on view in recent years.

*40 Years, 40 Stories* is curated by Jessica Powers, Interim Chief Curator and the Gilbert M. Denman, Jr. Curator of Art of the Ancient Mediterranean World.



*40 Years, 40 Stories* is organized by the San Antonio Museum of Art and generously supported by the Sue Denman Memorial Exhibition Fund, the Helen and Everett Jones Exhibition Fund, the Amy Shelton McNutt Exhibition Fund, and the Daniel Sullivan Exhibition Fund.

**Above:** Crown, China, Liao dynasty, 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century, Gilt bronze, h. 11 7/16", Purchased with funds provided by the Bessie Timon Endowment Fund, 2021.1.1  
**Left:** Winslow Homer (American, 1836-1910), *Boy Fishing*, 1892, Watercolor on paper, 14 5/8 x 21 in. (37.1 x 53.3 cm), Purchased with funds provided by the Robert J. Kleberg, Jr., and Helen C. Kleberg Foundation and Friends of the San Antonio Museum Association, 86.130  
**Below:** *Peach Blossom Spring* (detail), late Ming-early Qing dynasty, 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century, Handscroll with ink and colors on silk, painting: 12 in. x 106 in.; San Antonio Museum of Art, gift of Robert K. Winn, 64.291.97  
**Opposite page:** Tadé Styka (French, born Poland, 1889-1954), *Pola Negri*, ca. 1930, Oil on canvas, 54 1/4 x 42 1/2 in. (137.8 x 108 cm), Bequest of Pola Negri, 87.39.1





Born a Star



► **WENDY RED STAR:** *A Scratch on the Earth* is a mid-career survey of the work of Portland artist Wendy Red Star (born 1981, Billings, Montana). An enrolled member of the Apsáalooke (Crow) Tribe, Red Star works across disciplines to explore the intersections of Native American ideologies and colonialist structures, both historically and in contemporary society. Drawing on pop culture, conceptual art strategies, and the Crow traditions within which she was raised, Red Star pushes photography in new directions—from self-portraiture to photo-collage and mixed media—to bring to life her unique perspective on American history.

The title *A Scratch on the Earth* is a translation of the Apsáalooke word *Annúkaxua* and refers to the period after 1880 when U.S. government policy prioritized keeping Crow people on the reservation. The importance of family, the Indigenous roots of feminism, Crow mythology, the history of the Montana landscape, and the pageantry of Crow Fest are among the subjects that Red Star brings to life in this exhibition. *A Scratch on the Earth* also explores how boundaries between cultural, racial, social, and gender lines are reinforced in America, and how these lines blur across time and place.

*Wendy Red Star: A Scratch on the Earth* features sixty works drawn from the collection of The Newark Museum of Art and museums across the country and includes photography, textiles, and film and sound installations, produced over a period of twelve years. At the heart of the exhibition, a new immersive video will be screened inside a sweat lodge constructed by the artist.

The exhibition was organized by The Newark Museum of Art, and curated by Nadiah Rivera Fella, guest curator, and Tricia Laughlin Bloom, Newark's Curator of American Art. In San Antonio, it is generously funded by The Ford Foundation, Elizabeth Huth Coates Charitable Foundation of 1992, The Betty Stieren Kelso Foundation, and The Brown Foundation, Inc.

**Wendy Red Star: A Scratch on the Earth**  
February 11–May 8, 2022  
Cowden Gallery

Above:  
Wendy Red Star, *Indian Summer - Four Seasons*, 2006  
Archival pigment print on sunset fiber rag, 23 x 26 in. (58.4 x 66 cm)  
Gift of Loren G. Lipson, M.D., 2016 2016.46.1.1  
Collection of The Newark Museum of Art



## Scholastic Year in Review



The 2020-2021 school year was unprecedented for students, the majority of whom had to exchange in-person learning for a fully virtual curriculum. During a stressful transition for students, educators, and parents, SAMA provided much-needed art education resources.

**More than 40 educational programs** and resources were offered through the newly developed learn tab on SAMA's website.

**18 lesson plans** were provided to educators through hybrid workshops.

**3,209 students** benefited from **98** virtual tours.

**2,000 art kits** were distributed to schools that participate in the Museum's START School Partnership Program serving low-income schools throughout San Antonio.

**1,745 additional art kits** were distributed to families through hybrid family programming.

**3,630 people** attended one of SAMA's **55** family programs, which provided parents and caregivers with art supplies and interactive tools.



**"As I'm sure you know, it's been a rough year for students and for educators. So many of our kids did not have great access to art supplies at home, and during a normal year, art supplies are ordered for class sharing, not for individual students. The art kits you provided were absolutely gorgeous and well planned, and the kids were SO excited to have them during the virtual field trip..."**

—Rachel Jackson, Music Specialist, Lamar Elementary



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# Behind SAMA's COMMUNITY MURAL PROJECT

As part of a generous grant awarded by the Art Bridges Foundation supporting programming around the loans of three paintings, the Museum envisioned sharing art in the street with a mural project that would include the San Antonio community. Taking inspiration from Archibald Motley Jr.'s painting *Bronzeville at Night* (1949), which represents Chicago's South Side neighborhood and its community, SAMA initiated the creation of the murals to embody San Antonio's East Side, West Side, and SAMA's campus.

An open call invited artists to apply, and three artists were chosen by a selection committee that included San Anto Cultural Arts, the San Antonio African-American Community Archive and Museum, and SAMA staff. Artists Sandra Gonzalez, Victor Zarazua, and Suzy Gonzalez relied on insights from an online community survey and organized community conversations to produce two mural sketches each. The communities voted on the proposed designs and pitched in to help execute the final murals.

"Community involvement in the planning, design, and creation of each mural was integral to the success and impact of the Murals project," said Noël Bella Merriam, AT&T Director of Education, Diversity, and Inclusion at SAMA. "Community input was instrumental in shaping the design and vision for each mural, resulting in works of art that reflect the character, culture, and history of each neighborhood. Our goal was to reinforce social connections within the community, and these three murals are a good move in that direction thanks to the artists and the community's participation."

## Artist Sandra Gonzalez, East Side, Tony G's Soul Food:

Sandra created her mural using polytab, a type of fabric that can be painted on in the studio and then installed on site. This is what she said about her mural:

"The community wanted to see Black representation on the wall. The mural includes Miles Davis playing the trumpet and Etta James singing. Etta James used to perform all around the East Side. I also included street signs of the important East Side streets Hackberry and Douglass, and the design is inspired by Tony G's interior."





**Artist Victor Zarazua, West Side, Wicho's Mexican Deli:**

Victor planned his mural to be executed primarily in spray paint. After he suffered a stroke, his muralist friend Cesar Garcia stepped in to finish the mural using Victor's sketches and vision.

"I grew up on San Antonio's West Side, and I wanted the mural to represent the neighborhood. I walked around the neighborhood and took photos of the landscape and the surrounding area, then developed a style of abstract graphic design combined with harder black lines defining the shapes and objects while still staying conceptual. My goal was not to be photo realistic but to break up little scenes and demonstrate transitioning movement in town."



**Artist Suzy Gonzalez, SAMA, Gloria Galt River Pavilion:**

Suzy painted on wood panels cut as individual motifs and drilled into the brick wall; she also invited the people represented on the mural to help paint.

"I wanted to include as many themes as possible from community feedback. The mural includes local people that live in and progress our community such as musician Azul Barrientos, photographer Jess Gonzales, artist Mesquite Papi, and poet laureate Andrea 'Vocab' Sanderson. The figures are gathered around the Yanaguana river and surrounded by native plants and birds."





Ford Foundation Grant



Wendy Red Star, *Family Portrait Series – Two Prom Dates*, 2011, Cotton broad cloth with archival ink, 44 x 50 in. (111.8 x 127 cm), Autry Museum of The American West, Los Angeles, CA

This year, the San Antonio Museum of Art received a \$200,000 grant from The Ford Foundation to support the upcoming exhibitions *Wendy Red Star: A Scratch on the Earth* (see page 6) and *Traitor, Survivor, Icon: The Legacy of La Malinche and the Conquest of Mexico*. Both exhibitions present re-interpretations of the cultural history of Indigenous peoples of the Americas.

New Study of SAMA’s Cuneiform Texts

Jésus García Recio of the Instituto Bíblico y Oriental of Leon, Spain, recently published *Textos Cuneiformes de Texas, San Antonio Museum of Art*, highlighting thirty ancient Mesopotamian objects from SAMA’s collection.

Dr. Jessica Powers, Interim Chief Curator and the Gilbert M. Denman, Jr. Curator of Art of the Ancient Mediterranean World contributed to the catalogue’s introduction, explaining the history of the Museum’s collection of cuneiform texts. “It’s been a pleasure to collaborate with Jesús García Recio on this publication and to learn more about SAMA’s collection of cuneiform documents from ancient Mesopotamia,” said Powers. “His detailed study translates these texts for the first time, and we will now be able to share this better understanding of the inscriptions with our audiences.”



Dedication Cone of Ur-Bau, Lagash, reign of Ur-Bau, ca. 2155–2142 B.C., Fired clay, h. 4 in. (10.2 cm); w. 2 1/2 in. (6.4 cm), Gift of Miss Emma Reed, 38.237.14, Photography by Peggy Tenison

Museum of the Future Task Force

This summer, UTSA’s Institute of Texan Cultures launched the ITC Centennial 2068: Community Stakeholder Visioning initiative, a community engagement project to envision the future of the ITC. This effort will include three task forces, focusing on three areas: Museum of the Future, Community Engagement and Sustaining Support, and Facility and Land Stewardship.



SAMA’s Chris Torgerson, Tour & Volunteer Coordinator and Museum Educator, will be taking part as a Chair on the Museum of the Future task force. “Our particular task force’s efforts will be focused on ensuring that UTSA’s Institute of Texan Cultures remains a place for all to learn about the rich culture and history of Texas,” said Torgerson. “We want to embrace new technology and programming and tap into the wealth of ideas from the community at large that will make it an even more inclusive and engaging resource going forward.”

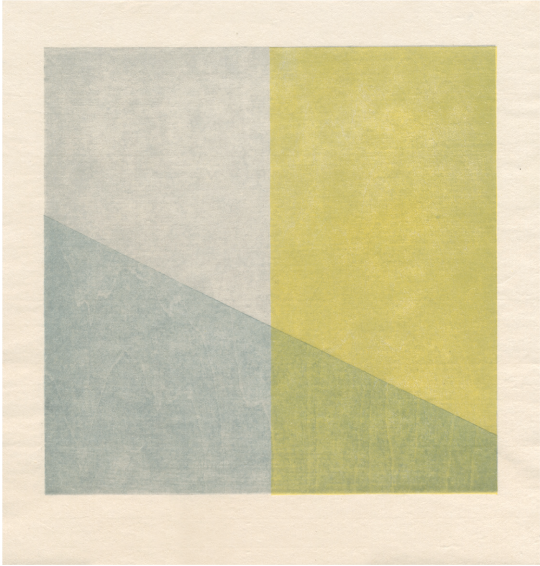
2021 Texas Biennial: A New Landscape, A Possible Horizon

The Texas Biennial exhibition, titled *A New Landscape, A Possible Horizon*, is distributed across multiple Texas museums: San Antonio’s Artpace, McNay Art Museum, Ruby City, San Antonio Museum of Art, and Houston’s Fotofest. The Biennial traditionally featured only artists working and living in Texas, but now embraces artists with deep connections to the Lone Star State working in any part of the world. SAMA is exhibiting fourteen contemporary works by artists Adrian Armstrong, Gregory Michael Carter, Colby Deal, Abhidnya Ghuge, Trenton Doyle Hancock, Tomashi Jackson, Virginia Jaramillo, Rick Lowe, Vincent Valdez, José Villalobos, and Jasmine Zelaya. “This grouping of artists showcases the range of artistic approaches and experiences that make Texas a vibrant cultural center. SAMA is thrilled to have these artists’ works on view and in conversation with our permanent collection this fall,” said Lana Meador, Assistant Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art. On view at SAMA through December 5, the exhibition is produced by Big Medium and co-organized by curators and artistic directors Ryan N. Dennis and Evan Garza.



New Acquisitions

As part of the San Antonio Museum of Art’s Initiative to Acquire Art by Contemporary San Antonio Artists, the Museum has acquired eight artworks by seven local artists, including Jennifer Ling Datchuk, Jenelle Esparza, Joe Harjo, Jon Lee, Ethel Shipton, Chris Sauter, and Liz Ward.



Jon Lee (American, born South Korea, 1968), *O1701*, 2017, Woodcut, 17 x 12 in. (43.2 x 30.5 cm), San Antonio Museum of Art, Purchased with The Brown Foundation Contemporary Art Acquisition Fund and funds provided by Dr. Katherine Moore McAllen, Dr. Dacia Napier, Edward E. (Sonny) Collins III, and The Sheerin Family, 2021.4.1-2, © Jon Lee

Also joining SAMA’s Chinese collection of art are a gilt openwork crown and a gilt plaque from the Liao dynasty (907–1125), a set of jade belt plaques from the Ming dynasty (1368–1644), and a set of silver hairpins inlaid with kingfisher feathers from the Qing dynasty (1644–1911).



Hairpins, China, Qing dynasty (1644–1911), Silver and kingfisher feather, 5 3/4" to 5 1/4"x3 1/4" by 3 1/8", Purchased with funds provided by the Bessie Timon Endowment Fund, 2021.1.4.a-c

In Memoriam: Margery Louise Block

The San Antonio Museum of Art mourns the passing of Margery Block on June 15, 2021. Margery was a longtime Honorary Trustee and donor to the Museum. The SAMA community is extremely grateful for her generosity and honored to have had her support over the years.



Member Profile: Lisa Hufstetler

Meet Lisa Hufstetler, a SAMA supporter who found her love for sketching at the Museum.



What is her relationship with the Museum?

Lisa is a frequent visitor of many museums in San Antonio. She started visiting the San Antonio Museum of Art about three years ago when SAMA had an artist on site to teach about sketching. "I showed up with my composition book, just like the ones kids use in school, and I just started drawing," said Lisa. She left that day as a new member with a newfound love for sketching the collection.

How often does she visit SAMA?

Every week or two, Lisa enjoys sitting in the galleries and drawing. With her frequent visits, new special exhibitions or gallery rotations quickly grab her attention. As for her sketches, she is usually drawn to anything colorful. Her most recent subjects have been in the exhibition *America's Impressionism: Echoes of a Revolution*, which she visited for a Touch-Free Family Day.

Why support SAMA?

Lisa has been a member for three years. "Being a member, you get a little possessive, you feel like it's your Museum. I just really appreciate that it's there," she said. Her favorite perk is the free admission and parking because "it allows you to go whenever you like. I can have a bite-sized, delightful time for free." But being a member is all about directly supporting the Museum for Lisa.

Thank you for supporting the San Antonio Museum of Art, Lisa!



An advertisement for the San Antonio Area Foundation. The background is a photograph of an older man with white hair, wearing a blue button-down shirt, playing a black and white accordion. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. The lighting is warm and focused on him.



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October 12



**MEMBER PREVIEW:**  
*40 Years, 40 Stories*  
October 15

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# Museum Market

**Shopping for inspiration?**

Find artisan foods, jewelry, vintage clothing, crafts,  
and more from local makers and creators  
in the Sculpture Garden.

**Every second Saturday | 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.**